

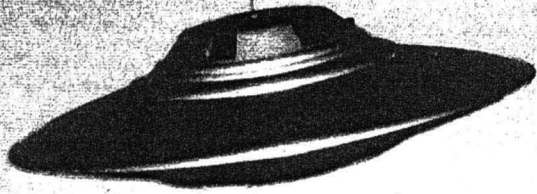
UFO

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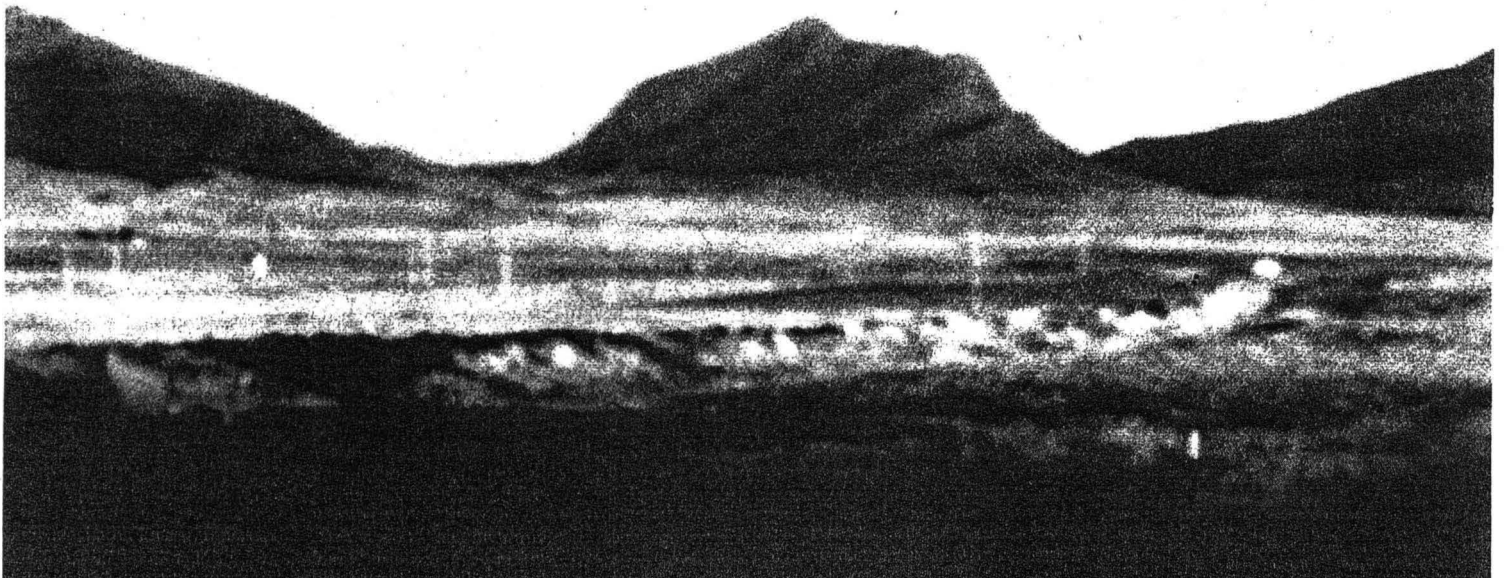
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Out there



Ohio State University's UFO collection attracts researchers and the curious alike

By Renee Schaefer
FOR THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Theirs is not your ordinary boy-meets-girl story. Michelle LaVigne met her future husband, Paul Wedel, aboard, well, an alien spaceship.

"We exchanged numbers of sorts," said LaVigne, a New Hampshire resident.

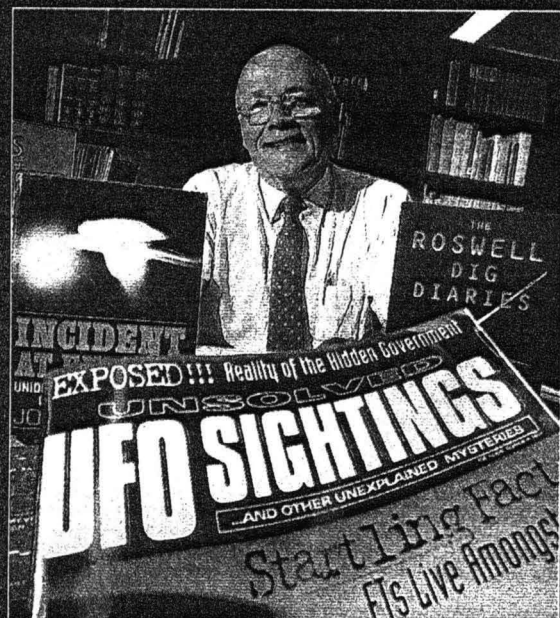
Then the two made plans to meet on Earth.

"There's no way we could have known each other," she said. "I've received phone calls from people that I couldn't have met another way."

That's right, LaVigne has been snatched up by aliens before. So many times that she wrote *The Alien Abduction Survival Guide: How to Cope With Your ET Experience*, a how-to of sorts "to help other abductees deal with the exceedingly unusual events of their lives."

LaVigne's book is one of more than 1,000 items in the William E. Jones Unidentified Flying Object Collection, part of Ohio State University's main library's rare books and manuscripts division.

The assortment of periodicals, reports and books ranges from the hard-to-believe (think alien invasions) to the maybe-believable (think Roswell).



FRED SQUILLANTE | DISPATCH

Although he's never seen a UFO and is not sure if they even exist, William E. Jones continues to donate books to his Unidentified Flying Object Collection at Ohio State University.

(continued on page 2)

The collection is one of the largest compilations of UFO material in the country, said Elva Griffith, a library associate. At least six times a year, the rare-books division receives a box full of items from Jones, a Columbus lawyer.

Jones has donated material to Ohio State for the past 15 years. Although he said he has never seen a UFO and is not sure if they even exist, he thinks as science continues to expand, the collection will become more valuable.

"It's part of our history, part of our society," Jones said, adding that the historical, sociological and psychological aspects of UFOs are worth documenting and preserving.

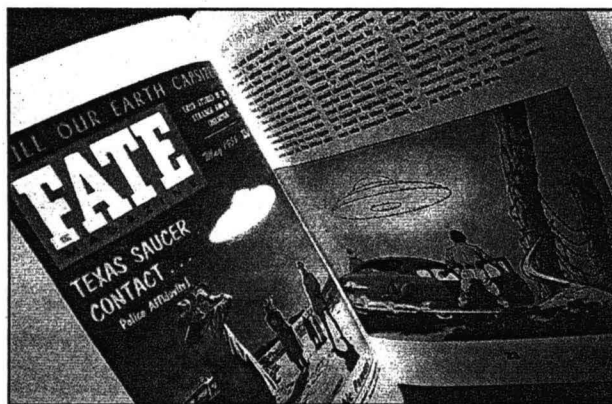
In 100 years, when more is known, the collection will give researchers information dating from the 1940s, Jones said.

"Then old literature takes importance."

Jones' interest in aliens and UFOs started in the 1960s while he was a student at West High School in Columbus. The 62-year-old said he was reading the book *Flying Saucers Have Landed* and became captivated by the pictures.

"They were the neatest pictures — probably fakes, but it got your attention," he said of the book written in the mid-1950s.

Though his interest fluctuated throughout the years, he returned to UFOs in the early 1990s. Through subscriptions and published works, Jones acquired a



FRED SQUILLANTE | DISPATCH PHOTOS

The books in Ohio State's collection range from difficult-to-believe tales, such as the alien invasion depicted here, to UFO encounters that are more plausible.

vast amount of information on the subject.

Needing a larger place to store his collection, he contacted Ohio State. The collection, or as Jones refers to it, "my closet," is so large that it is hard to get an accurate count of materials. The OSU depository on Kenny Road houses the majority of the collection, Griffith said.

Jones, a member of the board of directors of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies in Chicago — Hynek once was an OSU astronomer — said he has lost track of the items he has donated.

The Roundtown UFO Society of Circleville has contributed its quarterly newsletter to the collection since the early 1990s.

"We have been under

observation for many, many years," said director Pete Hartinger, who added that he saw a UFO in the late 1950s.

Hartinger founded the society, of which Jones is a member, in 1989 to discuss "one of the biggest stories there is, to put it mildly."

The organization works to document UFO sightings, raise public awareness and serve as a means for exchanging information between members, "ufologists," and those with more intimate UFO experiences.

The OSU collection encompasses a wide spectrum of topics. Interested in crop circles? Check out *Circles of Note: A Reader's Guide to the Crop Circle Phenomenon*.

Wondering about the connection between religion and

UFOs? There's *Flying Saucers in the Bible*.

Australian Aboriginal Culture and Possible UFO Connections, *Tom Slick and the Search for the Yeti* and *UFO Healings* round out a diverse offering.

Although each piece is not necessarily rare, the collection is not circulated in order to keep it in good quality. The rare-books division practices strict security precautions to protect it and other collections.

Visitors must first request to see a piece of the collection. Then they are buzzed into Room 327 — the Thurber Reading Room — must sign in, show ID, hang their bags on a coat rack and use only pencils while perusing one book at a time.

The same goes for reading Thurber or Chaucer.

Although the UFO collection attracts visitors from around the globe, Jones notes, "It's not the best in the world."

Like Jones, Griffith said the collection will be more valuable in the future.

For now, the Jones collection continues to grow, allowing the curious few to learn about things that seldom reach the airwaves.

"It's a perspective that I'd rather not lose. A broader vision that's a lot more than the confines of a neighborhood, state or country," abductee LaVigne said.

"It's a window to something that most people don't have, but it's too scary for the media to deal with."

Curious? Check out *The Media and UFOs* or *Media Cover-Up: Then and Now*.

msomerson@dispatch.com

UINTAH BASIN STANDARD, Roosevelt, UT - Aug. 24, 2004

DOCUMENTARY ON "MYSTERIOUS UTAH"

Film producer & UFO Hunters head to Basin

Utah UFO hunters will lead film producer to "hot" locations for seeing the unnatural.

By Phil Johnson

UFO hunters are heading to the Uintah Basin next month to guide a Utah filmmaker to areas where oral and written history shows there has been some rather strange occurrences in the past. As for extras needed in the production, humans need not apply.

"We'll plan on the extraterrestrials to fill those rolls," said Dave Rosenfeld who heads Utah UFO Hunters, a group of about 40 paranormal enthusiasts.

Film producer Ryan Emerson believes that what he will find in Duchesne and Uintah counties during a month of taping will help provide enough substantial footage to

produce a two-hour documentary he has titled, "Mysterious Utah."

"Utah is one of the hottest states in the nation for reports of unidentified flying objects (UFOs), signs of Big Foot and unexplained patterns created in grain fields," said Emerson, president of Fine Arts Film Studios in Nephi.

"The Uintah Basin is said to be the best part of the state for observing paranormal (unnatural) phenomena. We'll cover the array of phenomena recorded in Utah. We will spend about a month in the Uintah Basin, focusing on the NIDS (National Institute of Discovery Science) research station. We'll also spend some time getting acquainted with the area and other filming possibilities," Emerson said.

The documentary production team will arrive in the Basin about Sept. 15.

Emerson and Rosenfeld first became acquainted over the Internet. While surfing the net after moving to Nephi a few years ago from Illinois, Emerson and his wife Zelda discov-



HOPING FOR A CLOSE ENCOUNTER — Film makers are fascinated by documentation collected on paranormal incidents in Utah which included sightings of UFOs in the Uintah Basin (top) and Wolf Creek (bottom).

ered www.aliendave.com a website operated by Rosenfeld. They were fascinated by the documentation Rosenfeld and his group collected on paranormal incidents in Utah which

included sightings of UFOs, Big Foot, unexplainable lights of various shapes, animal depredations, unusual figures created in grainfields and strange animals.

In the mid-1960s and early 1970s, UFO sightings, cattle mutilations and Big Foot sightings were the talk of the town in places like Roosevelt, Fort Duchesne, Myton, Duchesne and Vernal.

By the 1980s sightings and reports of the unexplained had dwindled but Rosenfeld believes there is still a lot going on in the Basin — particularly on a former cattle ranch located between Fort Duchesne and Randlett. The 480 acres, known as the Sherman Ranch, was the site of reported cattle mutilations, strange depressions in the ground and unexplained circles of matted grass.

In 1996 Terry and Gwen Sherman sold their ranch to the Las Vegas-based National Institute of Discovery Science (NIDS). Scientists and researchers employed by NIDS established a field research station at the old Sherman Ranch in an attempt to observe and if possible, scientifically substantiate claims involving the reported unexplained phenomenon. NIDS is privately funded by Las Vegas real estate tycoon Robert M. Bigelow.

Exactly what kind of research has gone on at the Uintah County site is a mystery in itself. In the late 1990s NIDS sent letters out more than once to area cattlemen requesting they report any unusual or unexplained cattle deaths or mutilations to them so NIDS scientists could conduct research — all at NIDS expense. How-

ever, today NIDS Fort Duchesne observation location is silent and NIDS Las Vegas headquarters did not return a phone call by press time.

According to Rosenfeld, in 2002 and 2003 members of his group were able to observe interesting phenomena near the NIDS site in Fort Duchesne.

"On one occasion we spotted a lot of small blue lights moving about. They were not confined to the private property. I was able to get within a foot of one, then it disappeared," Rosenfeld stated.

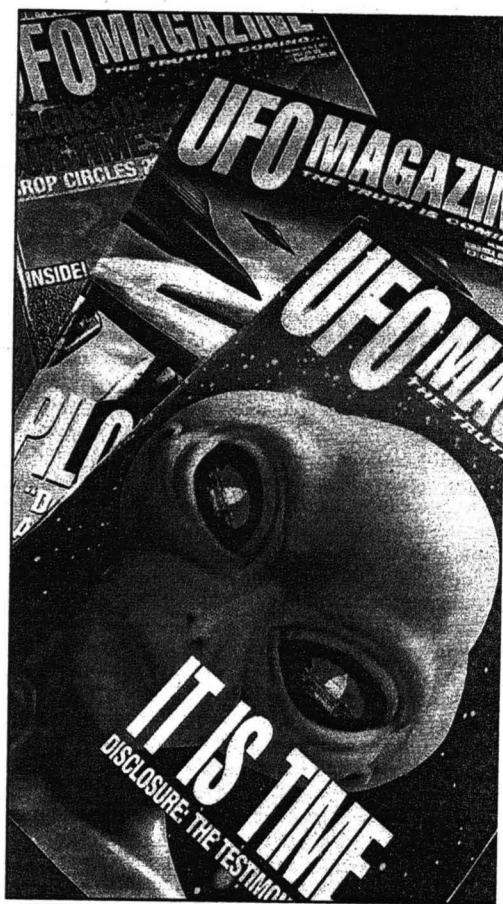
For several years, Pete Pickup of Randlett worked for NIDS tracking down reports of unusual sightings and occurrences. However when contacted recently by the *Standard*, Pickup said he "has no association with the organization nor interest in

what it is doing."

Rosenfeld said he has been denied access to the old Sherman Ranch, but has discovered a vantage point where he and fellow observers have a good view of the property.

"Bigelow and his local caretakers will not let us on the ranch so we have found a spot on public land where we can observe some of the goings on," he said. "I think the possibility of getting some good video tape in the Basin is excellent."

The Emersons give video versions of their products to libraries and schools, or sell them at cost. The videos are not available commercially,



The UFO collection at Ohio State is one of the largest collections of its kind in the country and includes many copies of *UFO Magazine*.

Region rich in UFO lore

By JAMES BAKER
Staff Writer

It was late one Thursday morning, and Peter Geremia had to keep his comments brief. An old friend was going to be buried in Exeter in a short while, and he didn't want to be late for the service.

"Betty Hill was a great lady," said Geremia, director of the New Hampshire chapter of the Mutual UFO Network.

"She had a way about her that credibility not only to her own UFO experience, but to the entire UFO phenomenon."

Hill, 85, a Portsmouth resident who

died recently after a battle with lung cancer, became an international celebrity in the early 1960s when she and her husband Barney claimed to have been abducted by aliens in the White Mountains while returning home from a trip to Canada. Their story became public when a Boston newspaper published transcripts of her encounter related while she was under hypnosis.

Geremia said that despite Betty Hill's credibility, he doubts whether her death will have an impact on whether people

ly assuming the role of official debunker of UFO's for the U.S. government before disbanding in 1969.

During its existence, Project Blue Book was unable to explain 701 reports, including the Exeter sighting, which later became the subject of the book, "Incident at Exeter" by John G. Fuller.

At approximately 2 a.m., 18-year-old Norman Muscarello was hitchhiking home when he first noticed an unusual light in the sky. As the light drew closer, Muscarello could see an elliptical-shaped object he later described to authorities as being 90 feet in diameter with a row of red lights around it.

As the object hovered above him, Muscarello took the opportunity to run to a nearby house. Finding nobody home, Muscarello flagged down a passing car driven by a middle-aged couple who drove him to the

believe in UFOs.

"Her abduction gained a great deal of notoriety, but there have been many other UFO incidents — many of them right here in New England."

On July 24, 1951, 10 years before the Hills' alleged encounter, New Hampshire's first recorded UFO sighting took place in Portsmouth when two military personnel reported seeing a gray, 200-foot-long tubular object with fins at one end flying at 2,000 feet at a speed of approximately 1,000 miles per hour.

Over the course of the next 50 years, at least 50 more sightings were reported in the Granite State, none more famous than the one that took place in Exeter on Sept. 3, 1965.

Details of the incident were recorded in Project Blue Book, a 21-year Air Force documentation of the UFO phenomenon. Starting in 1948, the group investigated 12,600 reports, eventual-

Exeter Police Station.

At about 3 a.m., Muscarello and Exeter Police Officer Eugene Bertrand returned to the scene where the incident began. As the two men walked into an open field in the direction of a horse corral, an object began to rise from behind two pine trees, lighting the whole area with a reddish hue.

After hovering for a short period of time about 100 feet above the ground, the object suddenly took off at a rapid rate of speed and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

Bertrand, who had been in the Air Force for four years and knew military aircraft, would later insist the object was like nothing he had ever seen before.

Neighboring Maine and Massachusetts have had their fair share of UFO sightings as well. Dating back to March 1945 through 2001, 64 sightings were reported in Maine to the National UFO Reporting Center, none of which were adequately explained by authorities.

In nearby Newburyport, Mass., two sightings were reported in recent years, neither of which were explained.

On Dec. 23, 1998, a witness reported seeing two green fireballs — one directly above the other — that descended perpendicular to the horizon before disappearing below the tree line.

Ten months later, another witness reported having observed a very bright light over the water where the Merrimack River meets the Atlantic Ocean. The light, which the witness described as being three times brighter than the brightest star in the sky, moved slowly from left to right about 30 degrees above the horizon before suddenly vanishing.

Are each of these sightings evidence that alien civilization

"What we have here is an abduction program, a breeding program, which accounts for all the reproductive activity that we see, and a hybridization program, which is why people (in regression hypnosis) see hybrids all the time — as babies, as toddlers, as adolescents, and then as adults."

— DAVID JACOBS,

Author of 'The Threat: What the Aliens Really Want and How They Plan to Get It'

exists and is visiting earth?

That depends on who you ask. Kenneth Olum, a research professor at the Institute of Cosmology at Tufts University in Medford, Mass., says he's skeptical about any reports from people who claim they've observed a UFO.

"These reports should not be treated as reliable evidence. Effects in the atmosphere can create these odd sightings, and in many cases, that's what people are seeing."

But the scientist in him won't allow Olum to categorically say that aliens don't exist.

"On the contrary, the mathematical odds would strongly suggest there are alien civilizations out there, but they're not here observing us," he said.

Meet the new boss

David Jacobs would disagree. He's never met Betty Hill, but has interviewed many like her.

An associate professor of history at Temple University, Jacobs began researching the controversy over unidentified flying objects in America back in the mid 1960s.

The author of numerous books on the subject, Jacobs has conducted more than 900 hypnotic regressions with individuals who claimed to have been abducted.

In an interview with Omni magazine several years ago, Jacobs discussed his third book, "The Threat: What the Aliens Really Want and How They Plan to Get It."

In the book, Jacobs concludes through feedback he received from his subjects that aliens are not only visiting earth, but are here on a specific mission.

"What we have here is an abduction program, a breeding program, which accounts for all the reproductive activity that we see, and a hybridization program, which is why people (in regression hypnosis) see hybrids all the time — as babies, as toddlers, as adolescents, and then as adults."

"And then finally, I think this is all leading to an integration program in which ultimately these hybrids, who look very human, will be integrating into this society. And who will eventually, I assume, be in control here because they do have super-



File photo

BETTY HILL holds a model of an extraterrestrial in 1991.

Recent passings include notable UFO believers

A number of notable UFO advocates have passed on in 2004, among them have been President Ronald Reagan, Astronaut Gordon Cooper, social worker Betty Hill, Harvard University psychiatrist Dr. John Mack, millionaire Laurance Rockefeller, England's UFO Magazine publisher Graham W. Birdsall and Diplomat and Flying Saucer Review Magazine publisher Gordon Creighton, also from England.

Ron and Nancy Reagan reported two UFO encounters, one while flying above California and one while driving down a California highway. President Reagan spoke on "The alien threat" in five of his last seven talks to various national and international organizations.

Astronaut Cooper chased UFOs while flying over Europe and later revealed movie films and still photographs taken of a domed saucer with tripod landing gears that landed in a restricted zone at Edwards Air Force Base in California. Cooper also testified on the reality of UFOs on a global scale during herings on the subject before the UN in 1978.

Another key figure in ufology was Betty Hill, who was abducted and then given a physical examination, along with her husband Barney in the White Mountains of New Hampshire in 1961. A best-selling book in 12 languages titled "The Interrupted Journey" was followed by an NBC movie titled, "The UFO Incident."

Dr. John Mack of Harvard University won the Pulitzer Prize with his biography of T. E. Laurence (Laurance of Arabia) in 1977. Psychiatrist Mack began to research and

investigate purported extraterrestrial abductions in many global countries, as well as in the USA. As a result, he published two books on the UFO topic. They were titled, "Abduction" in 1994 and "Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters" in 1999.

Millionaire Laurance Rockefeller invested much of his funding on scientific studies of the physical evidence for UFOs, peer group reviews of UFO reports worldwide and published "The Best Evidence Available," which was mailed to world leaders.

Graham Birdsall, a young man, published the bi-monthly UFO Magazine, circulated worldwide at Barnes & Noble Bookstores. He also sponsored worldwide scientific UFO symposiums for a number of years.

Another publisher and diplomat in England who knew how to translate 13 languages and published the worldwide Flying Saucer Review quarterly for 55 years recently died. This journal is still being published and circulates monthly.

GEORGE D. FAWCETT
Lincolnton

Fawcett is founder of the UFO organization, MUFON-NC, Inc.

rior technology and superior physiological abilities that we do not have. We would therefore become sort of second class citizens."

As sure as Jacobs is of his theory, other experts believe regression hypnosis is unreliable at best, and offer no proof that aliens exist.

In a recent telephone interview, Pamela Freyd, executive director of The False Memory Syndrome Foundation in Philadelphia, said people can sincerely and truly come to believe things that may or may not be true.

"Our findings suggest alien abductions are the product of similarly based practitioners who ask their clients leading questions during therapy."

"Memories are reconstructed from bits and fragments and reinterpretations; they're not videotape. In other words, hypnosis is not a reliable tool and memory is not a fixed thing. People can recall what they want to recall or what they're encouraged to recall, even if the events never occurred."

Having said that, Freyd said she would never totally discount the possibility of the existence of alien life.

"I think it would be wonderful if it were true. Unfortunately right now, science fiction movies are our best bet for a close encounter."

The search goes on

Actually, the best hope for a conclusive answer may lie in the research being done at the SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) Institute in Mountain View, California.

In the past there have been several unexplained intriguing signals detected in SETI experiments.

The most famous of these was

the "Wow" signal picked up at the Ohio State University Big Ear Observatory on the night of Aug. 15, 1977.

As on every other night, Big Ear was searching the skies for an alien signal and recording its observations. But as he was going over the printout sheet, Jerry Ehman, a professor at Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio, noticed a string of characters and numbers reading, "6EQUJ5."

Not only was the signal extremely strong, researchers concluded it almost certainly came from outside the Earth.

In the ensuing 27 years, numerous attempts to relocate the "Wow" signal have been made but to no avail. But that won't dissuade scientists from continuing the search.

In a 2002 issue of the Astrophysical Journal, veteran UFO signal hunter Robert Gray had this to say when asked about the possibility of life being, "out there."

"Over the last half century, scientists have developed a theory of cosmic evolution that predicts that life is a natural phenomenon likely to develop on planets with suitable environmental conditions. Scientific evidence shows that life arose on Earth relatively quickly, suggesting that life will occur on similar planets orbiting sun-like stars."

"Additionally, one should keep in mind that we are only one planet around a very ordinary star. There are roughly 400 billion other stars in our galaxy and nearly 100 billion other galaxies. It would be extraordinary if we were the only thinking beings in all these enormous realms."

Related Web sites:
www.extraterrestrial-life.net
www.space.com/searchfor-life

Lawton

Crop circle not a prank, group says

By Rosemary Parker
388-8543

rporter@kalamazoo Gazette.com

LAWTON — They aren't saying what made hundreds of cornstalks in John Polomcak's field lay over in one direction, in the shape of a circle joined by a square.

But it wasn't caused by human pranksters, volunteer researchers have concluded.

Investigators "do not believe, based on their field work, that the Lawton formation was mechanically made by people," said Jeffrey Wilson, director of the Independent Crop Circle Researchers' Association, a group of enthusiasts who study crop circles, which are unexplained patterns in fields.

He said that statistically verified tests showed the flattened plants — which form a circle 32 feet in diameter and a square about five rows wide and 12 feet long — had "elongated growth

nodes compared to the 'normal' standing plants that were in the same field. That kind of change is unhoaxable."

Wilson, who has a master's degree in general science, said it may be Christmas before the group's tests of the field's soils and seed germination are completed.

The group is stretched thin visiting other crop circles that have been reported this summer, some as far away as Texas.

Wilson said he has collected reports of crop circles in the United States from as far back as the 1800s. Of the 250 or so that have been reported since the 1990s, about one in five clearly have been hoaxes created by pranksters, he said; another fifth, like the Lawton formation, the group believes were not created mechanically by human activity. The rest, he said, are inconclusive.

Last year the team made a similar conclusion about a formation in a Howell-area cornfield. The next day, a local radio station's morning show hosts claimed responsibility; both stories were reported in Detroit papers. The station later retracted its claim, staff there confirmed, and Wilson's group stands by its judgment on that crop circle.

Wilson said his group does not speculate as to the possible cause of the pattern.

"There are half a dozen hypotheses out there and we hesitate to speculate further. None has enough evidence to favor one over the other," Wilson said.

"We acknowledge people can attempt to approximate a crop circle," he said. "We are saying we now have the capability of telling the difference between the two. It is not just our opinion, it is our analysis. We have statistical data."

Jane Polomcak, wife of 71-year-old John Polomcak who rents the land for farming, said she is happy to have Wilson's opinion. Since the formation was discovered in August at the intersection of 72nd Avenue and County Road 358, it has drawn a steady stream of visitors, curious about the odd pattern in an otherwise healthy stand of corn.

"Every time I'd go by, two or three cars would be stopped there," Jane Polomcak said. "We

have so many people asking us" about it.

She initially thought the crop circle was created by vandals with snowshoes. But when she tested that theory, it didn't work because the corn stalks "break off," she said.

Though she was once a skeptic herself, Jane Polomcak admits to getting a bit irked when neighbors tease that the couple must have had a hand in creating the formation. "We milk 150 cows," she said. "Who has time to go out there and gently lay corn over?"

She's heard from "a lot of people from Marcellus who called me and said they had seen strange lights in the Marcellus area (and) they had called police" on Aug. 7 or 8, about the time the corn was damaged, she said. "They said it was large beams coming down."

Neither the Cass County Sheriff's Department nor Marcellus Township has a record of such calls.

The crop circle hasn't been visible for several weeks, ever since a young woman from the area drove through the field with her truck and "did donuts," Jane Polomcak said.

"She told one neighbor she thought one of the aliens got her pregnant," Polomcak said, adding the young woman "has had her problems for a long time."

Polomcak sighed about the demise of the crop circle.

"I wished it wouldn't have been ruined," she said.

Paranormal investigator to speak in Winona

by CYNTHIA PORTER

For Chad Lewis, things that go bump in the night keep him awake until all hours, but not because he's cowering under the covers.

Lewis is a paranormal investigator, a ghost-buster of sorts, and researching unexplained phenomena has consumed a great deal of his free time for the past decade.

Lewis, who calls himself a healthy skeptic, has traveled around the United States and the world performing investigations of unexplained occurrences. Among his travels are visits to Loch Ness, Transylvania, the reportedly haunted tunnels of London and castles of Ireland.

Many of the situations Lewis investigates come with a tale of tragedy or natural phenomenon that supposedly are the instigator of strange happenings. Whether stories of murders, accidents or strange gravitational forces, Lewis said most of the time he ends up debunking the story that goes along with the activity.

What he cannot debunk, Lewis said, is that sometimes strange things happen to people, and the quest to explain or even identify those things is a never-ending challenge.

Using sophisticated equipment, Lewis will often measure the atmospheric conditions present in an area where people

have reported strange phenomena. While he can't tell you definitively what causes it, he can say with certainty, sometimes things aren't exactly as they should be. "We are sometimes able to measure phenomena that can't be explained," he said. "We are picking up atmospheric conditions often associated with paranormal activity and we believe there is a correlation."

Lewis acknowledged that sometimes imaginations come into play on reports of paranormal activity, particularly if there is a tale of intrigue attached to the location.

But sometimes, he said, imaginations appear to have little to do with it. "In many cases we find people are legitimately experiencing some unknown phenomena. Sometimes there are just too many people experiencing it to blame it on imagination," he said.

But the haunting-type of phenomena is just one of the many areas Lewis studies. Another is the occurrence of crop circles, which may be closer to home than some think.

According to Lewis, many crop circles have been discovered in Minnesota and Wisconsin with little fanfare in the public eye. "They are appearing literally in our own back yard," the Eau Claire man said.

After a surge of crop circles discovered in Great Britain fol-

lowed by the confession of a couple of men who said they made them, Lewis said the public may be less inclined to believe the local circles are anything but a hoax.

And some may very well be hoaxes, Lewis said.

But sometimes, he said, investigators turn up data that is impossible to fake. "We take soil samples and crop samples and look for differences between them and a controlled sample," Lewis said, "and we do find differences."

Although researchers cannot explain why, Lewis said some samples will definitely have chemical or compositional differences from the controlled sample.

Whether it is a UFO correlation or some other earth force, Lewis does not know, but he believes some of the circles he has encountered are not caused by two guys with boards on ropes.

Lewis does do a considerable amount of investigation into claims of UFO sightings and sometimes abductions, as well as research on reports of a Bigfoot-type creature spotted in Northern Wisconsin.

Lewis, trained with a master's degree in applied psychology, said he goes into each investigation with an analytical yet open mind. He neither assumes a report is true nor untrue and lets the facts of each situation speak

for themselves.

His investigative services are all volunteer, Lewis said, and he is skeptical of anyone in the business who charges for them. "Most researchers are happy to do it because they are advancing the field with research," he explained. "Most have outside jobs, because this is not really a career option. There's no money in it; I do it for science and curiosity."

Lewis will be one of the presenters at a Strange Phenomena Conference scheduled for Saturday, October 2, at the Winona Art Center.

The conference is sponsored by the Weird Winonans, a paranormal discussion group that meets weekly in Winona.

The other presenter will be Craig Lang, senior field investigator for the Minnesota Mutual UFO Network.

Together, Lewis said, the men will present research on a variety of unexplained phenomena, including regional hauntings, crop circles, anomalous animal reports and UFOs.

The presentation is geared toward those who may not be sure if they believe in such phenomena but are curious about them, Lewis said, and he strives to present good facts in an entertaining way.

The conference is from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and admission is \$8.

Mr. UFO

Valley resident
fascinated by
'little green men'

By Tiffany Malehefski
SPECIAL TO THE INDEX-TRIBUNE

Sonoma is not alone. Every now and then, signs of life from another world can be spotted on its quiet horizon, hovering silently, long enough for a handful of people to see, before vanishing out of sight. Sonoma resident Jim Ledwith has seen them. Maybe you have too.

"There are quite a few sightings in Sonoma," says Ledwith, a self-described "ufologist" with a passion for things not from this earth.

He has visited Area 51— an "infamous" UFO site north of Las Vegas — and subsequently got arrested there.

He has read hundreds of books and articles and has previewed countless programs dedicated to the topic of UFOs and little green men.

"It's kind of been a wild ride of sorts," he said.

Ledwith has attended trainings sponsored by the Center for Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence, a nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the understanding of alien life forms.

On Fridays, he meets with two other extraterrestrial enthusiasts for sushi as they chat about their experiences.

Last month he took his findings to the classroom, presenting for the first time a four-hour Sonoma Valley Adult School class dedicated to the topic of UFOs. The class was well received, and Ledwith is planning to hold another one soon.

When he's not chasing down little green men, he works in real estate out of a law office in San Rafael. He is also an avid train collector — he's

"I don't think I'm going to be the Messiah who is going to bring this message. I've just been invited to this party."

— Jim Ledwith

been honing the hobby since childhood — and he loves gardening in his fruit orchard.

But it's the conviction that alien life has been making pitstops on this planet for eons that really gets Ledwith's motor running. It is an interest that has spanned most of his life.

It all began on a sunny Saturday in July. The year was 1952 and a 7-year-old Jim Ledwith was on vacation with his family on Long Island, N.Y.

Meanwhile, 240 miles away, eight unidentified flying objects were seen floating above the nation's capitol in Washington, D.C. The sighting procured significant media coverage and subsequently left an impact on Ledwith that he remains unable to shake.

He carries a black-and-white photo from that family vacation, which is actually a printout his father was able to make recently, from an 8mm film.

The photo shows Ledwith, his mother and siblings sitting smiling on a grassy field. In the sky above them, a white blur, no bigger than the eraser head on a pencil, floats in the background.

Ledwith, part believer, part skeptic, isn't jumping to conclusions yet, but he can't deny the image's serendipity.

"Even if it's just a piece of lint, what a coincidence," he says.

It is not surprising that Ledwith, like so many others, has made the trek to Roswell, N.M. — a haven for extraterrestrial enthusiasts the world over.

He and his wife decided to visit the notorious town in 1995. They visited Roswell's well-known UFO museum, located inside an old movie theater.

With the obvious tourist draw in Roswell being its rumored alien activity, visitors are usually given guide books by the hotel that maps out various locations where sightings are most likely to occur.

Ledwith and his wife chose a marker number from the guide and sat on the hood of their car, taking in the stars and waiting to see if they would spy what so many others have claimed to have seen.

They wouldn't have to wait long.

From what seemed like out of nowhere a large black object stealthily made its way toward Ledwith and his wife.

"It wasn't motorized. It had to have had an internal combustion engine," Ledwith says.

"It sounded like a tank, low on the ground, and moving very fast."

They would never know for sure what it was because no sooner had they seen the foreign craft, they hopped back into the car and sped off.



Robbi Pengelly/Index-Tribune

VALLEY RESIDENT JIM LEDWITH is passionate about anything related to unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

"We took off like scared rabbits," Ledwith said.

They never took a picture, and didn't even have a video camera to record the encounter, which wound up being more of an asset than a loss.

They also went to scout out Area 51, which is where the U.S. government stages its most top-secret projects and test-drives its most experimental aircraft, such as Lockheed Martin's Skunk Works

or the Stealth bomber.

Some believe it is also where the government test-drives alien aircraft. Area 51 is a hotbed of alien activity, according to Ledwith.

While they had satiated

their desire to sight aliens, Ledwith wanted to drive the perimeter of the Nellis Air Force Range and Nuclear Test Site, which is part of Area 51.

Ledwith just wanted to

touch the chain-link fence that surrounds the site. He never had any intention of entering, and even if he had, any plans to do so would have been quickly squashed.

After only a matter of minutes, an unidentified Jeep Cherokee approached the couple and unidentified agents apprehended them.

They were detained for more than three hours in separate cells and questioned by the agents who never revealed what branch of the government was making the arrest.

Their car was searched.

Nothing was found, no camera, no video recorder.

"That saved our butts," Ledwith says.

The couple was released and given a small souvenir with which to remember the incident: a typed letter bereft of letterhead, names or phone numbers, firmly instructing them to leave the premises immediately.

It was frightening, fun and something he'd rather not repeat.

Ledwith isn't necessarily out to set the record straight and blow the cover off what some believe is the government's best kept secret.

For now, he prefers to keep his "ufology" a passion that he thinks many find engaging.

"I don't think I'm going to be the Messiah who is going to bring this message," Ledwith says. "I've just been invited to this party."

In snubbing professor John Mack's memorial, 'official Harvard' testifies to the power of his brilliant unconventionality

Mack, the life

BY HARVEY A. SILVERGLATE

U NSURPRISINGLY, nobody from "official Harvard" — the administration of Harvard University or of its Medical School — took the podium in Memorial Church last Saturday to give Dr. John Mack the kind of sendoff that this remarkable human being deserved. Oh, plenty of people eulogized the man for his path-breaking work as psychoanalyst, community psychiatrist, humanitarian, medical and political activist, anti-nuke and anti-war organizer, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author (for his remarkable 1976 psychoanalytic biography of T.E. Lawrence, a/k/a Lawrence of Arabia). Some even mentioned the adventurer-clinician's controversial research into mysterious phenomena such as alien abductions and communications with the dead. But other than the Reverend Peter Gomes, who presided over the service and thus indicated the esteem in which Dr. Mack was held by Harvard's head clergyman, no one formally represented the university Mack had served with distinction for four decades.

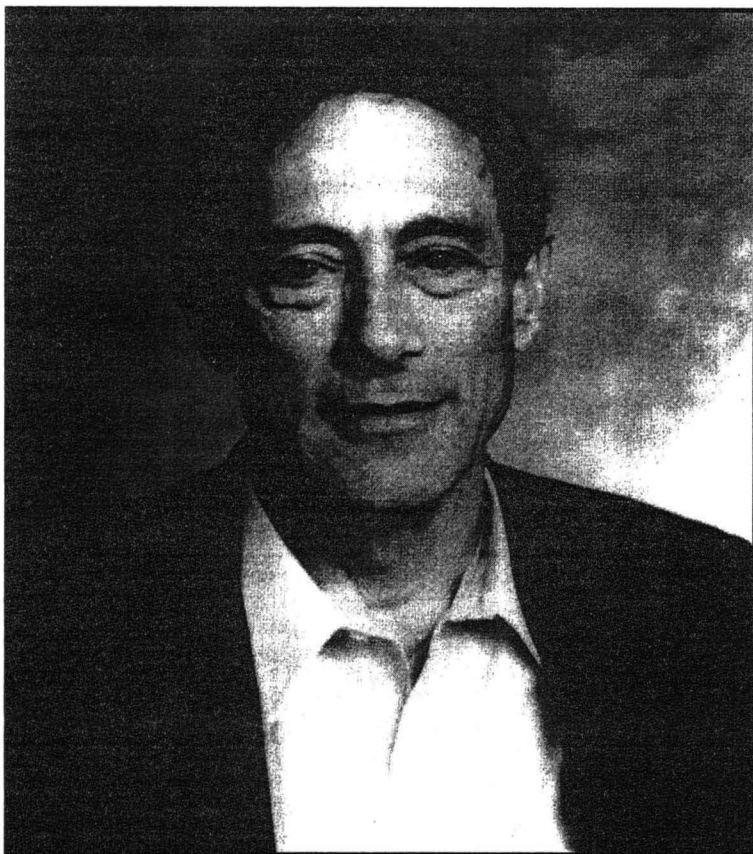
It's no wonder official Harvard absented itself from Mack's leave-taking, given what it had put him through in the mid '90s. At that time, Harvard Medical School convened a committee to review Dr. Mack's work, stacked it with his detractors, and tried to withdraw his tenure — something unprecedented in the university's 368-year history. The university ultimately retreated in defeat in 1995, but the ugly incident hovered in the background of the memorial service for this very un-Harvard sort of genius, who died after being hit by a drunk driver in London in late September, at age 74.

DR. MACK HAD an extraordinary career marked by outside-the-box thinking even before he became interested, in 1990, in the growing body of reports by seemingly sane people who claimed they'd had encounters with alien beings. In the 1960s, he started the modern psychiatry department at Cambridge City Hospital, which became one of the nation's most respected facilities for treating troubled children. In 1983, at Harvard, he founded the Center for Psychology and Social Change, which was recently renamed the Mack Center. Much of his pioneering research was done under the umbrella of the John E. Mack Institute, funded largely by Laurance Rockefeller, grandson of the great oil tycoon. Mack became deeply involved in the movement to rid humanity of nuclear arms, making numerous visits to the world's nuclear powers. Because of his substantial role in the work of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, he was invited to Oslo in 1985, when the organization won the Nobel Peace Prize. His was a full and useful life well-lived.

The sheer range of Dr. Mack's intellectual interests and accomplishments may have played a big part in his trouble with Harvard. It started in June 1994, when Medical School dean Daniel Tosteson appointed emeritus professor Arnold Relman, known for his conservative — indeed, rigid — views on medicine and medical research, to head an administrative committee to investigate Dr. Mack's research. This came shortly after Mack published *Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens* (Scribner's, 1994), in which he analyzed case studies of people who reported experiences with apparent extraterrestrials. Rather than assume the subjects — called "experiencers" — were hallucinating or otherwise insane, Mack concluded that the reports were so widespread

and had such a profound impact on the lives of the experiencers that possibly they were reporting a phenomenon that deserved credence. In order to take it seriously, he pointed out in his introduction to the book, one has to try to "participate in a universe or universes that are filled with intelligences from which we have cut ourselves off, having lost the senses by which we might know them." He called for a new paradigm to replace, or at least supple-

ously stacked against him. The committee's report was scathing in its critique of Mack, ignoring virtually everything that he and his lead lawyer, Boston litigator Roderick MacLeish Jr., had produced not only to support his work and his successful clinical results, but to highlight his right, under principles of academic freedom, to continue his research unhindered by the university. (Disclosure: I served as an informal legal adviser to Mack at the time.)



OUT OF THIS WORLD: Mack's research into alien abductions of humans brought him into conflict with Harvard's narrower thinkers.

ment, the narrow "materialist" scientific method by which Western scientists try to understand the physical world and universe. He suggested, in other words, a new way of looking at reality and of understanding not only the physical but also the spiritual world. In this sense, Mack worked very much in the tradition

John Mack suggested a new way of looking at reality and of understanding not only the physical but also the spiritual world.

of one of Harvard's greatest psychologist-philosophers, William James.

But Harvard's narrower — and narrow-minded — thinkers looked at Mack's approach as violating the medical school's professional-research standards (although in fact it was their world-view that he challenged). Given the opportunity either to renounce his views or to resign from the faculty, Mack instead fought a bitter battle with a committee that was obvi-

Several months after the investigative committee commenced its work, which would ultimately take 15 months, word of this extraordinary inquiry leaked out and spread like wildfire on the then-fledgling medium of the Internet. In some academic and legal circles, Harvard's investigation was viewed not as an effort to uphold intellectual standards of excellence and accuracy, but as something rooted in fear, ignorance, or jealousy of Mack's pursuit of questions that more rigid minds could not or would not comprehend.

The tug-of-war ended not with a bang but a whimper in July 1995, when Dean Tosteson called Mack into his office, had a friendly chat, and handed him a letter urging him to use care in his research but reaffirming Mack's right, under academic freedom, to pursue whatever subjects he wished. What began as an effort to quietly strip Dr. Mack of his tenure and dismiss him from the medical-school faculty (although Harvard denied that was its intent) ended with a highly public victory for the intended victim.

MACK'S BATTLE with Harvard came up repeatedly but obliquely at the memorial service. Mu Soeng, a Buddhist scholar and practitioner who led the assembly in a Buddhist chant, called his friend "a very remarkable human being" who was "part of the Harvard establishment" but who had the ability to "step outside of it." Mack's son, Daniel John Mack, praised his father's openness to new world-views and modalities of treatment, "even at risk to his reputation." The famed psychiatrist (now on the Harvard Medical School faculty) and writer Robert Jay Lifton, a Mack comrade from the anti-nuclear movement, hailed his friend's "arcane explorations of consciousness." Poet, lawyer, and essayist Michael Blumenthal, who was a close friend, noted that "some sought to mock and persecute John Mack for his goodness." Harvard faculty colleague and friend Edward Khantzian referred to the "controversial directions" in which Mack's interests had taken him, and reported, to the knowing laughter of the audience, that 10 days before Mack died he told Khantzian: "If anybody asks, tell them I'm not crazy." A Mack in-law, Jon Ingbar, quipped that "if John had been more careful, he would have allowed his day job [at Harvard Medical School] to act as a cover for his real interests." Raymond Mayo-Smith, educator and board member of the John E. Mack Institute, noted that Mack approached "with an open mind" those who reported alien abductions or communications with the dead — phenomena, he added pointedly, that "took courage" to explore. "How did he come through the stress of those times?" asked Mayo-Smith rhetorically. "He came through it stronger." Those in the audience who knew Mack's history with the Tosteson/Relman Committee understood full well it took real courage for him to fight rather than quietly accept a deal to renounce his controversial work.

People had come to the event to praise John Mack, not to bury Harvard University. But it was noteworthy that nobody from official Harvard offered an eulogy for this remarkable, accomplished, long-time member of the faculty. "Harvard" is quite capable of snubbing even the greatest minds if they don't play the Harvard academic game. In Mack's case, the enlistment of that ignoble tradition was compounded by Harvard's own embarrassing defeat by this man, who challenged its narrow thinking about the nature of knowledge itself.

Then again, Harvard's snub might have a much simpler explanation — one that also accounts for its decision to go after Mack's tenure in the first place — namely, professional jealousy. Most members of the Harvard Medical School, while renowned as medical researchers and practitioners, in the end make a rather modest splash in the ocean of life. This is especially true of psychoanalysts who, like Mack, came out of the conservative Freudian movement and the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute. They do not start community psychiatric centers for disturbed kids, and distinguished research institutes that explore fields of knowledge others fear to tread. They do not write Pulitzer Prize-winning books and help start Nobel Prize-winning organizations seeking to save the planet from nuclear holocaust. They do not, in other words, shake up their world. Official Harvard, with its \$22 billion endowment, looked pretty small last Saturday amid the large crowd of admirers who came to pay their respects to a great and large man.

Harvey A. Silverglate, a regular contributor to "Freedom Watch," can be reached at has@harveysilverglate.com.

55th Meeting of the Mutual UFO Network of NC, Inc. Set for Charlotte

The Mutual UFO Network of North Carolina, Inc (Mufon-NC) will hold its 55th quarterly meeting at the Charlotte campus of Pfeiffer University on Park Road at Mockingbird Lane on Saturday, November 13, 2004 from 11:30am through 4:00pm.

Two internationally known UFO investigators are slated for this event State Director George E. Lund III of Charlotte announced today.

Brian Boldman of Belevs Creek will give his presentation on "Angel Hair" a white fibrous substance seen to fall to earth from maneuvering UFOs overhead. This residue is related to UFO propulsion systems. Boldman will be giving scientific analysis and historical cases from the US Air Force's "Project Blue Book", the emphasis will be on UFO waves from 1954-1973.

MUFON members, non-members and

guests will also be on hand from across the state to hear Captain Jim Courant of Tega Cay, South Carolina. Jim is a commercial pilot for a major airline with over 21,000 flying hours. His interest in the UFO phenomenon began in 1964 when he joined NICAP in Washington, DC. He has served as a consultant for various TV network specials about UFOs. He has assisted many people with high-level clearances in government and the military. He has lectured at many UFO conferences around the world including Australia, Russia, and the Academy of Sciences of China. His illustrated presentation will include video films and documented UFO

reports.

George D. Fawcett, a veteran UFO investigator for over six decades, founded the MUFON-NC organization in 1989. Mr. Fawcett will also have several large exhibits on UFOs and their occupants. In addition, he will give our printed handouts to the audience, present some door prizes and give his recommendations on current UFO books, videos, etc. Fawcett resides in Lincolnton, North Carolina.



FOREIGN NEWS

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

NOW, Delta/Surrey, B.C., Canada - Oct. 27, 2004 CR: G. Conway

MYSTERY/Researchers can't explain the growing phenomenon of crop circles – and neither can the skeptics

'Croppies' showcase geometric wonders

Robert Nichol is on a mission to erase the skepticism surrounding crop circles, those geometric wonders that have somehow gouged the world's grain fields for centuries.

Over the past decade, the creations have been increasingly larger in size, greater in number and more complex, inspiring Nichol, a veteran filmmaker based in Gibsons, to document the phenom-

non in the feature-length *Star Dreams*.

A screening of the film Friday (Oct. 29) at Surrey's Days Inn hotel will be followed by a Q&A session with Nichol and crop-circle researchers Neil Olsen and Paul Anderson.

Material for the film was gathered by Nichol starting in 2001, when he jetted to rural England for a closer look at a few of the world's 10,000 crop circles, some of them 1,000 feet long and of dazzling design.

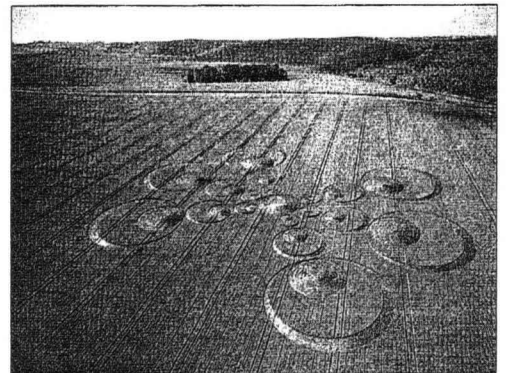
The name is actually a misnomer, because crop circles are now shaped like stars, giant ants, aliens and other geometric forms.

The phenomenon is expanding to include more areas on the planet, says Nichol in the commentary section of the DVD.

"It's clear that many, many people are now coming to (this) phenomenon, taking it seriously, being enthralled by it, realizing we're being communicated to by a higher intelligence,

trying to decipher the meaning of the symbols, and what it means to humanity as a whole. That is the basic purpose of *Star Dreams*, and it seems to have fulfilled its objective in capturing the public imagination and bringing people into this phenomenon."

The 77-minute film entertains with aerial footage of crop circles, and includes some illuminating interviews with researchers, known as "croppies." While the images are often stunning, the end-



Dazzling crop circles are featured in *Star Dreams* film.

'UFO' set to return

AN ARTIST will scale Coniston Old Man tomorrow morning (Saturday) to reveal the curious sight of an unidentified flying object, reports Andy Bloxham. Bristol-based Julian Claxton will head up the river valley footpath to Little Arrow Moor to recreate what is held to be the first UFO photograph ever taken in Britain.

Using a fishing rod, a wooden frame and a silvery shape, he will attempt to recreate a picture taken on the fell in February 1954 by Torver teenager Stephen Darbishire.

The event is part of the FRED art project, run by Kirkby Stephen artists' group Fold, which has seen a tree 'dressed' in Kendal and 125 fence posts in Kirkby Lonsdale decorated with shoes.

Mr Claxton said: "What I'm trying to do is adapt various methods that have been suggested to me by people ranging from UFO experts to local people as to how Stephen Darbishire might have made these photographs in the first place."

Although Mr Claxton believed some people had seen paranormal sights, he claimed this photograph was probably faked and the effect was achieved by painting on to the glass of the lens.

Speaking to *The Westmorland Gazette*, well-known artist Mr Darbishire, now 63 and living in Whinfell, wished the artist luck but said the encounter with the flying saucer had definitely not been faked.

"We just went up the fell and took the photograph of it. I was with my cousin at the time. This thing, whatever it was, appeared, we took a photograph of it. I fell over the camera at one point. When we took it down, everybody laughed at us. I've no idea what it was."

He said the publication of the photograph, encouraged by his father,



TOP: The UFO photo taken by a then teenager Stephen Darbishire.

LEFT: Stephen Darbishire.

RIGHT: Julian Claxton.



generated years of unwelcome attention. "For two years, every weekend was taken up with people coming and sitting on the lawn. Most of the people who came were sort of on some religious trip, that's the best way to put it. To a 14-year-old, it was a bit of a joke."

Mr Darbishire said the attention was so intense, he changed his story to say the photograph was faked: "I said it

was a hoax to get people away but they said 'you've been got at'. They wanted to believe. I should have dropped it like a stone."

For believers and sceptics alike, if you see a mysterious silvery object floating over Coniston on Saturday, this time, at least, the truth is definitely out there, and it's with an artist called Julian.

less New Age-y soundtrack annoys with plucked harp strings and blowing flute.

By film's end, even serious skeptics will begin to question exactly how these massive geometric shapes are created.

"We're obviously being communicated to by a higher intelligence, with superior technology, because no one knows how these circles are actually laid down in the crops," says Nichol. "We're dealing with advanced mathematics that only a small handful of scientists and mathematicians can decipher."

The filmmaker admits that some crop circles have been the work of pranksters – but only a

small percentage, he says.

"The argument that they're all hoaxed, I think, has a lot to do with the fact that people can't accept this remarkable phenomena – it's outside their reality construct.... It's like a defence mechanism. They just can't handle it, so they have to find some way of explaining it away rationally, and most of them can't – there's no way to explain it."

■ The screening of *Star Dreams* is 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 29 at Days Inn hotel, 9850 King George Hwy. Admission is \$10 at the door. For more details about the film click on www.stardreams-cropcircles.com.

CANNOCK CHASE POST, Wolverhampton, England - Sept. 2, 2004

Surge in UFOs seen

UFO spotters are dealing with a flood of calls from Chase residents who have spotted strange, dancing lights in the night sky.

And now Staffordshire UFO Group has evidence of the mysterious phenomenon, after a member of the public videoed the dancing lights over Lichfield Cathedral.

Last month The Post exclusively revealed that there had been a string of reports of orange balls in the sky over Hednesford and Heath Hayes. UFO group head Graham Allen believed skywatchers were seeing ball lightning.

The first 'dancing lights' report came on August 7 at 9.2pm over the Huntingdon and Stafford area. Later on the same night, there were more reports of UFO sightings over the Cannock area, Mr Allen told The Post.

At around 2am, on August 8, the same lights were seen over Lichfield Cathedral and were captured on video by an astonished onlooker. The display lasted for about an hour – and Mr Allen has ruled out the ball lightning as this natural occurrence doesn't last that long.

There were two other sightings in the Shenstone area at the same time," said

EXCLUSIVE
by Hannah Hughes

Mr Allen. "It looks like a pathway, all the towns are connected and the UFOs have travelled in a straight direction", he added.

Mr Allen told The Post that the strange sightings are being looked into, and is keen to hear from anyone who has seen anything similar.

The Staffordshire UFO group hold meetings every month at St Leonard's Sports and Social Club, Stafford.

This month's meeting will be held on the September 16.

The key speaker this month is Larry Warren, a former American Airforce Patrol Officer who was involved with the RAF Bentwaters sighting in the 80s, where a UFO landed close to the base.

The meeting will be 'ticket only', and they can be purchased for £6 from Mr Allen on 01889 585149.

FILEY & HUNMANBY MERCURY, Scarborough, England - Sept. 4, 2004

Centre is packed out for UFO gathering

VIDEO footage of alleged sightings of UFOs shown at a public meeting in Filey has had a major impact, according to local investigator Russ Kellett.

Mr Kellett, of Filey, said people had to be turned away

from the recent gathering at the Evron Centre, which was attended by a BBC film crew and enthusiasts from across the region. The meeting even brought an international response.

"It's woken people up," he said. "We've been stuck for quite some time with so-called experts sitting on computers. Now we've got people at the grassroots level actually filming these things."

"Since the meeting, we've been inundated with e-mails from people wanting us to make the evidence public."

Mr Kellett said he would

definitely be organising a second meeting, possibly in Scarborough. "We've had a fantastic response. It was more than a full house. The BBC was filming for three and a half hours, from start to finish. The media attention has been quite astounding."

Mr Kellett, who has been collating evidence for some years and believes the videos show conclusive evidence that UFOs exist, said he had even been contacted by someone from Japanese TV.

"The crop circles in Wiltshire make the tourist industry millions of pounds, and the same thing is sup-

posed to be happening in Bonnybridge (Scotland's UFO 'capital'). But we've actually got the video."

Mr Kellett also received two independent reports of unusual lights in the skies above Bridlington and Filey the night after the meeting, on August 24. The witnesses both saw a white object, possibly triangular, with red lights, and he is keen to hear from anyone else who may have seen something similar.

Mr Kellett may be contacted on 07901 597743 or by writing to PO Box 25, Filey, YO14 9YE.

Chase UFO mystery continues

Strange light in the skies

by Michael Bradley

UFOs are filling our skies, with a report of a third sighting of an unidentified object over Cannock in two weeks.

Last week, The Post told you how a mysterious orange globe, the size of a mini bus, had been spotted hovering over Hednesford before speeding away towards Stafford.

Now, less than seven days later, readers have contacted your favourite weekly paper to report the latest mysterious sighting.

Housewife Caroline Cliff, 48, of Heath Hayes, says she could hardly miss the glowing orange ball of light above her house on Sunday as she drove home.

She said on Monday: "I'd read about last week's sightings in The Chase Post, and much as I am interested in these things, I didn't go out of my way to look for any little green men.

"But on Sunday evening (August 15), I saw something.

"I was driving home from my mother's house in Fradley, it was 9.45pm.

"I looked up as I approached my house and it was there in

the sky, just like in the paper - a huge orange light.

"It was lower than an aeroplane and wasn't making any noise. It was moving quite fast, but it was clearly in view for a good ten seconds or so. I wish I'd had my camera with me."

Caroline, who has lived in Heath Hayes and Cannock all

of her life, says it is not the first time her family has experienced lights in the skies.

"My husband and daughter saw something similar over our estate four years ago," she said.

"But because no-one else mentioned it to the papers, and they never read about it, they felt a bit odd about reporting it."

Hot phone lines for UFO expert after sighting

by Andy Richardson

A UFO expert says he has been inundated with people ringing up and reporting seeing an orange sphere hovering over Heath Hayes last week.

Graham Allen, head of Staffordshire UFO Group, says his phone has been red hot with Chase folk offering witness sightings of the phenomena.

The Post revealed last week how an orange sphere of light - the size of a minibus - zoomed off at incredible speed as it hovered over Hednesford Football Club on Sunday August 8.

The ball of light was stationary at first but then suddenly moved at speed towards Stafford.

Mr Allen believed there was a rational explanation for the strange phenomena believing it could have been ball lightning caused by the recent storm conditions.

Although extremely rare, ball lightning has been documented over Cannock Chase - most recently during freak, near hurricane conditions in July 2001.

'People are saying they are seeing these balls of light regularly over the Chase'

Interestingly, such brightly coloured spheres are also associated with triangular shaped UFOs, which have been spotted a number of times over our area.

Mr Allen told The Post: "The phone has rung non-stop with people reporting having seen the orange ball of light. There have been a lot of reports between 9.20pm and 9.35pm on Sunday August 8 at Cannock and Stafford. People are contacting me saying they are seeing these balls of light regularly over the Chase."

POST, Stafford, England - Aug. 19, 2004

Ball of light mystery

New mystery surrounds reports of a mysterious orange ball seen in the skies above Stafford earlier this month.

UFO spotters originally believed the sightings may have been glimpses of the rare ball-lightning phenomenon. But after further investigations, Graham Allen, head of Staffordshire UFO Group, has his doubts.

Mr Allen told the Post: "I have done some investigation into ball lightning and what people in Stafford described was very different.

"Ball lightning moves very quickly, winding through roof tops. It only lasts a few seconds and then disappears."

But according to Mr Allen, residents in Stafford, as well as Rugeley, Penkridge, Lichfield and Cannock, had witnessed something quite different.

Eagle-eyed residents saw an orange ball, the size of a mini-bus, which had a triangular shape at its centre.

Exclusive by Lynn Grainger

Witnesses had reported the ball was silent, stationary and in one instance remained in the same location in Lichfield for more than an hour.

He added: "I have now been given video footage of the object in Lichfield, hovering over the cathedral and it is very convincing.

Mr Allen added: "Since your article last week we have been inundated with reports of sightings in the Stafford area - the phone has literally been ringing off the hook."

He said that the calls had corroborated sightings made in the Weston Downs and Butts Crescent areas of Stafford between 9.20pm and 9.45pm on Sunday August 8.

The Staffordshire UFO Group are meeting tonight (Thursday) at St Leonard's Sports and Social Club, St Leonard's Avenue, Stafford. Graham Allen can be contacted on 01889 585149.

HEBDEN BRIDGE TIMES, Todmorden, Halifax, England - July 30, 2004

Appeal follows view of strange lights

A UFOLOGIST is appealing to anyone in the Upper Valley who might have seen strange lights in the sky recently to contact him.

His appeal follows two weeks of reported sightings from "more than a dozen" people in the Todmorden area.

Steve Balon, director of the Manchester-based Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena, said the sightings had included an amber-coloured, cigar-shaped object in the sky, and a multi-coloured moving sphere.

Mr Balon can be reached on 01942 683141 and all calls are in confidence.

City gripped by UFO sightings

By MIKE HALLOWELL

RECENTLY I related to Bizarre readers the chilling tale of Uri Sakhov, a retired cook who lived in Upper Nazareth, Israel.

On September 16, 1996, Sakhov was apparently abducted by an egg-shaped UFO as he walked to his local post office.

Not everyone believed Sakhov's account, as there were no other witnesses to corroborate his strange story.

All that was to change, however, when another UFO appeared within hours.

At 2am the following morning, a small but steady line of traffic was still snaking along High Road in the Ramat Aviv area of Tel Aviv. Suddenly, one car screeched to a halt, forcing others to pull up sharply behind it.

One by one, the drivers left their vehicles and stared incredulously into the night sky.

Within minutes the call centre at the Tel Aviv police headquarters found its phone lines jammed as scores of witnesses rang in to tell them about a "light-emitting UFO" carrying out spectacular aerial acrobatics above the city. Police officers and military personnel were amongst the witnesses.

There is a climate of fear in Israel, as there is in Palestine, due to the ongoing unrest. Perhaps instinctively, soldiers from the Border Police offered

BIZARRE

to shoot at the object in an effort to bring it down. Thankfully, wiser heads prevailed.

The crowd turned on the soldiers and told them in no uncertain terms not to fire. One elderly woman called Maria Alimi, a shopkeeper, shouted, "Are you crazy? What are you trying to do? Do you want to start a war between our world and theirs?"

Just before sunrise, the UFO ceased its amazing display of flying manoeuvres and arced through the sky in an easterly direction, seemingly following the path of Shaul Hamelech Avenue.

Not to be outdone, dozens of motorists jumped into their cars and drove at speed down the same road in an attempt to keep the UFO in view.

Perhaps not wanting to be followed, the craft suddenly reversed direction and flew straight back to Ramat Aviv.

It hovered again for a few moments, and then disappeared.

On September 25, the newspaper Ma'ariv carried the headline "Policemen and Citizens Saw a UFO in the North".

That very morning, just after 3am,

hundreds of Bedouin Arabs, along with police officers, soldiers and other citizens, saw a large UFO hovering over the village of Nugidat, near Upper Nazareth.

One resident told reporters that the craft emanated violet and blue rays which lit up a small mound behind a local mosque. The UFO was, "shaped like a diamond", he stated.

For four hours crowds watched intently as the strange object slowly bobbed and wove through the sky. Just after sunrise it took off, leaving onlookers shaking their heads in bewilderment.

The Chief of Police in Nazareth was Major Samuel Marmelstein. As you may imagine, it wasn't long before he was faced with some extremely searching questions.

To his credit, Marmelstein didn't make up any silly cover stories. He simply told the truth: police officers had been dispatched to Nugidat, and, yes, they had indeed seen the UFO.

Then other UFOs started to appear.

Sixteen such encounters were reported in the daily newspaper Ma'ariv alone. As word filtered out of Israel, some people wondered if the encounters were the fulfilment of Biblical prophecies. A few believed they signalled the end of the world.

They didn't, of course, but these encounters still left people wondering. Wondering what they were and, just as importantly, would they ever come back again? Only time will tell.

Keep sending me your spooky stories and weird tales! Write to me at the Gazette, or e-mail me at bizarrefans@tiscali.co.uk

LICHFIELD POST, Staffordshire, England - Aug. 12, 2004

Lights in the sky appeal

A leading expert on UFO activity is appealing for people who may have seen something strange in the skies over Lichfield to come forward following a spate of sightings over the weekend.

Graham Allen, head of Staffordshire UFO group, said he had been inundated with callers who witnessed strange lights in the night sky last Saturday and Sunday.

Mr Allen said he originally thought the phenomenon was ball-lighting - a rare occurrence caused by freak weather conditions.

However, as the calls kept flooding in he conceded it may have been some-

Exclusive by Kevin Edge

thing more mysterious.

"We have had a number of reports from people who say they saw a large ball in the sky over the weekend.

"At first I believed people had witnessed ball-lighting.

"The phenomenon is very rare and as we received more calls I realised it may have been something else.

"To see ball-lighting three times over two weekends is very rare and not very credible.

"I think we now may be looking at people either witnessing UFO activity or something else that we have not

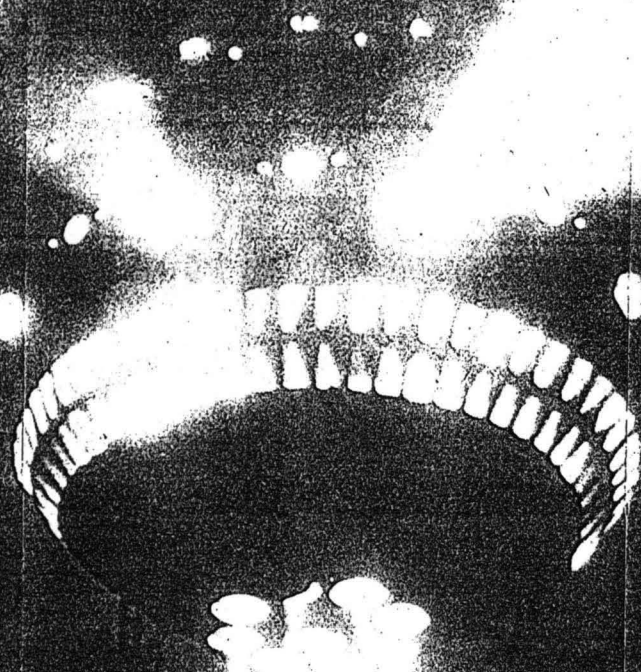
thought of."

Mr Allen's calls echo that of a Lichfield pensioner who saw something strange over the city last weekend.

She told The Post: "I looked out my window at 2am on Saturday and suddenly an object came into view in the sky. It was round in shape and glowed. It seemed to be just above the rooftops, going at some speed. It was not a plane, some people have said it was a firework, but there was no explosion, it just went."

The strange sphere of light was also seen several times over the Rugeley and Cannock area. "We're very keen to hear from anyone who also saw something over the weekend," Mr Allen added.

He can be contacted on 01889 585149.



Is anybody there?

UFOs and aliens, are they fact or science fiction? **David Powell** talks to a man who's determined to shed light on the paranormal

AS he peers at me over his half-moon spectacles, there's little to mark this scholarly man as extraordinary, certainly not as a "paranormal investigator".

In fact Gary Rowe looks more like former first minister Alun Michael than special agent Fox Mulder from the X-Files. No reason why he should look like David Duchovny of course...

And this cash register engineer's protestation that "it's the subject that's weird not me. I am not a nutcase" does seem plausible coming from a grandad with a respectable BMW and a modest Piper caravan parked outside his nondescript semi in Rhyl.

But it's his range of subjects, some might say hobby horses, which makes the heart sink and sends the eyebrows ever skywards: UFOs, numerology, vampirism, dowsing, extra sensory perception, psychokinesis, ghosthunting, poltergeists, the ancient Chaldean alphabet, leylines... culminating in the title of his series of talks starting next month *The Mysterious World Of The Unexplained*.

At first it's frustrating because he wants to keep his next talk's title

itself a mystery in case he fixes on a topical subject at the 11th hour.

Rowe, 62, explains: "If tomorrow Martians are discovered - I'm joking of course - that will be the topic next week."

But gradually he opens up as I try to suss him out.

Sitting on his leather couch, he insists: "If you mention anything that appears to be a mystery, sooner or later I will have to home in on it because it will draw me so that I've just got to know the answer myself."

But he has "no mission in life to convert people to anything... All I do is present exactly the truth that I have found."

Ah, there's that word: "Truth". Is it his truth or the widely accepted truth of everyone else?

To find out, I peer closer, sharpen my "focus", as Olympic athletes or Sue Barker might say, and pick the most obvious subject.

Perhaps the conundrum that is Gary Rowe is best explained in his attitude to UFOs.

He proudly claims to be co-founder of the Welsh Federation of Independent Ufologists and reveals he is building a small observatory in his garden.

He comes out with sensible statements such as: "I would be perfectly delighted if the next UFO I

investigated turned out to be a military aircraft being tested."

But it is harder to go along with him when he adds: "I am confident some of these UFOs cannot be defined as secret, military craft or any other natural phenomena. I have concluded positively that some of these vehicles though very rare are in fact extra terrestrial."

Rowe is adamant he and another witness saw two soft wide, cymbal-shaped UFOs hovering silently over a row of houses in South Wales in broad daylight 20 years ago, and he shows me a more recent internet print-out of Russian news agency's report on an alleged UFO sighting in Tunguska.

Food for thought perhaps. What about dowsing, then?

Rowe says: "I use dowsing frequently to locate archaeological sites. The twigs don't move. You move the twigs. It indicates a deep, subconscious detection which you cannot normally bring to

the conscious fore. We discovered the sunken palace of Llys Helig off Penmaenmawr at low tide in the 1990s. Helig was a major landowner of most of North Wales perhaps about 700 years ago."

"For a long time there had been speculation about what rocks around the bay might have been. Using dowsing and old documents we pinpointed the spot and brought back what we consider to be cut stone."

Ploughing on with my search for whether he's onto something, I ask about one of his next talks and tease out the fact that one will cover the bestselling book by Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*.

With some trepidation, I ask what it's about.

Rowe explains: "The book suggests - not myself, I'm only investigating it - Jesus got married and his lineage continued. It is protected by a secret organisation called The Priory of Zion. Members included Leonardo Da Vinci, Victor Hugo and others. We (people at his classes) will see if we can put any solid evidence to support or refute these things to see if it is invented twaddle."

And Rowe's verdict?

"I believe there's a case to answer." And so, as we touch on subject after subject, my eyebrows gradually go up. Reluctantly, but up just the same.

While he distances himself from strange phenomena, he is so

Gary Rowe is fascinated by the weird and wonderful

Picture: JEFF PITT

fascinated by it you wonder whether he believes in it too.

Rowe is from Stoke-on-Trent and moved aged 10 to South Wales then to North Wales about 30 years ago. Married to Chris, he has a son John and a two-year-old grandson James.

Rowe says he was attracted to the unexplained through a culmination of events.

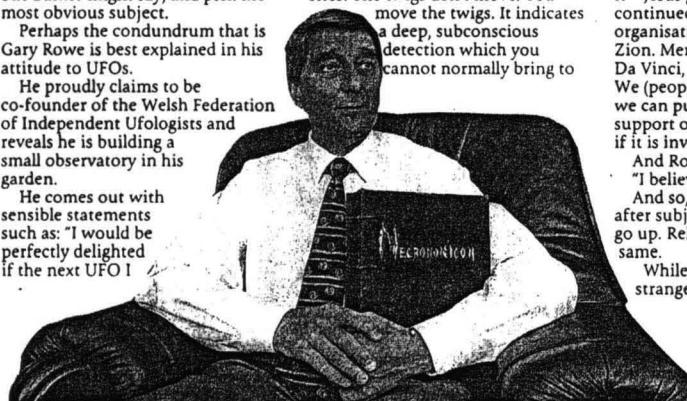
"I was born in 1942 and when I was young there was no such thing as space, satellites and rockets. I was a keen fan of Eagle comics and the adventures of Dan Dare, speculating whether there was life in space."

As a youngster he lived next to a haunted monastery in Stoke-on-Trent which fascinated him, and he was gripped with the nation when a George Adamski claimed to have seen a Venusian in the desert. Of course, his story was later disproved but it had set the young Gary's imagination ablaze.

As I leave, Rowe looks at me over his half-moons and implores me not to do a hatchet job on his passion for the paranormal.

He says: "I'm into all the weird and the wonderful. I keep meeting people and it's their life and their one love too. Don't go too silly because I want sensible people to come to the talks to look at really sensible, exciting mysteries. Anybody who's a thinking person will love this."

● Gary M Rowe gives talks from 7pm to 9pm at The Gamekeeper Inn, Lower Street, St Asaph on Mondays from September 6. Also at The Jubilee Community Centre, 45 Seabank Drive, Prestatyn, on Thursdays starting on September 9. Admission £3.50.



Stone drew craft

IN April 2003, mysterious tales of UFO sightings on Pontypridd's Rocking Stone on the Common appeared on an Internet website.

A writer called Gayna Andrews compiled the website and it described events surrounding an alleged sighting in 1979.

The druidic rocking stone was named as a possible site which draws UFOs to the area because of its symbolic markings.

It was put there in 1861 by the new druids, such as Dr William Price and Myfyr Morganwg.

Many authorities on UFOs consider this area and its stone foundation to have strong connections with UFOs.

They believe the "Sacred Floating Ark" is inscribed there, a druidic emblem which was the ancient description of a flying saucer.

A UFO was allegedly spotted and photographed over the Common in January 1979 by a Patricia Powell of Rhdyfelin.

But it was on April Fool's Day!

OBSERVER, Pontypridd, Wales - July 22, 2004

'Surrey corridor' is out of this world — really

I have received numerous reports from inside this area, not only of sightings, but abduction events.

GRAHAM CONWAY
Vice-president of UFO*BC
on Surrey's alien corridor

UFOs seem to favour B.C., making it the top province for unearthly sightings

BY CHAD SKELTON
VANCOUVER SUN

UFO enthusiasts call it the Surrey corridor — a three-kilometre-wide strip of land that runs from New Westminster to the U.S. border, along BC Hydro's high-voltage power lines.

It is here, they say, where you will find the greatest concentration of UFO sightings and alien encounters in the province.

"I have received numerous reports from inside this area, not only of sightings, but abduction events," said Graham Conway, vice-president of UFO*BC, who said anywhere from one-quarter to one-third of all Unidentified Flying Object sightings in the Lower Mainland take place in the corridor.

Last year alone, there were 304 UFO sightings in B.C., according to Chris Rutkowski, a UFO researcher in Manitoba who collects numbers from provincial groups like UFO*BC.

That made B.C. the number one province for UFO sightings in the country, with more than twice the sightings of second-place Ontario, which had 150. It was B.C.'s fifth year in top spot.

And UFO*BC is doing its best to keep track of it all.

The nine-year-old organization posts detailed reports on sightings and abductions on its website, sends out a quarterly newsletter to its 60 members and even maintains a toll-free hotline where B.C. residents can report UFO sightings and alien encounters.

It's been more than five years since *The X-Files* left Vancouver.

But when it comes to the things that go bump in the night — be they aliens, ghosts or Ogopogo — B.C. seems to have no shortage of people willing to investigate the unexplained.

In addition to UFO*BC, the province boasts organizations devoted to the investigation of haunted houses and "cryptozoologists" who specialize in gathering evidence about beings not yet accepted by science, like the Sasquatch.

And polls suggest there are a lot of British Columbians willing to believe in them.

A 2001 poll by Leger Marketing suggests British Columbians are more likely to believe in aliens than most other Canadians.

In all, more than a third of B.C. residents — 36.1 per cent — said they believed in aliens, more than residents of any other province except Alberta at 40.7 per cent.

And that same poll found B.C. residents were far more likely to report seeing a ghost, with 10.4 per cent of us saying we'd seen one, well above the national average of 6.3 per cent.

What makes our belief in the paranormal so surprising is that, by some measures, British Columbia is a province of non-believers.

The 2001 census found that more than a third of us — 35.9 per cent — have no religious affiliation at all, more than double the national average of 16.5 per cent and higher than any other province.

And British Columbians are less likely to believe in that most self-interested of faiths — life after death — than anyone else in Canada.

The Leger poll found just 53.3 per cent of us believe in an afterlife, below the national average of 57.4 per cent and lower than any other region of the country.

While our selective skepticism may seem strange at first, Barry Beyerstein, a psychology professor at Simon Fraser University, says it makes a certain degree of sense.

Beyerstein, chairman of the B.C. Skeptics Association, said our eagerness to believe in aliens and ghosts may reflect a spiritual hunger in people that is no longer being filled by traditional religions.

"These are substitutes for the more traditional kinds of religion that many people grow up with," he said. "We've left behind some of our traditional, spiritual beliefs ... and we're looking for no-hassle spirituality."

Not surprisingly, those who believe don't see it that way.

"I like to consider myself skeptical," said Heather Anderson, director of the B.C. Ghosts and Hauntings Research Society, a three-year-old organization.

Believing in ghosts, Anderson said, is simply a matter of looking at the evidence.

Anderson's society collects reports of ghost sightings and hauntings. And it also carries out its own "investigations."

One of the most elaborate, she said, was into a townhouse complex near southeast Marine Drive in Vancouver.

According to Anderson, her group received a tip by e-mail in 2001 that the complex — which contained about 70 separate homes — was haunted.

After talking to more people at the complex, she said, the group found that people in seven separate homes had reported paranormal activity — everything from hearing strange sounds to seeing a strange white presence in photographs.

"We did some research on the land and found out some amazing things," said Anderson.

A search of the Vancouver City Archives turned up a report about a tree that fell on a buggy in 1889 as it travelled along North Arm Road, an early incarnation of today's Marine Drive.

Four of the buggy's occupants were crushed to death, while two survived.

According to a story about the crash that appeared in the *Daily Colonist*, many blamed the crash on a man named James Saint, who lived near the site of the crash.

A few days before, Saint had apparently put burning coals inside the trunk of the tree — a popular way at the time of felling trees.

Anderson refused to provide an address for the complex, saying its owners don't want it publicly identified.

While the Marine Drive complex is one of the most active hauntings in the Lower Mainland, the haunting hotspot of the Lower Mainland — the ghostly equivalent of the Surrey corridor — is North Burnaby.

"Definitely Burnaby Heights," said Anderson. "That area just seems to be so incredibly active."

A partial list of Burnaby hauntings on the group's website includes a "phantom jogger" who appears and disappears in Confederation Park, nun-like figures seen near Gilmore school at night and the image of a little boy seen running through the headstones in the Masonic cemetery.

There have also been several reports of hauntings at Ceperley House, an old mansion in south Burnaby that now houses Burnaby Art Gallery, Anderson said.

Members of her society were walking in the house's yard a few years ago when several of them began to feel as if they were being followed.

Anderson turned around and took a picture of the stairs behind them.

When the photo was developed, Anderson said, she was shocked to see a blurry, white figure in the centre of the frame.

"It seems to look like a lady walking down the stairs," said Anderson.

(continued on page 12)

Graham Conway (left), vice-president of UFO*BC, says the highest concentration of UFO's and abduction reports is near power lines.

In general, as one might expect, the most active areas for ghost sightings are in the city's oldest areas.

"The old areas seem to be saturated with energy," said Anderson. "There are more layers of history. ... [More] opportunities for tragic things to happen."

Ahead of the curve

John Kirk, president of the B.C. Scientific Cryptozoology Club — which studies the existence of undocumented animals like the Sasquatch and Ogopogo — is adamant that he shouldn't be lumped in with people who believe in ghosts and aliens.

"We have absolutely no interest in the paranormal whatsoever," said Kirk. "Our entire investigations are based on the principles of science. And we have arrived at conclusions rather than beliefs."

According to Kirk, cryptozoologists are simply ahead of the curve — accepting the existence of new species before mainstream scientists do.

"We approach it completely from a biological [and] zoological perspective," Kirk said. "And conservation."

Conservation?
"The habitat of the Sasquatch," he said.

"It's incumbent on us to make sure the habitats are secured."

The cryptozoology club was founded 15 years ago by a group of people including Kirk, a writer, and Paul LeBlond, a retired professor of oceanography at the University of B.C.

The club is focused primarily on three creatures: Sasquatch, a hairy, upright animal that has been reportedly spotted across North America; Ogopogo, a serpent-like animal believed to live in Lake Okanagan; and Caddorosaurus, a creature like the Ogopogo that members say inhabits the waters around Vancouver Island.

And while people commonly refer to "the Sasquatch" or "the Ogopogo," Kirk says all three have been reported for so long that there must be several of each.

"The story of Ogopogo is 300 years old," said Kirk. "You have to have a viable breeding population."

While he believes in the existence of all three creatures, Kirk — who has written a book called *In The Domain of the Lake Monsters* — says he thinks the evidence for Ogopogo is by far the strongest.

He claims to have seen the beast himself 11 times and to have interviewed witnesses who claim to have had direct contact with it — in one case being lifted straight out of the water.

And Kirk stresses that several people have taken photographs and video of the monster — including a Kelowna resident who supposedly took a lengthy video of the monster last August.

"The evidence for Ogopogo is pretty darn strong," he said.

Indeed, Kirk says there is far more evidence for Ogopogo than for its more well-known cousin, the Loch Ness Monster in Scotland.

"I've been to Loch Ness and I believe that nothing actually lives there," said Kirk, saying he suspects instead that people have simply seen "an unknown species of very large eels" that travel through the lake as a shortcut between ocean waters.

Kirk feels he knows Ogopogo so well that he can give a reasonable description of what it would look like: anywhere from four to 25 metres long with a serpentine body and small legs on its front and back that push it along.

"The front legs do a breast stroke and the rear legs do a push-off kind of motion," he said.

And somehow — Kirk says he's not sure exactly how — it is able to move its body in such a way as to create humps in the water.

"Whether it uses air bladders or whatever ... it's able to swim in a hump or series of humps," he said.

And while he is less familiar with it, Kirk says the Sasquatch is a hairy primate that grows to as high as 270-centimetres (nine feet) tall and weighs about four times as much as the average man.

It also smells really bad — like rotten eggs, according to some reports.

The biggest problem cryptozoologists have is explaining why — if such large creatures have existed for hundreds of years — no one has ever found a dead one, or even a skeleton.

"The acidity of the soils in this province tend to lead to quick disintegration of remains," said Kirk, saying that may explain why a Sasquatch has never been found.

As for Ogopogo, Kirk points to the incredible depth of Lake Okanagan — where, he says, temperatures drop to just below freezing.

"In that kind of a climate, a carcass is fairly well preserved and does not deteriorate and float to the surface," he said. "They tend to sink down or be suspended in the water column."

Designed to believe

Without more convincing evidence, Beyerstein says he can't believe in things like ghosts, aliens and monsters.

But he understands why other people do: Our brains are designed to believe.

"There's pretty good evidence from cognitive psychology that magical thinking is the default mode," said Beyerstein. "That's kind of the natural way our brains work. We come wired up to believe this kind of thing."

In part, Beyerstein said, we believe in the supernatural because it's nice to believe in something larger and more powerful than ourselves.

"It's comforting to believe that there is justice in the universe and it's meted out by some supernatural force," he said.

Ghosts imply an afterlife, he said, which makes death — of ourselves or loved ones — less scary.



And aliens suggest

there is a wiser, more advanced society out there than our own.

The motivation behind beliefs in monsters like Ogopogo and Sasquatch is more complex, he said.

"Some of it is kind of a chip on the shoulder, wanting to prove the experts wrong," he said. "[Or that] despite the fact we've messed up the world and polluted it, there are some creatures that are too smart for us and keep out of our clutches and ... remind us that we aren't so smart after all."

A lot of paranormal belief can also be explained simply by the human mind's desire to find patterns in the world.

Just as many of us see well-defined objects when we look at clouds in the sky, Beyerstein said, we turn mysterious objects in the water into a lake monster or the creaks of a house settling into a ghost.

"Our minds are built to make sense out of vague and indistinct stimuli and we do it all the time," he said. "We're pattern detectors. ... And we are often so good at doing that that we see patterns that aren't there."

More difficult to explain are those people who claim to have had direct contact with paranormal creatures.

Kelowna resident Corina Saebels said

she and a friend were stargazing in a rural area just outside Kelowna around midnight on July 31, 2003, when they saw a bright green, oval-shaped craft hovering in the sky.

"At that point, I flashed on the light down the road ahead of us and there were five sets of eyes staring at us," said Saebels.

She and her friend rushed back into her Jeep and drove home.

Saebels said she recalls the creatures having large, almond-shaped dark eyes and bulbous heads.

As they were driving back home, Saebels said, she and her friend looked at the clock and noticed it was several minutes past 1 a.m.

"It would be a little over an hour's missing time," said Saebels. "We have no idea what happened. As far as we're concerned, we were only out there five or six minutes tops and we left."

The day after their experience, Saebels said, her friend had a round circular burn mark on her back.

Saebels said she had large bruises on her chest and on one of her feet.

"I've had strange medical things happen ever since," she said.

She now runs a support group in the Okanagan for others who claim to have been abducted by aliens. The group — about eight people — meets once a month, she said.

Saebels said she's no longer in contact with her friend and wouldn't provide her name or contact details.

Conway of UFO*BC said he's met more than 350 people like Saebels who claim to have had encounters with aliens or to have been abducted.

"These people are not telling a story to me, they are reliving a series of events and there is a great deal of emotional content to what they're telling me," he said.

Beyerstein said he doesn't doubt that the majority of people who claim to have had encounters with aliens or other creatures are sincere.

But he said he thinks they are mistaken.

Beyerstein said research into such supposed abductees indicates few are suffering from severe mental problems — such as schizophrenia — that could cause hallucinations. But he said there is some evidence that such people have highly suggestible personalities and may be more prone to waking fantasies, especially when they're sleep-deprived.

"There's a lot of research on what is known as fantasy-prone personalities — people who experience what might be called waking dreams," he said.

"They have such rich fantasy lives and they experience such visual imagery with all of their senses that they sometimes have trouble distinguishing episodes of reality from fantasy and they kind of waft back and forth between them."

Of course, in some cases, explanations for the supernatural may be more simple.

Elisha Moreno, a spokeswoman with BC Hydro, said high-voltage power lines — like the ones along the "Surrey Corridor" where so many UFO sightings take place — often give off strange lights, especially on rainy days or if there is debris on the insulating wires.

"It can be yellow. It can be blue. It can be blue-green," she said.

"When you have [electricity] traveling at a very high voltage like that, there is some line loss that takes place. It's a leakage current."

eskelton@png.comwest.com

B.C. Web sites about the supernatural

UFO*BC

<http://www.ufobc.ca/>

British Columbia Ghosts and Hauntings Research Society

<http://www.westghosts.org/bc/>

British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club

<http://www.cryptosafari.com/bccsc/>

B.C. Skeptics Association

<http://www.seercom.com/bcs/index.cgi>

This sculpture (right) at the foot of Bernard Avenue in Kelowna, commemorating the lore of the Ogopogo is probably the closest most people will get to meeting the monster of the deep said to inhabit the waters of Okanagan Lake.



WHAT BRITISH COLUMBIANS BELIEVE

B.C. residents are less likely to have traditional religious beliefs ...

but more likely to believe in some aspects of the supernatural.

The percentage of people who say they have no religious affiliation:

Canada:	16.5%
B.C.:	35.9%
Alberta:	23.6%
Prairies:	17.3%
Quebec:	5.8%
Ontario:	16.3%
Atlantic Provinces:	8.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census

The percentage of people who say they believe in life after death:

Canada:	57.4%
B.C.:	53.3%
Alberta:	60.0%
Prairies:	59.6%
Ontario:	59.6%
Quebec:	54.0%
Atlantic Provinces:	59.8%

Source: Legor Marketing Poll, 2001

The percentage of people who say they've seen a ghost:

Canada:	6.3%
B.C.:	10.4%
Alberta:	7.1%
Prairies:	7.7%
Ontario:	6.8%
Quebec:	3.2%
Atlantic provinces:	4.8%

Source: Legor Marketing Poll, 2001

The percentage of people who say they believe in aliens:

Canada:	31.5%
B.C.:	36.1%
Alberta:	40.7%
Prairies:	33.0%
Ontario:	27.1%
Quebec:	4.2%
Atlantic provinces:	24.3%

Source: Legor Marketing Poll, 2001

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 and other Spanish-language newspapers and media sources.]

September 28, 2004 — *INFOBAE.com*, Argentina — Argentina: Police and Locals Chase After "Strange Creature" — They have not been able to determine if it is a man or an animal. The fact is that it prowls around houses, has killed several hens and left enigmatic traces...

Police and locals sought a strange creature at Colonia Elia in the eastern reaches of this territory in the province of Entre Rios.

The police action came about when a neighbor reported that a person or large animal caused considerable damage in a henhouse behind his home, where it killed several hens. A footprint, hair and other traces were found at the site, which would give the claim credibility.

Oscar Resteinor, a resident in this rural area, reported to the Colonia Elia sheriff's office that for 20 days now he has been witnessing the presence of this being, with clearly abnormal characteristics, prowling around his home. He claims that he has not been able to identify if it is an animal or a person. It would have had yellowish hair of considerable length, claw-like nails, and it left large footprints, walking with its hind legs as would a human or primate.

After the attack to his henhouse, Resteinor and his family and neighbors began to keep a watch in order to catch the strange being, according to the "Analisis Digital" web portal.

The Entre Rios police admitted to having found several traces resembling footprints and hairs measuring between 6 to 10 centimeters in length, as well as a claw or fingernail embedded in a tree trunk.

Plaster casts were made of the footprints, which were described as manlike, but larger and wider than normal. — CREDIT: Gloria Coluchi

September 28, 2004 — *INFOBAE.com*, Argentina — UFOs REPORTED IN MONTE HERMOSO — The UFO phenomenon manifested itself last night when several drivers transiting from Monte Hermoso to Bahia Blanca saw red and white lights in the sky for several minutes, which later vanished over the fields.

Drivers on their way back from the beach at Monte Hermoso to Bahia Blanca reported having seen several flying saucers (UFOs) on National Hwy. 3 and Route 229, which provides access to the locality of Punta Alta.

Carlos Coria, a resident of Punta Alta and one of the witnesses to the event, said that he was driving along Route 3 "when to the left of the road, my family and I observed two flying objects of great [luminous] intensity and whitish in color."

"Afterward, having turned onto Route 229, we also saw red lights suspended in the air for 15 minutes, but then seemed to turn off, as though there was a landing strip in the field," Coria added.

Sources of the Traffic Police of Bahia Blanca reported that "many people remarked about what had happened, but it isn't something that can be investigated by the police."

"Several drivers phoned us last night to report that they had seen UFOs at the 630 km marker of Route 3 in the location known as Bajo Hondo," added the spokesman. — CREDIT: Gloria Coluchi

October 6, 2004 — *Cadena 3 (Television)* — ARGENTINA: STRANGE CREATURE IN ENTRE RIOS — A farmer from Argentina's Entre Rios province reported that "a strange animal having quasi-human characteristics" caused damage to his henhouse and had been seen prowling the farm--located in the rural department of Colonia Elia--on several occasions.

The complaint was made at the Colonia Elia sheriff's office by Oscar Resteinor, who claimed having witnessed the strange creature's presence around his home for some twenty days.

According to the *El Diario* newspaper in Parana, the alleged creature had yellowish hair of considerable length, claw-like hands and left very large footprints.

Criminalistics personnel from the Uruguay Departmental Precinct collected samples at the site from one footprint--between human and animal--which included hair and other elements that would lend credibility to the claim made by the rural producer.

Police elements found, upon reaching the site, several large-size prints measuring between 6 and 10 cm long, and including a "claw-nail" stuck to a tree trunk.

Resteinor stated that relatives and neighbors stood nightly guard around the house after having ascertained that the strange creature had ripped through the henhouse roof and killed several birds. Some locals claimed having seen an allegedly "light brown animal" of considerable size fleeing from the site.

Last Saturday, around 20:30 hours, one of Resteinor's children saw the creature prowling around the henhouse again. Accompanied by a group of neighbors, the boy pursued the intruder, but the strange creature got away. — CREDIT: Guillermo Gimenez, *Planeta UFO*

October 11, 2004 — *Grupo ArgusPR*, Puerto Rico — MEXICO: UFO's in Culhuacan — Alfonso Salzar, an aviation technician and consultant to noted researchers, was the first person to report sightings in the vicinity of Culhuacan. Apparently [the object sighted] was a spherical object with a ring around it, similar to the planet Saturn. Many people turned out to witness the heavenly phenomenon. The strange object moved very slowly toward Cerro de la Estrella at around 18:30 hours.

Minutes later, at 18:50 hrs., Salvador Guerrero shot video of a spherical, luminous object heading toward the north. He said that the UFO emerged from a cloud bank, flew very slowly and at times appeared to be suspended motionlessly.

Subsequently, at 19:00 hrs., Ana Luisa Cid videotaped a very large luminous object in the northern reaches of Mexico City. The video is brief because there was a camera malfunction. The image issued a strong vibration and stopped working. "At first," says Ana Luisa, "I thought the battery had run out ... but in fact I don't know what happened, because the camera was inoperable afterward; perhaps it was all a coincidence. I don't know, but the vibration was indeed captured on tape."

Numerous reports were also received from persons who were seeing strange objects in different parts of the city.

As an additional item of information, the National Seismological Service reported earth tremors with a magnitude of 3.8 on the Richter scale in Oaxaca and Guerrero.

"Mexico is a country with seismic regions," says Ms. Cid. "We know that low intensity tremors occur daily. Perhaps there is no direct relation with the UFO phenomenon, but I believe this to be important information to be considered within the scope of an investigation." — CREDIT: Jose Martinez, *Grupo ArgusPR*

October 14, 2004 — *CIUFOS*, La Pampa, Argentina — UFOs OVER SIERRA LA VENTANA — During the course of research carried out by CIUFOS-La Pampa in Sierra de la Ventana, Buenos Aires province, it was possible to obtain photographs which show unidentified flying objects.

The first image corresponds to photos taken at the specific place that lends its name to the site (a natural window formation amid a rocky formation).

At the time that the images were taken, a sort of sharp and penetrating sound was perceived; the sound diminished and lost intensity. In the belief that the sound could have come from a jet aircraft, an uncommon event in the area, an unsuccessful effort was made to see one.

Upon developing the film, one picture shows an oval-shaped object, reddish in color, turning left and ascending (from the standpoint of the witnesses), having a cirrus-stratus cloud layer as a background, as well as the "window" alluded to earlier.

The second photograph corresponds to another image made from the upper part of the Ventana system proper. An effort was being made to show the slopes and access road to the complex. Here can be seen, in the upper left corner, a form similar to an inverted soup bowl with a cloud like ("cumulus") aspect; the well-defined, rounded left profile can be made out along with its domed upper section and an inverted depression (upward) in its lower section.

This "cloud" is in turn shadowed by a cloud formation present at the time and which can be seen above the slopes.

The photos were taken in March 2004 at the Ventana Complex. — CREDIT: Raul Oscar Chaves

October 15, 2004 — *El Mercurio*, Valparaiso, Chile — CHILE: INTEREST IN VALPARAISO UFO GROWS — ***Ufologist Rodrigo Fuenzalida to visit Valparaiso to conduct research.*** — ***UFO experts will arrive in Valparaiso to study a series of claims involving UFOs in our region*** — According to Andres Rives, a UFO imagery expert and computer operator for a major local organization, the image taken by photojournalist Manuel Aguirre "is not the reflection of some object. I dismiss the possibility of any light effect or reflection. It is an independent source of light."

The expert said that we are facing something very strange and intriguing. "It appears to be a distant nocturnal light (NL). Upon cleaning it with computer filters, the lights stand out. By manipulating the photo a little, we realize that the object has a rhomboidal shape. Objects like this have been seen in Russia, Mexico and the USA."

Interest in the photographs published by *El Mercurio* this week, showing an alleged UFO in the hills, is still evidenced by ufologists. Christian Rizzo, president of OVNI VISION, stated yesterday that the images "were amazing" and that we were facing a major news story.

He said that research will continue on the photos obtained by photojournalist Manuel Aguirre in order to discard any light effect or the accidental effect of the camera flash employed to photograph "the spaceship."

TVN's morning program--"Buenos dias a todos"--hosted Rodrigo Fuenzalida, sociologist and director of the Ufological Investigations Group (AION, in Spanish), who presented this case to the country, arousing the curiosity of the show's staff.

The expert stated that the alleged UFO is not a "light reflection" or the reflection of a luminous object. "In conversation with the photo editor and the protagonist himself, the possibility of manipulation as part of a hoax has been dismissed. However, the theory of a lens flare or a possible reflection of some source of light was discussed."

"The problem," he continued, "arises when we search for luminous sources in a manner symmetrical to the alleged UFO. But we believe that the contribution of researching the site where the events occurred will shed more definite light on this new ufological problem," said Fuenzalida at his website, www.aion.cl

AION's leader will travel to Valparaiso tomorrow with his team to investigate the event "on site."

The ufologist explained that engineers and designers with the GraphMedia corporation have made some approximations to the phenomenon using computer filters, generating interesting data on the body in question.

The sequence of filters created by engineer Miguel Cueto contribute some interesting information: they show a body that does not resemble any of the structures that exist in the area. — CREDIT: Liliana Nunez O.

October 19, 2004 — *Planeta UFO*, Argentina — MEXICO: UFO FLOTILLA OVER VERACRUZ — Ricardo Antonio Lopez Morales, a resident of the port of Veracruz, describes the sighting of a UFO flotilla around 11:30 a.m. and with an approximate duration of 45 minutes.

He describes them as semi-spherical shining objects that changed color; a police squad car and a commercial airliner were also present on the site. He claims that cellular phones were affected and animals reacted to the passing of the strange objects.

The following are fragments of the e-mail sent by Mr. Morales to UFO researcher Ana Luisa Cid:

"I was checking my e-mail accounts when I suddenly heard all of the dogs in my neighborhood barking (including my own). First I thought it was some kids who, as always, were taunting the dogs, but then I noticed my neighbors going outside to see what was going on. I saw how one of them stared at the sky and began to say, jokingly, "Look, a flight of ducks!," to which I replied, "Those aren't ducks, it's a fleet of UFOs."

After some 10 minutes of watching the phenomenon, a police squad car came around during its normal watch, stopped, and its occupants got out of the unit to see what was happening. They witnessed the phenomenon and began transmitting over their radio to request backup. At the same time, I took out my cell phone to call a friend who's a helicopter pilot and who also believes in UFOs and also works for the police aviation unit, so that he would take a spin around the area for a look. To my surprise, my cell phone didn't work (and I had just charged the battery). I kept trying and the text, LOW BAT or NO SIGNAL AVAILABLE, kept appearing. The same happened to the squad car--its radio wouldn't work."

"They were 23 semi-spherical objects, silver-colored, flying in a nearly tight formation. The lead object changed color and the others would do the same. When they changed color, the objects changed formation to form a soccer-goal type formation. Thirty minutes later I saw an airplane taking off from the local airport, which was the regular AEROMEXICO flight from Veracruz to Miami, a Boeing B-737-900."

"The objects shifted from green to red and began spinning faster (just looking at them made me feel sick). After spinning for a minute, they broke formation and vanished into the air, but left us a little reminder of their presence: an odor of burnt leather or something that was truly unbearable. After that moment, the police were able to call their base to request assistance; I phoned my friend, but couldn't get a signal. Instead another

recording came on about my minutes having been exhausted (I had just purchased a 200 peso card the week before). My cell phone no longer works like it did before; it can be inferred that the magnetic field from the objects affected it -- aside from having "stolen" my credit, they short-circuited it, since it turns on by itself after being shut off."

"The squad car number was 087 Central Sector. When I spoke to the police station to make a report, I was told that no squad car with that number had been on the scene and that no report had been filed over the sighting (a code of silence?)..." — CREDIT: Ana Luisa Cid Fernandez

October 19, 2004 — *www.aion.cl*, Chile — CHILE: VALPARAISO UFO EXPLAINED — After having met with the author of the photographs obtained on Sunday, October 10 from Paseo 21 de Mayo in this city, and having replied exactly -- under the same conditions of time, location, camera employed and accessories -- we can state with absolute certainty that the Valaparaíso "UFO" was nothing more than an unfortunate sequence of reflections.

The foregoing is stated based on a series of interviews of the parties involved, observations of the image and subsequent visits to the exact site at which the photos were taken.

In order to verify the information, we held a meeting on 10.14.04 at 16:20 hrs. with photographer Manuel Aguirre from *El Mercurio* of Valaparaíso, author of the images, and after having seen them for over 20 minutes on a computer we realized that some small lights appear on the first three images taken. This heightened doubts on the actual presence of this phenomenon over the hills of Viña del Mar (at the Nueva Aurora sector, as had been claimed) and rather confirmed the interpretation of the event as a reflected luminous event.

In order to dispel all doubt, we decided to meet on Thursday the 14th at the exact site from where the images were taken and at the same time: we reached Paseo 21 de Mayo in Valparaíso at 20:00 hrs to begin the photo session under the same original conditions, which is to say, using the same photo camera and its accessories, the same location, same time (20:26 and 20:27 hrs.) and landscape (Esmeralda School Ship in Molo de Abrigo).

After having taken the first photos, our original suspicions were fully confirmed. A "flotilla" of UFOs appeared in the environs of the location in question. All pointed to the published photos being little more than "lens flares" -- in other words, reflections of luminous objects against the camera lens--something that isn't new, but on the contrary very common, in many cases involving so-called nocturnal lights and daytime disks.

We wish to thank the professionalism and integrity of Manuel Aguirre, the author of the images, in accepting the visual error, given that from the start he defended them strongly, leaving those interested in the subject even more confused. His concern in clarifying the case, as well as to provide us with his time for doing so, are signs of his acknowledgement of the incorrect interpretation. This is worthy of admiration and respect.

We therefore request yet again that anyone who is a witness or protagonist to such an event comply with formal research procedures to avoid confusing the community (whether pro or against ufology), given that similar events produce a negative image of those who wish to ascertain the truth about the subject. — CREDIT: Enrique Silva and Víctor Vial, AION

October 28, 2004 — *El Sol*, Orizaba, Mexico — MEXICO: UFO's OVER ORIZABA AND CORDOBA, VERACRUZ — Unidentified flying objects were seen in the sky around 8:30 a.m. causing great expectation among residents of Orizaba and Cordoba.

Hundreds of residents of the Cordoba-Orizaba area were witnesses to a seldom-seen spectacle. For several minutes, numerous unidentified flying objects were witnessed in the skies above.

It all started a little after 8:00 a.m. as students from a school who were meeting for their morning assembly saw some white dots in the sky that resembled balloons. The unusual event also happened to attract the attention of parents and teachers and some people on the street. A principal teacher of the Constitución de 1917 high school located on Avenida 11, said that the objects were 5 or 7 at first, and finally totalled 14 or 16.

"They were white, not shiny like stars. They moved in a circle at first and then they headed single file toward Orizaba," remarked the witness, adding that both students and teachers alike witnessed the event, which lasted some 25 minutes. Also in Orizaba, at the Carlos Cardenas Rojas primary school in Colonia Cidosa, mayor Martín Cabrera Zavaleta headed a civic event when one of those present asked that people look up to some balloons in the sky.

"First they were 6, then 9. Suddenly they started moving while others remained fixed," said one witness. Two of the strange objects moved toward one side and 6 toward the opposite side. One of them remained motionless and finally all of them vanished.

Professors, parents, students, reporters and municipal authorities were witnesses to the extraordinary event that was also seen at other schools and sites without anyone being able to find a satisfactory explanation. Phone calls were received at this news room inquiring about the phenomenon. No authority offered an explanation for this unusual event.

Witnesses differ somewhat about the time and duration of the event. Some state that the alleged UFOs were seen at approximately 8:30 a.m. for some 20 to 25 minutes. Others in Orizaba state that they saw the objects for little more than 25 minutes. — CREDIT: Ana Luisa Cid Fernandez

November 13, 2004 — *Terra.cl*, Chile — TENTACLED UFO SEEN OVER MEXICO — "It is an inexplicable phenomenon. It's as though it were an organic being with several tentacles, and some of these tentacles are putting forth spheres. We called in an expert to see if it could be some sort of balloon, but he said no," said ufologist Jaime Maussan. — MEXICO, November 13 - The UFO most resembling an organic creature may have been recorded over Mexico as it expelled strange spheres from several tentacles.

Says Jaime Maussan: "On October 27, to be exact, a giant object was photographed and videotaped over Mexico City. It was very impressive and it launched spheres," with regard to the latest evidence to feed his alien hypothesis.

"This is an inexplicable phenomenon. It's as though it were an organic being with several tentacles, and some of these tentacles are putting forth spheres. We called in an expert to see if it could be some sort of balloon, but he said no."

The ufologist remarked that an air traffic controller of the city's airport calculated the object was flying at over 10,000 feet, which means that in order to have been picked up by a camera, its diameter should have been between 300 and 400 meters, making it a highly strange and extraordinary event.

He added that the object made a series of impressive maneuvers, like a knot. Then it braided itself and stretched, but always surrounded by a series of blue and red spheres that appeared to be stuck to the object's sides.

"If it's an organic being, where did it come from? How did it get here? What is inside the spheres it is ejecting? Is there some sort of invasion or are we being monitored?," the journalist asked himself. He pointed out that this fact confirms the existence of a very intense presence of beings from another planet. "These

beings are literally here, and unfortunately, we aren't through realizing what all of this means."

Maussan said that the images were supplied by Arturo Robles Gil, a professional photographer, who also managed to record it with a camcorder. For this reason, the images are very clear.

He remarked that at first they debated over whether it could be a balloon, but a considerable monetary investment would be required, aside from the fact that it would have been necessary to assemble it around 2 in the morning in order for it to be seen at 9 am.

"If balloons are involved, we figure that some 57,000 of them would be required to form something similar, aside from the fact that it is forbidden to launch balloons in the Mexico City airspace which could jeopardize air travel. This would constitute an illegal act," said the ufologist.

He stated that this evidence is still being analyzed. "It was fortunate that this event took place at 9 a.m. and no infrared lights were needed to see it perfectly. If it isn't a balloon, then what the hell is it?"

The video's total duration is between 5 -10 minutes, although the object was visible from 10 to 20 minutes. — CREDIT: *Terra.cl*

November 20, 2004 — *Planeta UFO*, Argentina — MEXICO: SPHERES OVER TEPOZTLAN, MORELOS — On Saturday, November 20, Mr. Salvador Guerrero videotaped four translucent spheres in the town of Tepoztlan, state of Morelos. He was in the company of Amado Marquez and Eduardo Ortega, engaged in routine skywatching. The forementioned gentlemen are renowned UFO watchers and have provided extraordinary evidence since 1991.

At approximately 4:45 p.m., the team became aware of a strange sphere (the size of a ping pong ball), almost at ground level, and they approached it to record evidence, making three videotapes with different cameras. Subsequently, the object headed for a tree bough and remained surprisingly motionless, then moving up and down with intelligent movement, according to Salvador Guerrero. At one point [the object] was very close to his own body, scant centimeters away, and it was then that he reached out to touch it. Upon contact with his skin, the sphere emitted a gelatinous fluid that caused burning and discomfort to the witness, leaving a red mark on his flesh.

A total of four spheres were observed at approximate intervals of 5 minutes between each sighting.

The translucent structure can be clearly seen in the video, as well as how they reflected sunlight, their unusual movement and the confusion of the witnesses, since a group of boy scouts, children and schoolteachers at the Escuela Meztitla field had joined the threesome.

Prof. Ana Luisa Cid Fernandez has been in contact with Salvador Guerrero, who still reports discomfort to his hand. He has been advised to see a physician to ameliorate the symptoms and obtain a diagnosis as to what happened to his skin. Guerrero had recorded similar phenomena before, but had never touched it.

As additional data, it is worth noting that soap bubbles are sold in this country, as well as unbreakable bubbles. However, these have no resemblance whatsoever with the Tepoztlan spheres, neither in structure nor in motion.

The video was presented today on the "Los Vigilantes" program. It will also be shown next Thursday on The Omar Chaparro Show and Sunday on "Los Grandes Misterios de Tercer Milenio" (www.jaimemaussan.tv). — CREDIT: Ana Luisa Cid Fernandez

December 3, 2004 — *Primera Hora*, San Juan, Puerto Rico — PUERTO RICO: 11 GOATS SLAIN IN PETTING ZOO — ***Horrible find in children's park*** — Eleven goats were found dead inside their wooden pen, which forms part of the petting zoo of the "Illusion" children's park on the premises of the Montehiedra Town Center in Rio Piedras (San Juan, PR).

The discovery was made by Fausto Radaelli, the person in charge of the petting zoo and its owner.

According to the explanation given by Radaelli to *Primera Hora*, he took 11 goats to the kiddie park last Monday because he was attempting to recreate a manger scene for the Christmas holiday.

He placed them in a wooden pen in the open air so they could spend the night there. But they were found lifeless on Wednesday morning.

Three of the goats presented large bite marks, dismemberment and one of them had half of its body devoured; all of its internal organs, excepting its stomach, were gone.

The rest of the goats had bite marks and fang marks on the rear of their bodies. The marks resembled the ones found on animals allegedly attacked by the infamous "Chupacabras".

The goats had their necks twisted backward and rigor mortis had not set in 48 hours after their deaths.

According to biologist Ernesto Marquez, a specialist in exotic animals, the goats were attacked by "a wolf, a coyote, a hybrid (wolf-dog hybrid) or very large feral dogs.

Marquez says that these animals exist on the island and [he] knows that they are trafficked and even advertised in newspaper classifieds.

The expert's theory is sustained by the carnivore's modus operandi. "These are regular fang marks. Canids kill animals by the rear, seizing them to hold them down and eat them."

Marquez dismissed the possibility that the goats may have been slain by a feline, since "these kill from the throat, strangling [their prey], dragging it off. This was a canid."

He added that "the animal leaped; it is an agile animal, attacking from the rear. It's astute and knows human beings. It came around when there was no one around and returned on the next day, when there was no one either. He explained that this animal has wild instincts and that not even animals in Africa, at large in their own habitat, kill so much prey to eat only one.

"This is vicious. The animal isn't psychologically well," maintained the biologist who also belongs to the SPCA.

Yesterday, the site was being examined by Marquez, Julio Diaz of the Animal Control Solutions company and veterinary technician Herman Sulsona of the San Juan Animal Control Center.

There were no signs of forcible entry. No prints nor hairs of any other animal were found. Radaelli also has a pony, Dutch hens and sheep at the petting zoo; at his farm in Carolina, where he raises these animals, he has dwarf cows, a burro and other goats, which he occasionally brings to the park. The park, which has been operating since May 8th and will remain until January 31st, has no security of any kind. Yesterday, after removing the dead goats, the park was reopened to the public after 6 pm. Specialists cautioned the park's custodians that the animal may return, and advised that the animals be kept inside a trailer, or else removed from the site.

Last night, Martinez and Radaelli were expected to authorize Diaz and Marquez to stay overnight at the location with the specialized equipment needed to hunt the predator. Diaz informed *Primera Hora* that they have been given confidential information that in the vicinity of Caimito and Montehiedra there are "wealthy persons who traffic in exotic animals and lions, tigers and pumas can also be found." — CREDIT: Lucy Guzman



Bigfoot?

1977 photo draws researchers hunting fabled man-ape creature

By Jim Cox
SA Publisher

It was a foggy morning back in November 1977. I was driving from my home in Coffeerville to work at *The South Alabamian* here in Jackson. I was 23, just out of college, and learning the ins and outs of the newspaper business as a novice ad salesman. I was also starting to take photographs and write a few feature stories for the newspaper.

As I rounded a bend on Highway 69 just south of Coffeerville and started to cross Eberline Mill Creek and go up the hill into the Tattlersville community (many of its residents prefer the better-sounding Union Chapel), I saw an eerie sight. Through the misty fog a figure could be seen on the highway, bent and stooped, with the sun trying to break through the gray in the background. What a great picture, I thought, as I stopped, grabbed my camera and snapped a shot.

We ran the picture on the front page with no mention of it being anything other than a normal person. However, a few folks took the figure to be some kind of "critter" and it sparked a lot of talk, including some references to "Bigfoot," the fabled man-beast that has stirred the curiosity of many around the globe and here in the U.S.A. for centuries.

That was 27 years ago. I know there are a lot of you who can distinctly remember what happened 30 to 50 years ago with great clarity. I am not one of those people. Sometimes, I can't tell you what happened last week with a lot of exactness. I guess being in the newspaper business I rely too greatly on notes to prod my memory.

Man shoveling mud?

Anyway, I can't remember a lot of detail about the "creature" I photographed but something tells me that as I drove on by after making the picture, it was a man shoveling mud off of the highway.

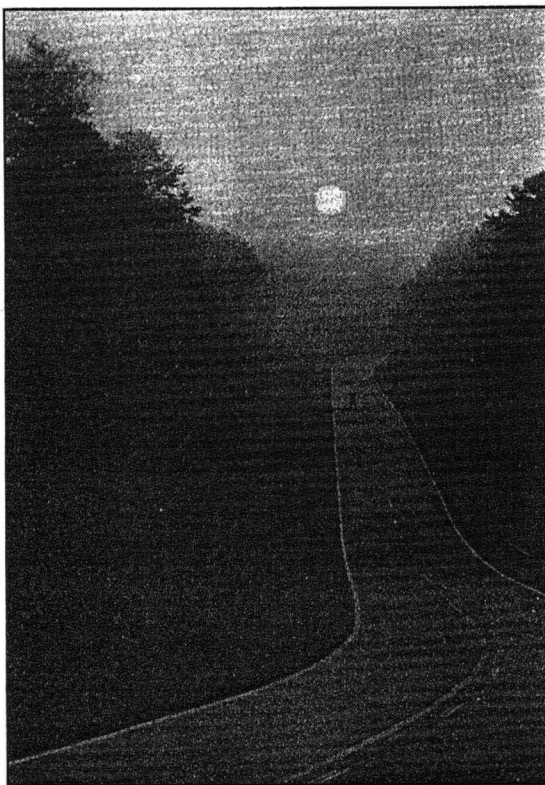
The South Alabamian had a visitor the other week who looked up the photograph and called me about it. He didn't like my suggestion that it may have been a mere mortal and insisted that I had seen a Bigfoot.

The man, who I'll just call Bill because he doesn't want his full name used, researches Bigfoot sightings for an organization called Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (BFRO). Bill said Alabama has a wealth of reports of Bigfoot sightings, including ones in Clarke and Washington counties. BFRO has an elaborate Web site that details these local sightings as well as others in Alabama and across the U.S.A.

I've been in the newspaper business in Clarke County going on 30 years and I've never heard any tales of Bigfoot here but Bill assured me that we are well-known to those who study the elusive creature.

Hunter, others reportedly know of creature

He said he had an appointment to talk to a deer hunter from



This is the photograph that was first published in 1977 of a figure crossing Highway 69 south of Coffeerville early one November morning.

Mobile who said a huge hairy creature walked on two legs under his tree stand in south Clarke County once. Bill also said he was to see people near Gainestown who had stories of the critters.

When I asked for specific names so I could talk to them too, Bill told me the witnesses were reluctant to give them because people would think they were crazy. I told him the newspaper business was about credibility and if he wouldn't let me use his name, or the people who have reportedly seen Bigfoots (or is it Bigfeet?) wouldn't let me use theirs, it'd be hard to print a very believable story.

He told me he did investigative work for law firms and businesses and his credibility could be called in question if he used his real name. He promised as soon as he retires he's coming out of the closet.

Area sightings posted on Webs ite

On the BFRO Web site, Report 1907 is from an unidentified motorist who says on Dec. 5, 1996 they saw a "large creature, about 6.5 feet tall and covered with hair" crossing Highway 69 in front of their vehicle near the Saltworks historical monument in the

Bolentown area about 3 p.m. "I had the window down in my car and I clearly heard a scream unlike any I have heard before in my life," the individual stated in the report filed Jan. 6, 1997.

In Report 961 submitted Feb. 10, 2000, "V. L." offered a sighting on Jan. 6, 1997 of a similar "hairy man-like creature" on Highway 56 about two miles west of Wagarville in Washington County.

"I stopped my car to go to the bathroom because I had to go bad and in the woods next to the road there was a horrible hairy man-like creature. It walked toward me and snorted. I was so scared. It had what looked like a small limb or something in its hand. It came up to three feet of me, grunted and walked off. I ran back to the car and got away. I saw it standing in my rear view mirror as I drove away. It was at the edge of the road. I think this monster is dangerous," the witness said.

He added, "There have been stories of animals with glowing eyes in those woods but I always thought they were deer."

An additional comment on the Saltworks monument sighting was posted in 1998. A "professional photographer" said he drove an hour-and-a-half to visit the sight after seeing it on the Web site. He said he found the remains of a goat that appeared to have been dead about a year—about the length of time of the sighting—and speculated that the creature may have killed the goat. A photograph of the goat's remains is posted on the Web site, for what that's worth.

He estimated the distances between this sighting and the Washington County sighting was "at least five miles." Looking at it on the map, it is at least nine to 10 miles.

Bigfoot sightings in Tuscaloosa, Chilton counties

BFRO's Web site details other sightings in Alabama. I told Bill I had looked at the site and he excitedly asked if I had seen the numerous sightings in Tuscaloosa County, including the most recent postings. I didn't have the heart to tell him that in Tuscaloosa County, some University of Alabama students are apt to see anything, or dream up anything to stir things up. Pink elephants are not unheard of there.

This past summer, *The Clanton Advertiser* reprinted some stories of Bigfoot in Chilton County that drew a lot of attention. It seems that in the 1960s strange footprints were found in one of Chilton County's peach orchards. The prints were "similar to a human but bigger and wider," said James Earl Johnson, the former Chilton County investigator, who tracked the critter.

Bryan Wyatt, a Bigfoot researcher, told NBC 13 television, "Supposedly the legend is that a hairy man-like creature that walks on two legs at some point inhabited the bottomland swamp regions in Chilton County in Clanton, Ala."

I told Bill that I had collected stories of black panthers and brownish cougars in Clarke County. I believe they exist or have existed. Just a few years ago I had collected a lot of stories on the big cats but my computer

crashed and I lost them all.

Back in the 1970s when I was driving between Coffeerville and Jackson regularly, a big black "thing" crossed the road in front of me near Cantuche Church on Highway 69. Again, it was an early foggy morning and the creature leaped off the bank from the left, crouched low for a second in the middle of the highway and leaped again and was gone. It stretched from almost one side of the highway to the other and appeared to have a long tail. It had a cat-like, springy movement and apparently was leaping eight to 12 feet at a bounce.

Bill suggested this was a Bigfoot but I don't think so. It was moving on four feet, not two and was more cat-like than ape-like. He suggested the "screams" that many have heard and attributed to big cats belong instead to Bigfoot.

Does monster exist in this area?

Does Bigfoot really exist? Does a man-ape species inhabit the river swamps and woodlands of Clarke and Washington counties? If so, how come some of our experienced hunters have never bagged one? Why haven't loggers or other outdoorsmen spotted one? Why hasn't someone run over one on the highway? How come no remains have ever been found?

BFRO's Web site offers detailed explanations as to why the creatures remain elusive but

I am skeptical of unidentified "witnesses" reports posted on a website and of an investigator who comes in here and wants information but doesn't even want full identity known (sorry, Bill). The Internet contains a wealth of information but it also contains a lot of misinformation too.

We want Bigfoot, panther stories

If any of our readers have ever seen one of these creatures, heard unusual screams or know of any other information that can be attributed to the animal, please call me at *The South Alabamian*, 251-246-4494, or *The Clarke County Democrat*, 251-275-3375. If you call *The Alabamian* and I'm not in, please ask for Editor Evan Carden. We will need your name but we may be willing to withhold it if you do not want it published. But we will need it for our records.

Likewise, if you have any stories of panthers or cougars in our area, we'd like to know about them too.

You know, the more I think about that mystery creature in the photograph from 27 years ago, the more I'm unsure...it was a man with a shovel when I passed by, wasn't it? Or had the figure moved out of the road by the time I went by?

Could it have been Bigfoot? Ol' Bill and BFRO have me questioning myself now!

POST JOURNAL, Jamestown, NY - Aug. 3, 2004

Vacationers Claim They Saw Creature In Lake Champlain

CHAMPLAIN, N.Y. (AP) — Five vacationers from Maryland claim they've seen Champ, the mythical Lake Champlain monster.

Bob Gload and four of his grandchildren said they saw a dark, black, snakelike creature while bass fishing Wednesday afternoon. Gload said there was an "explosion" in the water, and then he saw three humps, two-to-three-feet tall, four-to-five feet apart.

"I was born in Champlain. I never believed in Champ or the Loch Ness monster," Gload told the *Press-Republican* of Plattsburgh. "I believe now."

Last year, the *Skeptical Inquirer*

er, a publication that routinely challenges such things as UFOs, Bigfoot and other mysterious claims, disputed the existence of Champ.

The story by Joseph Nickell and Benjamin Radford was based on a visit they made to the lake as part of a Discovery Channel production. They swept the water with sonar and watched — unsuccessfully — at locations alleged to be particularly good for Champ sightings. In reviewing eyewitness accounts, the team noted "widely inconsistent" descriptions.

Lake Champlain is home to lake sturgeon that can grow to 7 feet in length and in some cases weigh up to 300 pounds.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, Denver, CO - Oct. 4, 2004

Earth's hummm...



The source of a mysterious low-frequency "hum" emitted by the Earth has been pinpointed, according to seismologists writing in the journal *Nature*. It has been known for years that the persistent noise — between 2 and 7 millihertz and well below the range of human hearing — is caused by large emissions of energy at or near the Earth's surface. But University of California at Berkeley experts Junkie Rhie and Barbara Romanowicz have deter-

mined that the hum originates mainly in the northern Pacific Ocean during the northern winter, and in the Southern Ocean near Antarctica during the southern winter. They believe storm energy released in deep ocean waves during each winter interacts with the seabed, creating vibrations that cause the hum.

CR: P. Noonan

Tales of sightings lend credence to Bigfoot myth

On my recent trip to the Bitterroot and Salmon River mountains in Montana and Idaho, I heard some chilling stories about sightings of Bigfoot or Sasquatch. Do these and other stories I've heard about this so-called myth have any credibility?

It seems so. Some of the Nez Perce people made me think there may be truth to the tales of Sasquatch.

It seemed no matter where I went during my trip to Idaho, the Corps of Discovery — Lewis and Clark — had left their mark on that part of the region. The Nez Perce, for example, are the *Nimi'ipuu*, which means "the real people," but they were given the name "Nez Perce" in 1805 by interpreters of Lewis and Clark. Apparently the interpretation means "Pierced Nose." (They say this was not a common practice among their people.)

When I stayed with my adopted Nez Perce relatives, we spent a lot of time visiting. They are storytellers — tellers of real-life stories.

This is one of their Sasquatch accounts.

When Muriel and her father, Allen, were driving to work a few years ago, they came upon an unexpected sight. They were heading for a nearby town some 60 miles west of Kamiah, Idaho, where they live, she said.

This is mountainous country. On a



Dorreen Yellow Bird

HERALD
COLUMNIST

large mountainlike hill next to the road, Muriel, who was on the passenger side of the car, said she saw a large animal on the hillside. At first she thought it was a cow grazing, she said. It was bending over and suddenly stood up. It looked like a giant, hairy man. It turned its body toward them and looked human. When it saw them, it ran.

With only a few strides, it was over this steep hill.

They stopped and walked to the spot where they saw what they assume was Bigfoot or Sasquatch. They found the spot and it looked as though the creature had been digging roots. There are roots on the reserva-

tions that the Nez Perce harvest and use for eating, making mats and so on.

They measured its footprints on the ground. The prints looked like those of human feet, except much, much bigger.

Muriel covered the same ground over the hill, following the footprints it made in the ground. The beast made it in three or four strides. It took her at least 5 minutes to cover the same ground.

There have been many reports of Bigfoot or Sasquatch in that area, but people often don't feel comfortable telling their story because the public doesn't believe them.

A spiritual leader who also was hearing that story said it is true, there are indeed these manlike beasts. He also has seen, heard and smelled them.

This was on the West Coast, he said. It was a place where the Sasquatch frequently are seen. He was taken to the place by people who wanted him to see them. They know where the Bigfoot is and keep that home a secret, he said.

He and his friends waited for the chance to see them. I don't think that at that point, he was convinced Sasquatch was real.

But while he was waiting, he heard noises in the trees, he said. And before he heard them, he could smell them. They smelled awful.

And when they came into view, they were as people had reported: large, hairy beasts with long arms, but not gorillas, he said. The creatures made low guttural sounds as if they were talking, but the spiritual leader couldn't understand any of the words.

He got a good look.

When these manlike beasts had left, this man and his friends examined the area where they had been. They found footprints that were three times the size of a human's. The footprints were shaped like a human foot, he said.

They also didn't report their sightings to anyone. They are best left alone he said.

I believe there are many things beyond our understanding. I believe my grandmother was right when she told her grandchildren, "it is a fool who thinks they know everything and have seen everything." There are things that are strange to us because we aren't familiar with them, but that doesn't mean they're make-believe.

Perhaps way up there in those dense mountain ranges, these manlike creatures have thrived. Or, perhaps not.

Yellow Bird writes columns Tuesday and Saturday. Reach her at 780-1228, (800) 477-6572 ext. 228 or dyellowbird@gherald.com.

CANNOCK CHASE POST, Wolverhampton, England - Aug. 19, 2004 CR: T. Good

Castle Ring sighting of Big Foot creature

Exclusive by Andy Richardson

to the German cemetery.

The terrified group wouldn't report the incident at first for fear of ridicule but finally contacted the official Gulf Coast Bigfoot Research Organisation based in America.

Graham Allen, chairman of Staffordshire UFO Group, said: "There has been a number of these sightings in the Chase area. The one in 1998 is a well documented case and Mr Downes did take part in an investigation on the Chase. These people are genuine and are convinced at what they have seen is a Big Foot type creature."

There have been hundreds of sightings of Big Foot in the western regions of America and the sasquatch, as the creature is known in Canada.

The creature communicates through grunts, cries and whistles and is believed to be placid and shy.

The Big Foot creature is added to the growing list of Chase mysteries including the Chase Beast, reports of triangular shaped UFOs, ghostly apparitions and the wild boar.

■ Have you seen the Chase Big Foot or anything else unexplained on the Chase? If so contact the Chase Post on 01543 501762.



The mystery of the Chase Big Foot is growing following the latest sighting of a 7ft beast prowling on Castle Ring.

The latest sighting was in May when Alex Williams, from Birmingham, spotted the creature at the well known landmark.

He was driving home from a business meeting in Rugeley when he saw the beast on the Iron Age Fort at around 11.15pm.

Mr Williams saw a large, shambling, hair-covered creature lumber across the road and into the trees.

He said it lasted seven or eight seconds but that the illumination from the lights of his car lit the creature up perfectly to make out its form.

He said: "It was about seven feet tall, with short, shiny dark brown hair, large head and had eyes that glowed red."

He had contacted the Phenomena Stone Forest website which chronicles paranormal events and mysterious creatures.

The website confirms that Castle Ring has been the site of several unusual events involving so-called man-beasts.

The Post had exclusively revealed how a world renowned cryptozoologist had been called to Cannock Chase to investigate a sighting of Big Foot in 1998.

Cryptozoologist Jonathon Downes was called in after a group of four spotted the creature on the Chase in woods near

erinary services to conduct further investigation.

Osburn said incidences of livestock mutilation were rampant in the area about 20 years ago, but this is the first time that any of her cattle have been mutilated. Osburn said she has a "small cattle operation" of about 200 head. She has moved the calves in her herd to a different pasture.

"I guess if it's going to happen anytime, it's going to happen around Halloween," she said. "I hope it's not the start of something, but you never know."

Osburn said she has started to cir-

culate word of the incident to other ranchers, so they can watch their livestock.

Law enforcement is looking for leads in the case, and anyone who has seen suspicious activity in the livestock fields should call the sheriff's office, Folks said.

Folks said livestock mutilation wasn't unheard of in Moffat County, though it is rare.

"It's a little more common when you get closer to the larger areas," he said.

If charged, a person could face a minimum of a misdemeanor charge of animal cruelty, said Amy Fitch, 14th Judicial District chief deputy district attorney.

Osburn said she wouldn't be as outraged by the incident if a person needed the meat for survival. Instead, she has pictures of the dead animals with only their sexual organs removed.

Insurance will cover the costs of the animals if it is proved that the animals were shot, hit by lightning, drowned or hit by a vehicle, she said.

"It's scary," she said. "People feel pretty immune from crime when out here, but we're not. It wasn't a good trick, and it sure as hell wasn't a treat."

Amy Hatten can be reached at 824-7031 or ahatten@craigdaily-press.com

Sheriff probes mutilated cattle

Two steers, one heifer slaughtered

By AMY HATTEN
DAILY PRESS WRITER

The Moffat County Sheriff's Office is investigating the mutilation and killing of three area cows.

Two steers and one heifer in a herd owned by Jacque Osburn mysteriously have been killed and their genitals removed between Oct. 10 and 16, Moffat County Sheriff's deputy Courtland Folks said.

"Possibly it could have been done for some type of worship with the organs," Folks said. "It's something that makes livestock owners uncomfortable."

Osburn said the cattle that was in a pasture near the Craig-Moffat County Airport already had been sold to a buyer. She estimated a loss of up to 1,300 pounds of meat and a personal financial hit of up to \$2,400.

Folks said no visible marks were present on the cattle to determine how they were killed, but the department is contacting the state's vet-

Falling ice a melting mystery



Breez Halte, 8, sits in her bedroom where a ball of ice fell through the ceiling Thursday and hit her bed. Breez was not home at the time. The hole in the ceiling is about 18-by-24 inches in size.

Kent parents happy their daughter wasn't in room when chunks fell on bed

By Bruce Rommel
Journal Reporter

KENT — They came from the sky! That's not the title of a classic 1950s science fiction movie.

But it's about all Troy and Rachel Halte know for sure about the ice chunks that slammed

through the roof of their East Hill home and tore a hole in the Sheetrock ceiling before landing on the bed of their 8-year-old daughter.

The couple was thankful that their daughter, Breez, wasn't in her bedroom playing or doing homework when the mysterious chunks fell from above.

"It was pretty frightening when we analyzed the situation later," said Troy Halte, a longshoreman for the Port of Seattle.

The couple said Friday that they've been speculating the ice chunks fell from an aircraft heading

for Sea-Tac Airport, about seven miles northeast of their neighborhood.

Federal Aviation Administration officials are investigating. Mike Fergus, an FAA spokesman, said the fist-sized ice chunks Troy Halte found in his daughter's bedroom and in the back yard don't appear to be "blue ice."

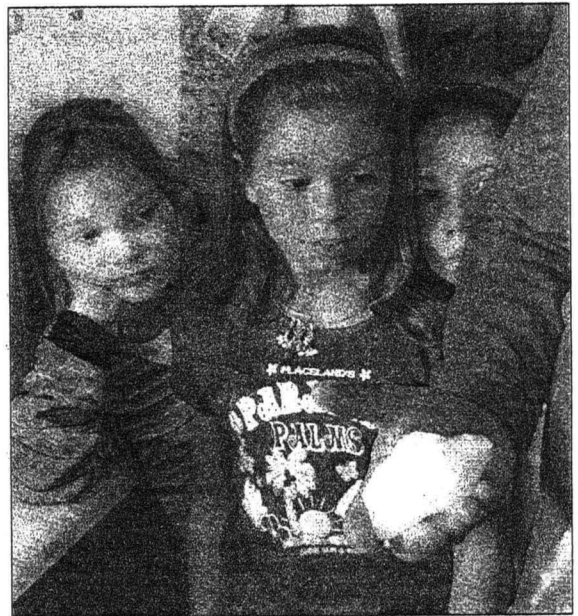
That's the stuff that occasionally falls from passing aircraft that have leaks in their lavatory systems, which are filled with a bluish-green fluid.

As the fluid dribbles outside the skin of an aircraft in flight, it is immediately frozen into thin layers of ice on the aircraft's exterior. Eventually, the "blue ice" builds up and breaks free and falls.

Such incidents are rare, although Fergus said he knows of two incidents in the Santa Cruz, Calif., area in 2003, where residents found "blue ice" fallen from aircraft. He didn't know of any such incidents in Western Washington in recent years.

Troy Halte found five ice chunks of what he described as "clear ice," saving several chunks in his freezer. The blankets and sheets of Breez's bed were soaked, indicating some of it had melted before the family returned home and discovered it.

The Haltes have lived in the one-story rambler on 120th Avenue Southeast near Millennium Elementary School for about seven years. They often see aircraft passing overhead.



Breez Halte (left) and her friends Delaney Vesperman (center) and Kimberly Zielke, all 8-year-olds, look at a piece of ice Friday from a much larger piece that fell through Breez's bedroom ceiling Thursday, hitting her bed. Breez was not home at the time.

When the ice chunks fell isn't known. Rachel Halte, a service technician at Boeing, was at work Thursday when Troy Halte left about 4 p.m. with Breez and her 2-year-old brother, Lee, for Breez's ballet lesson.

They returned about 5:30 p.m., and Breez entered her bedroom to find the down comforter and blankets on her bed in disarray.

"I saw the insulation hanging down from the hole up there," she said, pointing at an oval-shaped hole, about 18-by-24 inches in size in the ceiling.

"Then I saw a pile of stuff on my bed and I went to get my dad," Breez said.

Since nobody knows when the ice chunks hit the family's home, there's no way to tell whether they might have fallen from a commercial passenger or cargo airplane, or some private aircraft.

Mary Jane Olson, a spokeswoman for The Boeing Co., said her company's "icing experts" say it is theoretically possible, under certain weather conditions, for ice to form on the leading edge of an airplane's wings, then build up and fall off.

But Olson said she's never heard of any incident in this area or elsewhere where icing from an aircraft fell and struck buildings or landed near people.

"We have airline customers around the world, and whenever anything unusual happens, we hear about it," Wilson said.

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, Denver, CO - Oct. 18, 2004

New ape



A giant ape unlike any previously seen has been found in a remote area of central Africa, according to a report in the journal *New Scientist*. Wildlife experts said the ape, which stands over 6 feet in height and has similarities to both chimpanzees and gorillas, may be a new species of primate. Villagers in the far north of the Democratic Republic of Congo say the apes can be ferocious and are capable of killing lions. But unlike gorillas, which charge upon seeing a threat, the new apes turn around and silently slip away into the forest when encountered.

Jefferson conference will probe Bigfoot question

As Agent Mulder might say, "The truth is out there ..."

By ANTHONY DAVIS
Texarkana Gazette

JEFFERSON, Texas—For those who are still seeking the truth about one of the world's biggest hominid mysteries, Bigfoot, the place to be Oct. 23-24, is this town, where the Texas Bigfoot Research Center will again hold its annual conference.

"The event has continued to grow in size from 150 attendees in 2001, 250 attendees in 2002 and over 300 attendees in 2003," said TBRC member Craig Woolheater of Dallas. "We have outgrown the facility which was used in previous years, as last year's event was standing room only. This year we have moved to Jefferson High School, which has doubled our capacity."

The conference schedule includes guest speakers from around the country and Canada, evidence displays and video presentations.

"We have an impressive lineup of speakers including John Kirk III of Vancouver, British Columbia, president of the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club. He will be speaking on the legitimate evidence of the existence of Sasquatch using criminal investigation methods," Woolheater said in an announcement about the conference.

"BFRPO curators Alton Higgins and Sue Lindley will be on hand to discuss their research and findings. Alton will be dis-



Submitted photo
Joe Napoli, director of field operations for the Texas Bigfoot Research Center, paid a visit to the Sulphur River Bottoms in Miller County last winter looking for clues to a reported Sasquatch sighting. Although no sighting occurred, researchers said they received a response from the darkness from a broadcast call.

cussing the circumstances surrounding apparent Sasquatch handprint finds in Oklahoma.

"Sue will be talking about her Sasquatch

sightings in Washington, California and Oregon. She will also discuss Bigfoot behavior at adolescent and adult stages,

Woman claims she saw the skunk ape

N.W. FLORIDA DAILY NEWS, Fort Walton Beach, FL - Nov. 26, 2004 CR: R. Reid

LAKELAND (KRT) — Urban legends are supposed to be legends and that's all. But if you ask Jennifer Ward about the Florida skunk ape, she will tell you it stepped out of the mists of myth and into reality.

"I never thought anything like that was out there before," Ward, 30, said last week. "But I know there is now."

Ward's encounter with the hairy creature came in August, about a week after Hurricane Charley, along a rural stretch of road as she was driving home from a friend's house. Her daughters were asleep in the back seat and it was approaching dusk.

"I noticed something in the ditch. I looked over, and I guess it noticed me. It rose up," she said explaining that the animal had been crouching when she first saw it.

"Its eyes went from serious, maybe it was getting frogs — it was focused on something," she continued. "When he saw me, he was as surprised as I was. I slowed down to almost a stop; I didn't stop because I was scared. It was almost dark, but I could see it and get a good look."

Ward said the creature was 6 to 8 feet tall and covered with hair about 2 inches long. There was white around the eyes, but she did not notice a nose or ears. She said the lips were full with the texture of a dog's paw pad. Its hands were drawn up next to its body.



Special to The Daily News
A man snapped this picture of what he says the Sarasota County Sheriff's Department identified as the skunk ape.

At first, Ward only told friends and family about what she saw. She acknowledged that it took considerable time for her to decide to go public.

Florida skunk ape sightings have been reported for more than 200 years, according to Scott Marlowe, co-founder of Pangea Institute in Winter Haven and instructor of an upcoming college course on cryptozoology, the study of hidden animals and the possibility of their existence.

He said there have been about 75 reported sightings of the skunk ape in Florida in the past 20 years. This Southern relative of Bigfoot gets its name for the awful stench often associat-

explaining Sasquatch intelligence, sense of humor and her food and beer experiments."

Nick Redfern, a British researcher, will discuss research relative to the Patterson/Gimlin Sasquatch film and Bigfoot creatures in the United Kingdom. Jim Chilcutt, recognized forensic latent print analyst, will speak on his evaluations of Bigfoot casts and his rare expertise in nonhuman primate prints.

"Chilcutt now believes that, while some of the prints are fakes, some are the genuine prints of a reclusive animal which has yet to be documented or studied," says Woolheater.

Rick Noll has been researching Sasquatch phenomena since 1969.

He has worked with the major Sasquatch researchers and also has skills in digital technology and related electronics he uses to monitor camera traps.

His presentation, "Pacific Northwest Field Research Techniques," will reveal information about his methods of conducting field research and video and photo analysis.

General admission to the event is \$10 and will be payable at the conference site.

For more information on related activities, call 1-877-529-5550.

ed with it. Ward said she could not remember an odor, but that may have been what first caught her attention.

Joy Hill, a spokeswoman for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, would not comment about whether she thinks the sighting was genuine but said her agency has received no reports of such creatures.

Marlowe is searching the area of Ward's sighting outside Lakeland for footprints and hair that may have been snagged on a branch. He said the increasing development in Florida means man and beast will cross paths more often.

"With so much encroachment, it's almost inevitable if the thing exists, we're going to find it," Marlowe said.

The skunk ape makes its winter home in the Everglades, Marlowe said, but may move about seasonally.

Loren Coleman, author of the 2003 book, "Bigfoot! The True Story of Apes in America," is considered the leading cryptozoologist in the world and has been tracking Bigfoot-type sightings for 45 years. He said weather events, such as hurricanes, often result in sightings.

"Hurricanes and tornadoes stir up wildlife. They travel to get settled," Coleman said in a telephone interview.

As for Ward, she said she drives a little slower now so she can look around, and she keeps a camera in her vehicle. The Lakeland woman said she hopes her report does not stir up any craziness among people looking for the creature.

"I have the feeling they do watch a lot," she said. "I wish I could see it again. I want people to see what I saw."