

UFO

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OTHERWORLDLY

Desert town known and revered for UFO activity

BY MARK MUCKENFUSS
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

They stop into Halliday's 10 to 15 times a week, looking for little green men.

Faith Schreppe, the woman behind the counter in Landers' only convenience market — about half of a 7-Eleven — points them down Bellfield Road toward the domed Integratron and to the sandy road beyond that leads to Giant Rock. Both sites are integral to the world of UFO enthusiasts and both have given this sprawling but thinly populated desert town a place on the map.

It's no Roswell, N.M., but locals say the intrigue of otherworldly visitations is an accepted part of the local culture.

Giant Rock is said to be a site where alien beings landed and met with George Van Tassel, a one-time aeronautics engineer, beginning in 1953. Van Tassel later spent years raising money for and building — but never completing — his Integratron, a house-sized machine designed to repair and rejuvenate the body at a cellular level. Van Tassel said he got the plans for the Integratron from his alien friends.

Schreppe, who has lived here for 20 years, has seen a lot of visitors come and go. But they have all been human. She's never observed anything in the night sky she couldn't explain.

"But you should talk to John," she says, as a motorcycle-helmeted man walks in and heads for the beer in the refrigerators at the back of the store.

John Brady, 60,



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clockwise from bottom left, Nancy Ako, Arjuna, Alice Jones, Kathy Fulton and Wink Mann inside the Integratron, purportedly designed by extraterrestrials.

says he has lived in Landers most of his life. At one time, his family owned Giant Rock and operated the cafe there, the Come On Inn, which is today only a scarred and broken concrete pad. On "fly-in" weekends in the 1950s and 1960s, the now long-gone runway near the restaurant would be lined with private planes,

he says.

"I've seen UFOs," Brady says, his voice muffled by the helmet that he never removes during the interview. "Still do sometimes. I've seen several

dancing lights over at Goat Mountain. I had a couple of skeptics with me and I said, 'You'll see one, one day.' And they did."

The lights were not the first encounter for Brady. In the 1970s, he says, he saw something that seriously affected him.

He was in his truck on Bellfield Road when he looked up.

"A couple hundred feet above my head there was like a white cloud with lights," he says. "I could see the portals."

At about that time, he says, Van Tassel zoomed past in his Cadillac, heading toward the Integratron. The hovering craft, Brady says, took off, following the car.

"I haven't talked about that in years," he says, adding that recounting the memory shakes him up.

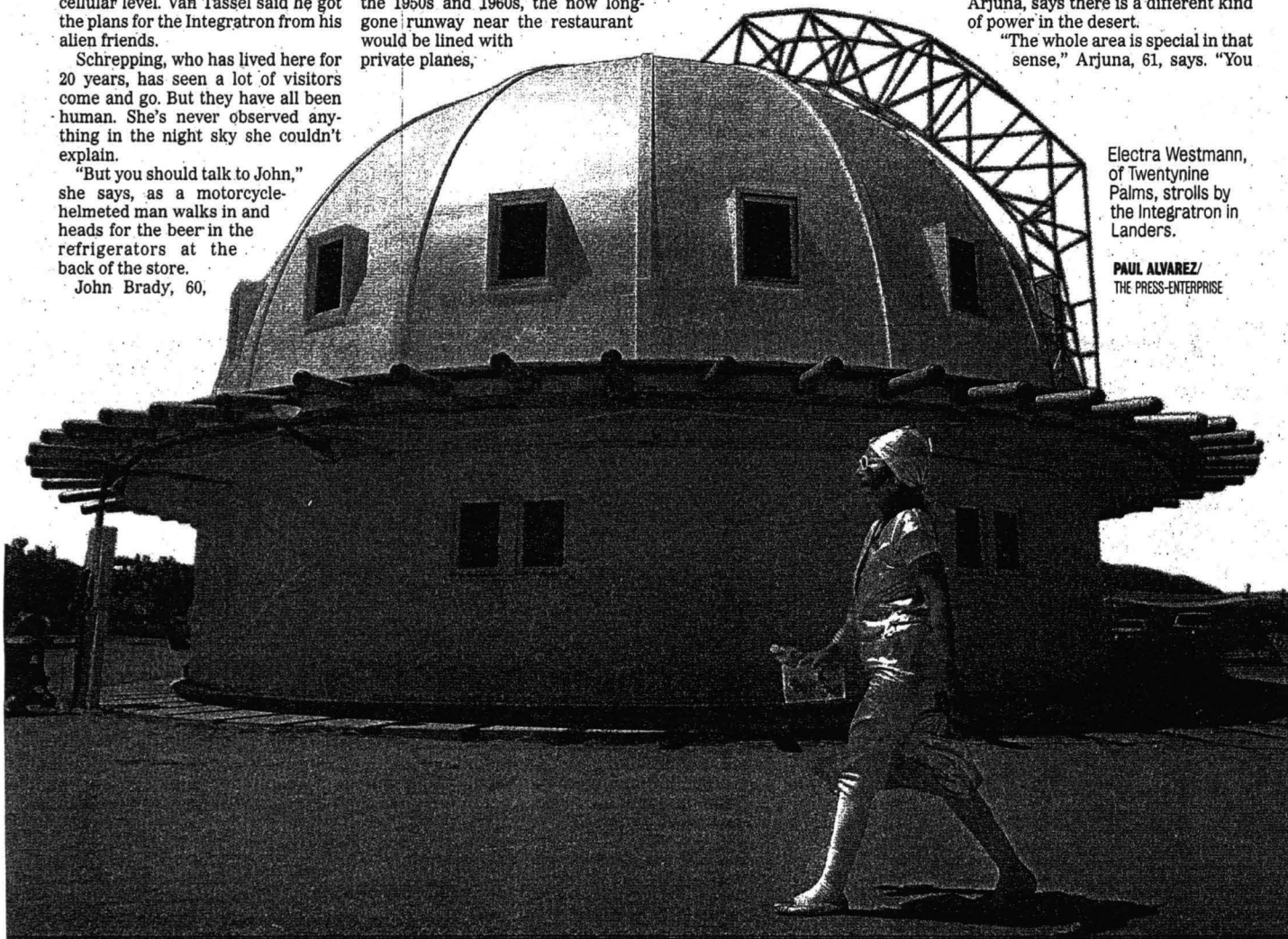
Reports of such sightings aren't limited to Landers, of course. In fact, some say the desert lends itself to extraordinary experiences.

A Tibetan horn player and throat singer, who lives in nearby Joshua Tree and goes by the single name of Arjuna, says there is a different kind of power in the desert.

"The whole area is special in that sense," Arjuna, 61, says. "You

Electra Westmann, of Twentynine Palms, strolls by the Integratron in Landers.

PAUL ALVAREZ/
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE



(continued on page 2)

Spray
of the
Falls
—
Rich
Ecke



Mariana's UFO film one of the best produced

Great Falls area residents have seen many unidentified flying objects over the years.

Some of those people might have had too much hootch to drink at the time.

But that wasn't the case for Nicholas Mariana, who filmed strange objects from Legion baseball park with a 16mm camera in August 1950.

Mariana was general manager of the Great Falls Electric's baseball team at the time.

Little did he know that his quick-thinking work with a camera would make Mariana a heroic figure among UFO buffs.

Mariana was standing in the bleachers one day when he was amazed to see "two vehicles hovering above the pitcher's mound," his son related in an interview Saturday.

The elder Mariana, who studied journalism at the University of Montana, kept a movie camera in his glove box.

He ran for the camera, and stood in the bleachers behind home plate filming closeups of the strange objects.

After a short time, the aircrafts shot up into the air in a flash.

Soon, "they were little dots on the horizon," said the son, Nick Mariana of Victor.

Mariana's film is credited as one of the best films ever taken of possible extra-terrestrial activity. And he had a witness, his secretary, who backed up his story.

Mariana later complained the best segment of his film disappeared after he gave the movie to Malmstrom Air Force Base to analyze. Base officials denied intentionally clipping out the best closeups from the film.

Mariana once appeared on "I've Got a Secret," a TV program hosted by Gary Moore in which a panel tried to guess what secret a guest had.

Panelists didn't guess Mariana's secret.

Mariana died Aug. 20, 1999, in Oregon, but interest in his film continues.

Mariana's son, Nick, was born in Great Falls, but the family almost immediately moved to Missoula.

Today, he owns a former Great Falls business called Mr. Video. As it turned out, he had his own movie camera when he was a kid.

Nick Mariana shares his father's view that the government took the best part of the film and stuck it in a classified folder somewhere.

"They don't lose that stuff," he said. The younger Mariana thinks the vehicle may well have been from another world.

"I'm a believer," the Victor man said. "I think it's perfectly feasible that they've made contact."

At the same time, he said there are plenty of "crackpots" out there who falsely claim to have been abduct-

don't have all this pavement and you can reconnect with the magnetic energy of the earth."

Fans of the Integratron, such as Arjuna, say it lies at the junction of three different "ley lines," global connections that run between significant world landmarks, particularly those tied to some sort of religion. The lines are supposed to generate some form of energy.

"When you get a vortex like this," Arjuna says of the Integratron, "you're blessed if you can be part of it."

He thinks it's also a blessing to be in an area that aliens seem to find of interest.

"I believe there's an alien force here on this planet," he says. "I've seen some things that I can't explain."

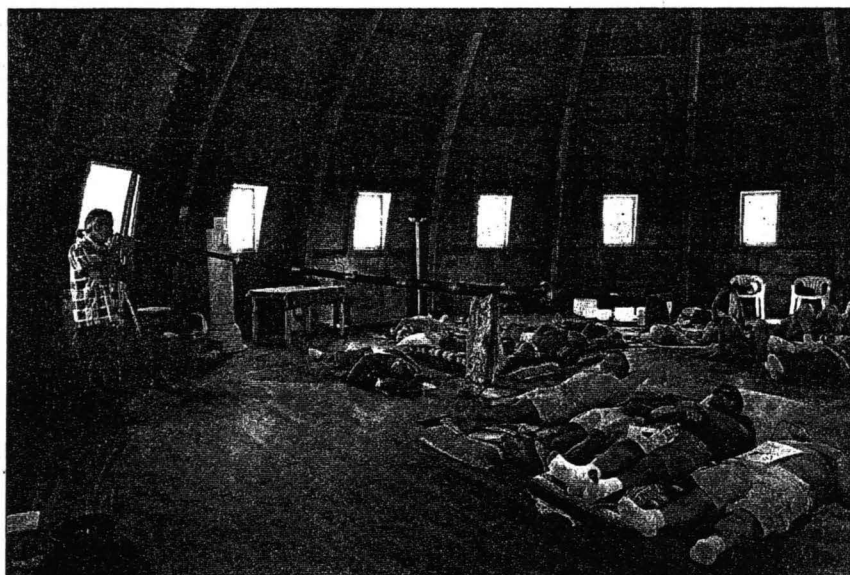
Locals, he says, seem to accept it.

"For the most part," he says, "it's a positive experience. I've never heard anybody complain about it. There is such a strong force, why question it?"

Arjuna was one of those involved in a recent UFO convention held at the Integratron. He spent much of the day guiding visitors through a sound meditation in the upper floor of the Integratron.

Downstairs, Lloyd Nowell, 64, gave the same visitors an introduction to the Integratron, playing the role of Van Tassel, who died in 1977. Nowell, a member of the Morongo Basin Historical Society, also participates in Old West reenactments at nearby Pioneertown on the weekends.

Researching Van Tassel and his work in order to play the role was interesting, he says. He's performed as the late UFO contactee so often that local folks often refer to him as George.



PAUL ALVAREZ/THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

Arjuna, left, leads a group of UFO enthusiasts in meditation at the Integratron in Landers.

"When you get a vortex like this, you're blessed if you can be part of it. ... I believe there's an alien force here on this planet."

ARJUNA,
FROM JOSHUA TREE

While alien visitors don't come up in conversation on a regular basis, Nowell says it is part of the community's culture. But it also might be part of the American culture in general, he points out.

Lowell counts himself among those who believe in the exist-



Ken Keller, 69, of Yucca Valley, visits Giant Rock.

tence of visitors from other worlds.

"There is probably something that we aren't really able to

comprehend that's out there," he says.

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IDAHO STATE JOURNAL, Pocatello, ID - April 9, 2006

UFO expert to speak at ISU

By Jimmy Hancock
Journal Writer

POCATELLO — Robert Hastings has been part of the university speaking circuit for 25 years. Tuesday he is bringing his lecture, "UFOs: The Hidden History," to Idaho State University.

"We chose Hastings because he has been popular when speaking here in the past," said Cameron Homer, issues and speakers chair for the Associated Students of Idaho State University. "His presentation centers mostly on government documents and he couples that with picture and video evidence."

Hastings' lecture focuses on the interest that unidentified flying objects seem to have in American nuclear weapons facilities. He said federal documents released in recent years under the Freedom of Information Act show an unusually high number of UFO incidents around military installations and especially nuclear weapons sites.

"The information I and other researchers have accessed is worthy of public attention," said Hastings, who lives in South Carolina. "There is an official policy of secrecy. The people deserve to know what is going on."

Hastings focuses his research on UFO incidents involving nuclear facilities, such as military bases where nukes are kept. He believes the bases play a significant role in the reason UFOs are visiting.

"I have asked my sources over the years to speculate for me what is occurring and the majority of them believe someone is issuing us a warning," Hastings said. "They have an interest in our nuclear weapons and are demonstrating the ability to affect them."

Hastings said in cases where he has been able to speak with personnel at a base that's been visited by a UFO, the stories are starkly similar.

There is usually a call from a guard to the commander reporting saucer or disk-shaped objects above the base. Commanding officers typically berate the guard only to watch as one by one each of the base's nuclear missiles goes off-line just a few seconds after the initial UFO report was received.

Hastings said in all the cases in which he was able to speak with the people involved, they say that the missile guidance systems were permanently damaged at the same time the UFOs were reported above the base.

"The odds of even one of these guidance systems failing at that exact moment are very remote," Hastings said.

He said that there are far more questions than answers about why this happens, but all the people he has interviewed over the years are adamant about what they witnessed.

His interest in UFO research was sparked when he was in the control tower at Malmstrom Air Force Base near Great Falls, Mont., in 1967. Hastings, a self-described Air Force brat, was in-

yited to the tower at the base his father was stationed.

While in the tower, five UFOs were tracked for several minutes and jets were launched to intercept them, he said. He later learned that as the jets closed in, the UFOs performed a vertical ascent and left the area at enormous speed.

Tuesday's 90-minute lecture will begin at 7 p.m. in the Idaho State University Bengal Theater in the Pond Student Union.

The event is free for students, \$2 for ISU faculty and staff, and \$3 for the general public.

As an additional treat, the theater is showing "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" after Hastings' lecture.

"We wanted to have a package deal," Homer said. "We decided to show 'Close Encounters' because it's a little more believable than something like 'Independence Day' or 'Star Wars.'"

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY DETAILED IN BOOK

'Skinwalker' tells mysterious story of Fort Duchesne ranch

A Skinwalker is a witch that takes the shape of an animal and has supernatural powers including immortality.

By Lezlee E. Whiting

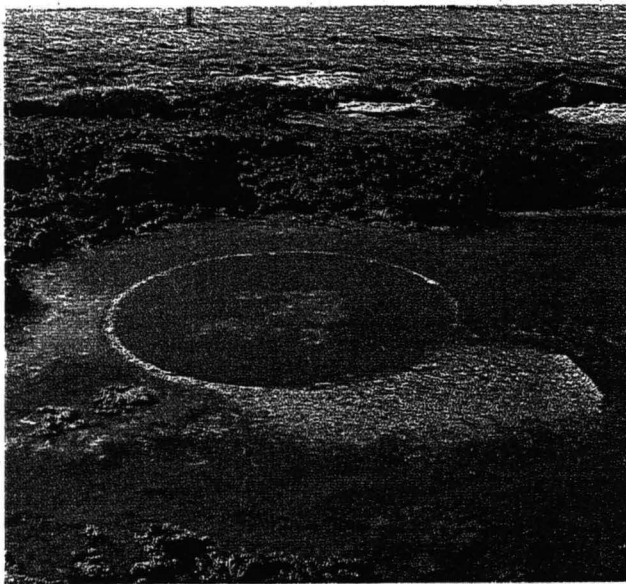
In 1996 a Las Vegas billionaire bought a ranch in Fort Duchesne from a family who had for all intents and purposes, been run off of their property by forces they could not explain. All they knew was that a series of bizarre events on their property had left them financially ailing, mentally anguished, and in the end horrified and afraid.

Vanishing and mutilated cattle. Unidentified Flying Objects. Huge, otherworldly creatures. Invisible objects emitting magnetic fields capable of causing destruction.

A book has now been published in narrative form about what went on in the late 1990s and early 2000s at what was dubbed the "UFO ranch," an area in west Uintah County known for its 50 year history of perplexing and even frightening events said to have taken place there.

Colm Kelleher, the author of the recently released "Hunt for the Skinwalker," was a research immunologist at National Jewish Center in Denver when he came across "a very strange job placement advertisement" in a respected scientific magazine. It was the wording that caught his eye, he said. The ad's author was looking for scientists interested in "exploring the origin and evolution of consciousness in the universe."

Kelleher said he found the ad



ICE CIRCLES — In February 2002, as most paranormal activity at the Gorman ranch had slowed to a trickle, this perfect circle appeared overnight in a shallow, ice-covered pond not far from the main house. The circle, which was just under six feet in diameter, was carved about one-quarter inch deep. The ice was so thin that any sort of weight on top would have broken it. There were no footprints nearby.

"so completely unusual" that he was compelled to respond. "I have had a long standing interest in scientific anomalies," he said in an interview with the *Uintah Basin Standard* from his home in northern California. Kelleher is currently working as a senior scientist in biotechnology in the private sector.

The native of Ireland, with reams of scientific degrees behind his name, answered the ad and joined a team of respected mainstream research scientists with backgrounds in physics, biochemistry and veterinary studies, work-

ing for the National Institute of Discovery Science (NIDS).

Founded by real estate and aerospace tycoon Robert Bigelow, NIDS was intent on removing the crackpot element from the study of the paranormal. His goal was to study related events purely from an unbiased and authentic scientific angle using the brightest minds and the latest technology.

"NIDS had a uniquely deep range of analytical capabilities that most organizations involved in the study of anomalies would never



UFORANCH.—Surveillance and full-time caretakers remain on the ranch in Fort Duchesne that has become known for the paranormal activity that has occurred there. The property is still owned by the National Institute for Discovery Science, however active research has been downgraded although the ranch is still under 24 hour surveillance. "People have never been encouraged to trespass on that property," said author and research scientist Colm Kelleher. "It is not a place people should visit."



IN BROAD DAYLIGHT THE UNEXPLAINED — This calf was healthy just 45 minutes before it was found in this condition. There wasn't a drop of blood anywhere on the carcass or on the ground. "The animal looked like its ribs had been cut open ... one of the ears with the bright yellow ear tag was also gone," said Colm Kelleher, the author of "Hunt for the Skinwalker." The ranch foreman and his wife were obviously freaked out about this. They were on the field in daylight."

have had these advantages," Kelleher explained.

That's how Kelleher and other NIDS scientists and researchers ended up living part-time on the mysterious ranch in west Uintah County that borders the Ute Indian Reservation. The reservation itself, as they discovered through interviews with its residents, is not exempt from unexplained events similar to those that occurred on the neighboring ranch.

Kelleher worked with award-winning Las Vegas investigative reporter George Knapp, the only journalist ever allowed on the ranch. Knapp teamed with Kelleher to publish his first-person account of what happened on the remote property when NIDS set out to scientifically study the ranch that had been besieged by forces, which they found out, never played by the rules.

"The book is a narrative of many of the incidences that happened to the Gorman family (names of the family have been changed at their request), prior to NIDS taking over the ranch," Kelleher said. he Gorman family's experiences are recounted in detail in the book, however they have moved out of state and want absolutely nothing to do with the notoriety their former property has attracted, he said.

In section two of the book, Kelleher and Knapp detail the hundreds of days and nights spent on what was a working cattle ranch at the time, and the observations of many of its haunting mysteries that happened to NIDS researchers beginning in March 1997.

One of those still unexplained events involved the mutilation of an 84-pound calf which occurred just minutes after the animal had been tagged by the ranch manager.

"We were fortunate to get the vet and full NIDS staff up there in five hours," Kelleher related. "It was 10 a.m., March 10, 1997, the ranch manager and his wife had just tagged it and their dog started acting strangely. They went back to investigate 45 minutes later and in the field in broad daylight found the calf and its body cavity empty."

One of the strangest things was there was not a drop of blood on the animal or on the ground, said Kelleher. "Most people know if an 84 pound calf is killed there is blood spread around ... it was as if all of the blood had been removed in a very thorough way."

The "calf incident" was the opening salvo, according to Kelleher. "That early summer and stretching into late summer there were multiple incidents." There were large, ferocious animals with piercing yellow eyes. Although they were seen, they left few tracks and in a few cases were not injured when struck by bullets.

"Three eye-witnesses saw a very large animal in a tree and also another large animal at the base of the tree," he said. The animal was shot but was never found. "We had videotape equipment, night vision equipment. We started hunting around the tree for the carcass and there was no evidence whatsoever."

The same problem was encountered when flying orbs were seen by several people. Expensive au-

dio and video recording devices meticulously placed, produced nothing and one time the NIDS teams found their equipment vandalized, with taped wires ripped apart and no evidence at all as to the culprit or culprits that wreaked the havoc.

"It was very difficult to gather the kind of evidence consistent with scientific publication," said Kelleher.

Kelleher and Knapp not only allow the reader inside the ranch, which remains off limits to the public, they also provide the detailed historical background on phenomenon such as skinwalkers, UFO sightings, and flying orbs. They delved into Native American legends and curses that had some connection to the events they had witnessed or had recounted to them. The pair also spoke to a number of Uintah Basin residents who shared their own encounters with the paranormal in areas not too far from the ranch.

Kelleher and Knapp scouted out the gamut of possible explanations for what they had seen. Hoaxes, hallucinations, conspiracy theories, military experiments were all investigated and essentially eliminated. Despite plotting close to 100 incidents or anomalies (something that doesn't have a ready natural explanation) the authors did not lay out the full array of scientific data and charts in the book, preferring to gear their narrative to the lay person.

Did Kelleher feel his involvement with NIDS — which has since disbanded after paranormal

phenomenon at the ranch and indeed throughout the nation seemed to dramatically decrease in early 2000 — was worth it?

While acknowledging that the field of the paranormal (poltergeist, ghost hunters, UFOs) has "a bad reputation," his answer is still unequivocal. "I firmly believe the study of anomalies can open doors into other fields."

For Kelleher, research into anomalies that occurred on the ranch are basic to the discovery process involved in science because they ultimately open doors to advance mainstream knowledge. "One-hundred years ago meteors were not considered real in science. They were figments of imagination, hallucinations ... that's the way science progresses. NIDS in Utah was pretty unique."



FOREIGN NEWS

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

EVENING NEWS, Scarborough, England - April 20, 2006

UFO investigator's anger over movie

by Tim Readman
tim.readman@yrnld.co.uk

A UFO investigator is to burn almost 20 years of research because of housewives' favourites Ant and Dec.

Russ Kellett is upset that the Geordie duo's movie about a faked alien autopsy is taken more seriously and grabs more headlines than "real" sightings of alien craft.

The 42-year-old from South Crescent Road, Filey, has hours of footage showing what appear to be flying triangles, silver saucers and strange balls of light.

But he says he will set fire to the dozens of video tapes along with hundreds of photographs and documents because of the movie Alien Autopsy, which tells the story of how an extra terrestrial autopsy is faked using a tailor's dummy, some raw sausages and a haggis.

A disillusioned Mr Kellett said the film "glorified" the real-life hoax.

"It makes a mockery of everything UFO investigators do and cheapens what we are about," he said. "There's no point in carrying on."

"All this fascinating video footage we have



UPSET ... Russ Kellett with a photo of a UFO 053258a

never gets a chance to come out so I might as well burn it.

"There's more being filmed around here in North Yorkshire than anywhere but what's the point if it's never going to be viewed by millions of people?"

"If bogus information, fakes and hoaxes are more important than the truth there is no point in carrying on. Why could they not have made something about the real thing?"

Mr Kellett has been interested in UFOs and has investigated the paranormal since a "close encounter" in 1988.

He was riding home on his motorbike when he was hit by a bright light at a level crossing near Keighley.

In the early 1990s he started a group called the International UFO Research Network with members around the world and later moved to Filey because of all the sightings.

He led a campaign to get the coastline between Filey and Scarborough named the UFO capital of Britain after more than 50 recorded sightings of objects that "defy physics" in 1994 and almost 100 sightings the following year.

One of the sightings in the Filey area described flying triangles emerging from the North Sea while there have been multiple sightings of fleets of small objects flying in formation around Scarborough.

He plans to set fire to his papers on St George's Day - April 23 - on a hill near Whitby.

He added: "From the sky it came and now it's going back there."

DOSE, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - May 8, 2006 CR: G. Duplantier

UFO? TRY IFO. SCIENTISTS IN THE U.K. HAVE RELEASED A REPORT THAT CLAIMS TO PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION FOR FLYING SAUCERS, SUGGESTING ALL THOSE MYSTERIOUS GLOWING ORBS IN THE SKY ARE NOTHING TO SPEND TIME WORRYING ABOUT (unless you're with the British government, in which case four years of subsidized research is deemed appropriate). Of course, there's NO EVIDENCE to prove that the scientists haven't been BRAINWASHED BY ALIENS trying to LULL US INTO COMPLACENCY before WREAKING HAVOC ON EARTH. Either way, our culture loves to fantasize about the world behind the stars, and the mystery of UFOs isn't likely to vanish anytime soon. Dose probes the issue.

IS ANYBODY OUT THERE?

UFOs just lots of gas, researchers say

IT'S A BIRD! It's a plane! It's ... an "electrically-charged gaseous mass."

That's what researchers at the U.K.'s Ministry of Defence said could account for most sightings of unidentified flying objects.

In a document based on four years of research, the scientists described how glowing "plasmas" of gas could be created by charges of electricity in a rare and little-known atmospheric phenomenon. Flowing air could then sculpt the plasmas into aerodynamic shapes, which appear to fly at extraordinary speeds through the sky.

"Credited with the ability to hover, land, take off, accelerate to exceptional velocities and vanish, they can reportedly alter their direction of flight suddenly and clearly can exhibit aerodynamic characteristics well beyond those of any known aircraft or missile," the report said.

The 400-page report will be published on the ministry's website (www.mod.uk) on May 15.

The researchers emphasized that what many have believed to be spaceships were not, in fact, vehicles housing bug-eyed men with anal probes. They said the plasmas could emit electromagnetic fields that, as a result, made witnesses suffer from "extended memory retention and repeat experiences" induced by the plasmas.

The findings contradict statements made last month by Briton Gary McKinnon, who is facing extradition to the U.S. for breaking into army computers. He said he saw a room in the Johnson Space Centre where UFOs were airbrushed out of satellite images, Reuters reports. — DOSE, DAILY TELEGRAPH



CANADA A UFO HOT SPOT

DESPITE THE COMMON misconception that UFO sightings are limited to lonely Americans wandering home in the middle of nowhere after a jug or two of moonshine, spotting flying objects is not a distinctly Yankee pastime.

Since 1989, there have been more than 6,000 Canadian UFO sightings recorded. According to the Canadian UFO Survey, conducted by UFOlogy Research of Manitoba, there were 769 sightings last year — nearly two a day.

The sightings are scattered across the country and are made by a variety of people, from military officers to air-traffic controllers. Victor Viggiani, a former school principal and director of Exopolitics Toronto, an organization that studies UFO phenomena, will present some of the witnesses' testimony tomorrow at an organized event in Toronto.

He has heard from 400 UFO witnesses and has become personally acquainted with at least 70, he said yesterday.

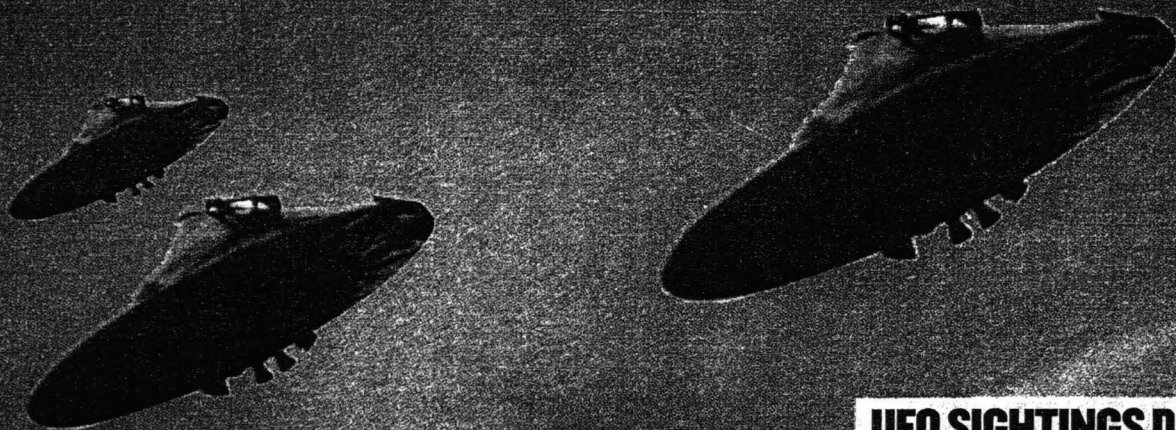
"I believe their testimony because each and every single one of them has come before a press conference and said they will testify under oath before Congress," Viggiani said. "People, especially those in the military, just don't say that. The way they give testimony is so credible and it converges with other lines of evidence."

Sightings are spread out across the country, but the East Coast, Lake Ontario and northern B.C. are UFO hotbeds, he said. The flying objects come in all shapes and sizes from cigar- or tubular-shaped UFOs to the classic flying saucer.

— CHRISTIE TUCKER/DOSE

The Canadian cities with the most reported UFO sightings are Calgary and Vancouver, with 29 sightings each last year. Toronto had 26 sightings, Edmonton had 20. Ottawa did not make the Top 10.

(continued on page 5)



UFO SIGHTINGS THROUGH CANADIAN HISTORY

1788 British naval officer John Meares travelled to the West Coast and reported a story told by Aboriginals about a man who had arrived in a flying copper canoe.

1911 The Windsor Record reported on March 7 that an "air car" surrounded in lights was spotted over several villages around Chatham, Ont.

1933 With strange lights reported in the area of Nipawin, Sask., three people told authorities they discovered an oval ship glowing and being repaired by short beings in silver suits.

1962 Farmers south of London, Ont., reported seeing bright lights over their fields. The next day, portions of their land had been flattened, as if by heavy objects, and they found a strange glowing green gunk on the ground.

2005 A young couple in downtown Montreal claimed they saw a bright flickering light and moving quickly around the sky. It, apparently, emitted a beam of coloured lights from the bottom.



IF YOU SEE A UFO ...

IF YOU SPOT an unidentified flying object there are a number of things you can do — aside from phoning your local newspaper or TV station to alert the news desk, of course. You're likely to receive a faster response by phoning the tip into an independent UFO researcher or investigator.

You can e-mail Chris Rutkowski and the Canadian UFO Survey in Manitoba at canadianuforeport@hotmail.com. If you're in British Columbia, try contacting HBCC Research International (www.hbccufo.org). If you're in Ontario, the Mutual UFO Network (www.mufon.com) is dedicated to the scientific study of UFOs.

— KEVIN RITCHIE/DOSE

UFO SIGHTINGS DOWN

CANADIANS DISTRESSED over the government's apathy toward UFO sightings will be interested to note that Canada is one of a few countries where independent researchers keep track of unknown objects spotted in the sky.

"We get cases from literally everywhere. We also get reports from the Department of National Defence and Transport Canada," said Chris Rutkowski, research coordinator for UFOlogy Research of Manitoba. "People are reporting in greater and greater numbers."

Rutkowski is an independent researcher who is not affiliated with any university or museum and compiles an annual survey of Canadian UFO sightings and acts as a liaison between the scientific community and the public.

The number of UFO sightings has risen steadily each year, to 882 in 2004 from 259 in 1999. Last year, the number dipped to 769, an anomaly in an otherwise uninterrupted annual rise in sightings since the 1980s, he said.

About 10 per cent of the population believes they have seen a UFO, said Rutkowski, who attributes the steady rise in UFO reports to people's increasing willingness to discuss their experiences. The vast majority of reports come from private individuals. A few (four per cent) come from the government and most turn out to be explainable.

It's too early to tell if the upward trend will continue this year, said Rutkowski, who won't have an idea of this year's numbers until the end of summer. — KR

How much does the Canadian government know about UFOs?

THE HISTORY of the Canadian government's tracking of UFO sightings dates back as far as 1947, the year of the infamous Roswell incident, in which debris from an apparent UFO crash was found in a field in New Mexico, prompting years of controversy and conspiracy theories.

The government of Canada outlines a complete timeline of government policy and research on UFOs in Canada on its website.

Project Magnet was established in 1950, to study sightings, but it was abandoned in 1954 because of a lack of funding. The engineer in charge of the project, Wilbert Smith, was trying to unlock the secrets of geomagnetism, which uses earth's magnetic field to move vehicles, which he believed was how

UFOs moved around. Smith's research was cut short when the program folded.

Victor Viggiani, director of Exopolitics Toronto, said he believes the government has covered up its knowledge of UFOs.

"The U.S. government has back-engineered UFO technology," he said, meaning it has recreated technology found on UFO crash sites. "Fibre-optic cable was the result of the Roswell crash. Canada is not as involved with back-engineering but is involved in the coverup."

Viggiani claims that the U.S. and Canadian governments knowledge of the electromagnetic or propulsion technology used by UFOs could be used on earth to provide free and clean energy. He said he believes that secret agents and agencies,

not elected government officials, are the ones involved in the so-called coverup.

RCMP records of sightings since 1959 can be found at Library and Archives Canada. According to the government of Canada website, researchers from the national research council found that most sightings were "the result of natural phenomena such as fireballs, weather balloons and meteors. Other occurrences defy explanation."

The Department of National Defence received many reports of UFO sightings in the 1960s, but reported sightings since then have decreased. A spokesperson for the department said he has no knowledge of any sightings.

— NICOLE O'REILLY/DOSE

EVENING POST, Reading, England - May 12, 2006

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: your calls flood in UFO cannot believe it!

BY SARAH DAVE

A SPACE odyssey of UFO sightings has been zooming across our radar courtesy of eagle-eyed readers.

Your calls flooded in after Pip Neal spotted a mysterious green ball in the sky over Southcote on Friday, April 7, and Vicky Chapman saw a glowing red orb over Basingstoke Road on Good Friday (Post, Wednesdays, April 19 and 26, respectively).

It's not the first time Mr Neal has seen unexplained things in the sky. He also told us that he saw a triangle of light in the skies over Lincoln two decades ago.

Gloria Fisher, a carer from Meadow Road, Earley, called to say she and

husband, Roy, a window-maker, spotted the same phenomenon, also 20 years ago, while camping in Wittering, Sussex.

She said: "We looked up in the sky and saw a triangle of white light as though joined but you could see through the middle. It was in complete formation but whether it was a Government experiment, you just don't know."

"We haven't really mentioned it too much to people."

"My husband, if you do see things, says it's probably clouds or aeroplanes and the last thing you think about is UFOs but you do think: 'Ooh, I wonder.'"

Peter Brake, 77, revealed his experiences after reading about the Good Friday sighting in the Post.

"The first one was mind-boggling, like a

world just going along," he said of his sighting of a multicoloured globe while in his Whitley Wood garden some years ago. "It wasn't smooth, it was like in a square pattern and lit up. I didn't know quite what to make of it."

"When it got level with me it was there one second and suddenly went away from me within two seconds."

Then last September the retired forestry worker spied a deep red star-like object moving slowly over his Falmouth Road garden.

But perhaps the most exciting phenomenon has been by former coffee shop worker Janet Cryer, from Woodley who witnessed a bright, whooshing light roaring past her first-floor window.

She couldn't sleep at around 1am on Tuesday, April 18, when suddenly she heard a noise "like an underground train, a roar and a whoosh at the same time" before a greeny-coloured light flew past her open-curtained window.

"Immediately I thought it was a meteorite and I was waiting for a bang," said the 58-year-old.

"It was faster than a helicopter and nothing like an aircraft. The day after that I saw all those stories in the paper."

Mrs Cryer, of Hanwood Close, added: "My late husband used to long to see a UFO, he used to keep all the clippings."

Have you seen any strange aerial objects or inexplicable sights worthy of the X Files? Call the Evening Post's paranormal reporter on (0118) 918 3009.

DAILY EXPRESS, London, England - May 10, 2006

The truth is still out there - despite what boffins say

THERE is a problem of confidence and credibility concerning any report released by the Ministry of Defence regarding UFOs ("UFOs just a lot of hot air", May 8). This is the government body that denied the very existence of this enigma for 50 years.

All this report does is humour and irritate (in equal measure) those who have followed this mystery for years. I give more credence to the thousands of observations by our professional military and civil air crews, whose skills are never challenged under any other situation.

There are many UFO sightings that are attributable to freak weather conditions and reflections of the light, but also many that describe metallic objects, that emit and reflect light, keep pace with aircraft, then accelerate away at colossal speed.

We should keep an open mind. We should bring the subject into the open and have a public debate, with the co-operation of mainstream scientists.

Philip Croft, Nailsea, Somerset

Farmer convinced there is life out there after sighting two U.F.O.s

A Congleton farmer claims to have spotted two U.F.O.s in the skies above Astbury in the last nine years and is now convinced that there must be life on other planets.

George Ball believes that the strange flare of light that he and other local people saw travelling through the night sky in 1996 was likely to be no more than a large meteorite, but this summer he claimed to have witnessed another flying object that was somewhat harder to explain.

Sixty-six-years-old Mr. Ball, of Ciss Green Farm, Watery Lane, Astbury, has a keen interest in space travel and astronomy stretching back many years, but his knowledge of shooting stars and the far corners of the galaxy did not prepare him for what he experienced on the afternoon of 16th July this year.

While mowing the grass at a property in Wharf Lane, Moreton, his attention was drawn to an object in the windscreen of his tractor.

Swallows and swifts

He said: "What caught my attention to look through the upper part of my tractor windscreen was the swallows and the swifts feeding on the insects that I was disturbing by cutting the grass.

"Suddenly, in a perfectly clear blue sky, this object resembling a flying saucer appeared. It was about the size of a two pence coin and at first I thought it might be a reflection of something at my rear, but I could not see anything.

"Looking forward again, the object was clearly visible immediately over Jodrell Bank. It appeared to be ascending at a very high speed and slowly diminishing in size until it finally disappeared after about 35 seconds. I estimated its height to be around 90,000ft. and it appeared to be around 60 miles away."

Mr. Ball said that the object was silver in colour, with a dome-shaped top and thin wings. An aeroplane enthusiast, he said that it moved in a fashion unlike any man-made aircraft he had seen.

This recent experience left Mr. Ball "gobsmacked" and keen to learn more about the unexplored depths of the universe. Now he wants to know if other "Chronicle" readers have had similar experiences they would like to share.

The first time he claimed to have seen a U.F.O. was in September, 1996, when a strange, cigar-shaped light was also reportedly witnessed by a further three local people. His account of what he saw that night appeared in "Quest" magazine, a monthly national publication that investigates claims of spaceship sightings.

At the time he was convinced it was some kind of flying saucer, but nine years on Mr. Ball believes he had seen not a spaceship, but a very bright meteorite.

It was on a Saturday night and he was on his way to fetch a cow and her calf to his farmyard when he said his immediate surroundings suddenly lit-up mysteriously.

He said: "It was around 10.51p.m. when my shadow appeared on the ground and I could see all the surrounding fields, hedges, trees, Congleton Edge and Mow Cop. I looked up and saw a very bright light which was coming from an object above me, the front of which was glowing very bright red, with a white, illuminated tail."

Bright

Mr. Ball said that his immediate reaction was that it was a flare, because it was so brilliantly bright. He explained that it originally appeared to be about the size of a golf ball, but grew in size as it got closer to him.

The object travelled over Congleton in a north-easterly direction in a long arc and as he watched it passed through a small cloud at around 5,000ft., which vanished as it did so, as if it had burnt away.

Mr. Ball said that as it got lower the object changed in colour from red to orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and finally violet.

"The object disappeared in the direction of Woodford aerodrome. The whole experience lasted about three minutes in total and then it seemed to vanish. What was very odd was that there was no noise from it at all," he said.

Following his second experience, Mr. Ball now tries to take a camera with him when he is out working in the area and plans to be even more vigilant of the skies in future.



Mr. Ball points to the spot where he claims to have witnessed his first U.F.O. nine years ago. (Submitted photograph).

Vastness

He said: "I think what I saw in the summer was a flying saucer and I do believe there must be life on other planets. There may not be life in our galaxy, but when you consider the vastness of the universe, who's to say there isn't another world as advanced, or more advanced, than ours, in another galaxy?"

However, one person who does not share his enthusiasm for all things extra-terrestrial is Mr. Ball's 58-years-old wife Rosemary, who remains sceptical.

She said: "I'm really not sure what to make of it. I think he has seen something, he's not imagining it and wouldn't make it up, but I couldn't say what he has seen."

Mrs. Ball joked: "I think most of the locals seem to think he has gone crackers, but those who know him know that he did see something."

In recent years, reports of U.F.O. sightings have been sparse in the "Chronicle," but in January, 1995, Congleton airline pilot Mark Stuart and his captain were shaken when their "plane was buzzed" by a mystery craft. A year after the sighting their experience was officially recognised in a Civil Aviation Authority report.

They were flying a Boeing 737 when they came frighteningly close to a craft that passed them at an unidentifiable speed. They reported the "air miss" and a full independent investigation was carried out by the C.A.A.

Relief

The report by the Joint Air Miss Working Group stated that the findings of the investigation were "inconclusive" — meaning that the incident was recorded as an unidentified flying object. The verdict came as a relief for the pilots, who had risked ridicule by formally reporting the incident.

At the time, there were suggestions that the object could have been a military aircraft, but experts had some doubts about that theory because such 'planes usually travel at a much greater altitude than the Boeing, which was travelling at 4,000ft. on its

way to land at Manchester. A spokesman for British Airways said that the mystery craft flew so close to the airliner that it caused Mr. Stuart to duck in anticipation of a crash.

After the close encounter the mystery craft flew on and was not tracked again — although similar incidents had been reported in the past, particularly in the "Pennine Corridor" stretching from the Midlands to the North.

In fact, during the 20 years before this encounter there had been numerous sightings of what became known as the "Silent Vulcan" along the corridor, from the Midlands through Derbyshire and Yorkshire.

The object was named after the British Vulcan bomber by U.F.O. enthusiasts of the time.

Spate of sightings

There was also a spate of U.F.O. sightings reported locally in the 1970s, particularly in the Holmes Chapel area and Biddulph areas.

In 1975, 21-years-old Robert Wood of Leek said he caught sight of a strange glowing cigar-shaped object hovering over a field off the A54 and travelling from the Holmes Chapel direction towards the Congleton area.

Mr. Wood claimed that it was around 150ft. high and had green flashing lights and portholes, adding that three or four other motorists also stopped their cars to have a look.

At 7p.m. on New Year's Eve in 1979 a family were travelling from Middlewich to their Holmes Chapel home when they saw what they described as a long flame, or a streak in the sky. It was aglow and travelling in the same direction as themselves.

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BEAN ME UP SCOTTIE: The picture that Norman Crossland took of the shimmering grey object seen flying over mill dam woods near the Heinz factory on Monday

UFO SIGHTING, OR JUST HALF-BAKED?

BY CHARLES GRAHAM

UFO experts were investigating this picture today after an amateur photographer claimed to have snapped a giant spacecraft over Wigan's baked beans factory.

The shimmering grey object, said to be size of two jumbo jets, was tracked across the skies of Kitt Green by 61-year-old Norman Crossland of Standish.

He thought Hollywood blockbuster War of the Worlds had come to life when he saw the strange craft looming above the Heinz canning plant.

Norman was carrying a pocket camera and managed to record these images of the UFO.

He said: "I was walking the dog last month when I felt like there was someone behind me. I looked up and noticed this thing coming over the top of the hills. I was mesmerised."

"It was as clear a day as you could have wished for and it was the only thing in the sky."

"I never believed in UFOs before

Flying object seen over Heinz factory

but I certainly do now! It was like something out of a Hollywood film."

Retired oil industry worker Norman said the bizarre spacecraft was twice the size of a Boeing 747 but did not move like an aeroplane or helicopter.

Norman said: "The thing was moving to the left at first but then it changed direction and started heading towards me."

"It was difficult to tell just how big it was because it was so far away but I reckon it was at least twice the size of a Boeing 747."

"It seemed to be floating in the air but then changed direction really quickly. It did not move like an aeroplane and there were no propellers like on a helicopter."

"You have to class it as a UFO as it was flying, it was definitely an

object and I've got absolutely no idea how to identify it."

"I could not stop staring at it but I managed to reach down and grab my camera."

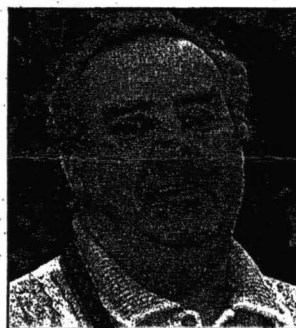
"My own personal view is that it might be a hi-tech new plane being tested by the RAF or someone."

"They always try to keep these things secretive but that's the only explanation I can come up with."

"Most people I have told have believed me because they know I would never make something like this up."

"There are always some doubters and I can understand that. I'm not sure I would have believed it if I had not seen it with my own eyes."

Ian Hawthorne - co-ordinator of WasPsi, the Wigan group which investigates the unknown - is not convinced.



SKY WATCH: Norman Crossland, who says he photographed a UFO

He said: "I may be mistaken but, looking at the pictures, I think I can see another object which could be a helicopter or small plane off to the top left of the object."

"This may be towing some large sheet, perhaps an advertising banner, which seems to have some kind of logo on it. It does look two-dimensional."

"I am quite sceptical about most sightings and this falls into that category."

Sky is the limit for UFO hunters

By Emily Bridgewater

CATALOGUING unexplained activities in the night skies above the UK has been the 11-year project of Alvechurch couple John Hanson and Dawn Holloway.

They have spent more than a decade researching and compiling accounts of unidentified flying objects since 1940 ready for a four-volume publication.

With a working title of *Haunted Skies*, the book features in-depth accounts of unexplained objects in the sky presented chronologically.

"We have included a lot of stuff that has never been covered before," said Mr Hanson.

The 58-year-old retired policeman explained he first became interested in the subject after speaking to some fellow officers about something they had seen in the night skies over Birmingham in the early 1990s.



UFO researchers John Hanson and Dawn Holloway.

Picture: SIMON MARSHALL

SM46001

He and his partner then started to look at other stories - often in newspapers - and used telephone directories to contact the people who had reported the sightings.

The stories flooded in from all over the country, with accounts from former servicemen, pilots and policemen, as well members of the public.

"There is nothing better than speaking to someone first hand," said Mr Hanson.

"It's rather exciting talking to senior airmen who have seen some amazing things."

However, the couple have also followed up their fair share of hoax stories, including one where a man photographed discs on his car windscreen and claimed they were UFOs.

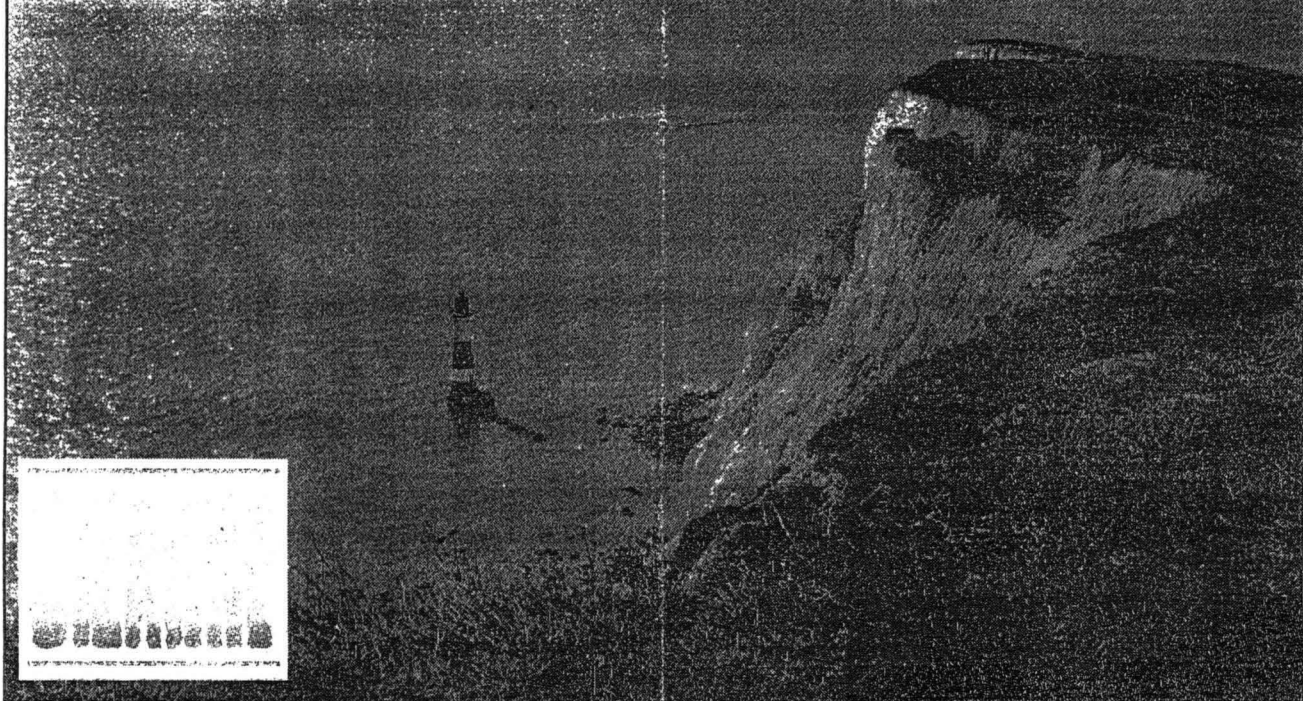
"We are firm believers that you can only form your own opinions by doing your own research," said Mr Hanson, of Red Lion Street.

The couple are now looking for a talented graphic artist to help them design a book cover.

"We want the quality of the artwork to reflect the quality of the book," said Mr Hanson.

Anyone interested in offering their artistic services to the project can call Mr Hanson on 0121 445 0340.

UFO slips past police chopper



HOVERING ... a police helicopter, returning from a routine patrol around the cliffs of Beachy Head, above, gave chase to a mysterious cigar-shaped object over the skies of Brighton, Sussex.

By MIKE HALLOWELL

MY friend Alan Tedder has sent me information concerning an eerie UFO sighting near Brighton.

It's a while since I covered a good UFO story, so here we go.

On August 11, 2000, the Sussex Police helicopter was returning to headquarters from Beachy Head.

The weather was fine and the two people on board - Sergeant John Trickner and paramedic Sean Mitchell - were no doubt enjoying the view from their coasting altitude of 1,000 ft. Without warning, a bright, cigar-shaped light suddenly appeared to starboard.

The object - according to press reports at the time - floated next to the helicopter before shooting off into the distance.

After they recovered from their initial surprise the crew decided to give chase and immediately began an airborne pursuit of the UFO.

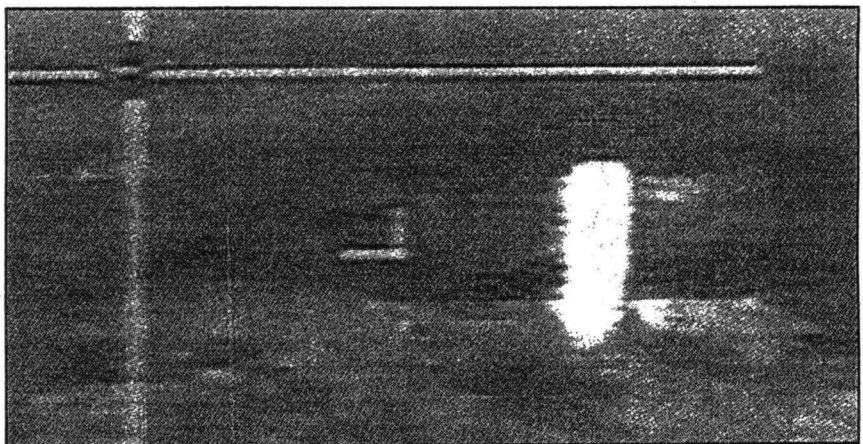
As it was evening, they attempted to film it using the helicopter's thermal imaging camera.

For three minutes they chased the object through the skies above Brighton before they eventually gave up and returned to base.

The footage was quickly made public and it wasn't long before UFO experts around the globe began to speculate on just what the witnesses had seen.

The now-defunct UFO Magazine did a write-up of the incident and the film was even screened at a conference about the Brighton sighting and other.

Whatever it was, Trickner and Mitchell didn't seem to think they'd had a close encounter with something



HOT PURSUIT ... the highlighted cigar-shaped object was caught hovering on the police helicopter's thermal imaging camera.

from beyond planet earth. The police Sergeant later commented that never for a moment did he think the object was anything sinister and the two crew members actually thought that the incident was quite funny.

Chase

During the chase they both joked about the possibility of little green men and admitted later that they didn't really take the incident seriously.

Of course, this doesn't mean that it wasn't a serious incident.

The fact is that something appeared in the sky over Brighton that night and to date, it has not been satisfactorily explained.

I spoke to Sussex Police and, sadly, they no longer have a copy of the footage or any stills from it.

Richard Taylor, picture editor of Brighton's local newspaper The Argus, kindly searched the paper's archives to see if they had a copy, while their news desk tried to put me in touch with Barbara Davidson, the reporter

who originally covered the story.

Barbara has apparently moved on to pastures new, but Richard did send me copies, one of which is reproduced here with the kind permission of Sussex Police.

I've highlighted the strange, vertically-hanging cigar, but can't offer any clues as to what it was, I'm afraid.

That didn't stop some creative souls having a go, however, and suggestions were made by unnamed experts that the sighting could help prove that there is life on other planets.

Actually, all the sighting proves is that there was a very strange light in the sky over Brighton that night.

The object seemed to have a flame coming from the bottom and was apparently under intelligent control, but whether it hailed from Alpha Centauri or Accrington is another matter.

As usual, Bizarre readers will have to make up their own minds.

Send your eerie tales to bizarrefans@tiscali.co.uk or write to Mike directly at the Gazette.

VISITORS FROM BEYOND

AS I lay on a couch in a darkened room in the ancient city of Bath, the streets outside grew quiet and deserted and offered few clues to remind me of the familiar world. It was reassuring to find that I could still read the luminous dial of my wristwatch if I held it in front of my eyes.

Ten minutes passed, then 20, then 35. I began to feel bored, restless, even a little blasé. But at the end of the first hour of my vigil, when I tried to stand up and walk around, I was amazed to discover that my legs would not work.

Out of nowhere, an enervating feebleness had ambushed my limbs, the slightest physical effort set off uncontrollable tremors and stumbling, and I completely lost my sense of balance. A wave of giddiness and nausea washed over me and I fell back exhausted on the couch, drenched in cold sweat.

I remembered, with a shudder of finality, that it was too late to change my mind. There was no antidote to the poison I had taken. Now that it was under way, the process I was going through would simply have to be endured.

The substance I had swallowed was ibogaine, a potent and potentially deadly chemical derived from an African shrub known as eboka.

This plant is native to countries such as Gabon, Cameroon and Zaïre, where certain age-old religious cults have long believed that by consuming its roots, they can commune with the spirits of their ancestors.

In short, they believe it to be the plant that enables men to see the dead — but it does not produce these visions unless consumed in toxic quantities, creating an ever-present threat of fatal overdose.

I had not approached my ordeal lightly, and was under the constant supervision of a doctor.

My primary motive, unabashedly, was research into the origins of our belief in the supernatural. But I must admit to another, much more personal motive as well.

It had to do with my father's painful death from bone cancer the previous autumn and my inexcusable failure to be at his bedside during the last few days of his life because I was too busy working.

Part of the appeal of this frankly risky experiment was

The figures had the look of the grave

undoubtedly its promise of 'encounters with ancestors', and the possibility of closure that it seemed to offer.

As the poison remorselessly tightened its grip, I fell prey to indescribable sensations of physical and psychic unease. It was as if my body was being slowly and systematically smashed and dismembered.

My ears filled with a tremendous ringing and buzzing. My eyesight rapidly became obstructed at the edges with strange black lines, like fence-posts, so that I could no longer see my watch and had to abandon all control of time.

Great gusts of dizziness hit me, and I winced at the terrifying sensation of balancing on a swaying tightrope over a bottomless abyss. Then, in a moment of stillness when my eyes were closed, a bizarre vision popped up of a vivid, swirling tapestry of intertwining branches and leaves, elaborate arabesques



by
Graham Hancock

and Celtic knot work. I blinked my eyes open. Instantly, the writhing geometric patterns vanished and the darkened drawing room returned.

When I closed my eyes again, the sinuous, intertwined patterns returned but they were quickly overwritten by something even stranger: a profile view of a heavily built, blond young man with his eyes turned towards me in a glare of reproach.

He appeared right at my side, startlingly close. His skin was pallid and his brow blotched with patches of green mould.

As the night wore on, the room became full of yet more unfamiliar people, a large and somehow threatening crowd of uninvited guests. They stayed firmly in view even when I opened my eyes — for the most part anonymous and shadowy, shoulders hunched, heads down.

A few showed their faces and, like the young blond man, they had the look of the grave.

As these eerie visions continued, I fell into a dream state for what seemed a very long time. In flashbacks of that night I believe I see my father among the crowd of phantoms gathered around me.

Sometimes these images are so poignant and intense that I can almost believe he must really have been out there, walking by with dignity and pain, just as he did when he was fighting his cancer.

For more than 12 hours after the visions ended I remained violently ill and was unable to walk. It was not until two days later that I felt completely better and was able to reflect fully on what I had seen.

If I were to nominate the single defining quality of my visions, it would have to be their remarkable sense — no matter how 'otherworldly' they were — of being real.

The spirit people I had seemed to glimpse carried with them an unassailable aura of certainty and solidity.

The experience shook me to the core, and I could not easily accept the scientific view that these were just hallucinations, mere products of my mind.

On the contrary, I felt obliged to explore an alternative possibility — an explanation that science is unwilling even to consider.

Might the spirit world and its inhabitants actually exist in some hitherto undiscovered parallel dimension? And, if so,

For millennia, man has been seduced by glimpses of the supernatural — from Stone Age monsters and fairies to alien abductions. But could they ALL be encounters with the same mysterious beings from a parallel universe?

might human consciousness be liberated from the body under certain special circumstances and become able to interact with this otherwise hidden realm?

In other words, could my 'hallucinations' have been real perceptions of real beings? Outlandish though the idea sounds, my subsequent research has convinced me that it may, in fact, be true.

I believe that such an extra-world almost certainly does exist, and that it explains a vast range of mysterious and seemingly unconnected phenomena that have been recorded throughout human history — from the sightings of elves and goblins in the Middle Ages to today's much-ridiculed stories of UFOs and alien abductions.

MY SEARCH for proof of the existence of supernatural beings began deep within the

ancient cave systems of south-western Europe. Here, between 40,000 and 30,000 years ago, our prehistoric ancestors chose to paint beautiful and enigmatic images on rock faces shrouded in darkness.

The great painted caves such as Chauvet, Lascaux and Pech Merle in France, and Altamira in Spain, contain some of the oldest art in the world.

It is so wondrous that when the Altamira caves were first opened at the turn of the 20th century, academics refused to believe primitive and savage cave-men were capable of such creativity, suggesting instead that the paintings were ingenious fakes or graffiti left behind by bored Roman soldiers.

Much of the art depicts animals that would have been familiar to our prehistoric ancestors such as horses, bison and woolly mammoths.

This quickly gave rise to the idea that the paintings were a

form of magic designed to give humans power over the animals they hunted.

This idea prevailed for much of the 20th century but it is hard to see why because it was so patently wrong. We can tell what our ancestors ate by the animal bones discovered in the caves, and these rarely match the creatures depicted on the walls.

More importantly, many of the images feature fantastic monsters that have never existed on Earth. Known as 'therianthropes', they are half animal and half man.

They include such grotesques as the 'Beast-Master' of the Trois Frères cave in France. Deeply engraved into a rocky ceiling, this amazing protean figure has the ears of a wolf, the antlers of a stag, the tail of a horse, the claws of a lion, and the feet, legs and body of a human being.

Other bizarre therianthrope images can be found in caves across Europe, and the similarities between them are breathtaking.

A horned bison with a man's arms and torso, daubed in red ochre in the Fumane caves in northern Italy, matches another bison-man etched in charcoal on a cave ceiling in Chauvet in France, which resembles yet another bison-man at El Castillo in northern Spain.

The Chauvet image is 32,000 years old, the El Castillo image 15,000. That is a difference of 17,000 years — more than eight times longer than since the birth of Christ.

An image must be very, very powerful to be maintained and

They were half man and half praying mantis

repeated over that length of time. And just as significant is the fact that similar images can be found all around the world — notably in Africa. In a cave in Namibia, archaeologists have discovered a terrifying painting of a figure with the feet and legs of a human being and the body, head and massive jaws of a lion. It is thought to be around 27,000 years old.

In South Africa, I have seen stunning rock paintings of beings that are half man, half praying mantis. In Tanzania, there are weird images of human bodies with insect heads, including 'feelers' and eyes on stalks.

Clearly, such images are not depictions of a hunter's prey. They are pictures of supernatural beings — and the question is, how and why were they conjured up by our ancestors?

The answer almost certainly lies in another mysterious set of recurring images in the caves: enigmatic geometric patterns such as grids, nets, ladders and zig-zag lines.

These patterns are central to the work of David Lewis-Williams, a much-respected professor of archaeology in South Africa, who has come closer than anyone else to decoding the mysteries of cave art.

Lewis-Williams was intrigued by the results of various neuropsychological experiments in which volunteers under modern laboratory conditions were given hallucinogenic substances and asked to describe their effects.

During these tests, the volunteers reported seeing various kinds of abstract geometric patterns known as 'entoptic phenomena'.

Since scientists believe that neither the average size of our brains nor their basic wiring has changed at all in the last 50,000 years, Lewis-Williams realised our prehistoric ancestors would have seen much the same geometric patterns had they entered hallucinatory states.

(continued on page 10)

He began to speculate that the abstract patterns painted on the cave walls represented what our Palaeolithic predecessors saw when they were in some kind of deep, visionary trance — much like the one I had entered in Bath after consuming ibogaïne.

It was an extraordinary theory, but Lewis-Williams found evidence to support it in the testimony of an extinct tribe of southern African bushmen known as the San.

Until 1927, when the last official permit was issued for hunting bushmen, it was legal for whites in South Africa to murder the San, whose body parts were kept and boastfully displayed as trophies.

Anticipating their annihilation as early as the 1870s, a German linguistics expert named Wilhelm Bleek conducted interviews with the few surviving San tribesmen to record their way of life before it disappeared.

The notebooks containing his neatly-written transcripts remained hidden in South African archives until David Lewis-Williams rediscovered them nearly a century later.

The San were remarkably clear about the beautiful and mysterious rock paintings of their ancestors, which include the praying mantis images I mentioned earlier.

They revealed that the paintings were the work of designated psychics or 'shamans', whose role was to travel into the spirit world and negotiate with its inhabitants on behalf of their fellow bushmen.

On their terrifying psychic voyages, these shamans were accompanied by spirit guides who appeared to them in animal form and taught them to heal the sick, influence the weather, control the movement of animals and so on.

Intriguingly, the San described how the shamans entered the other world by means of an arduous and exhausting form of dance. Lewis-Williams realised that this would have led to extreme dehydration and hyperventilation

The shamans went on terrifying psychic journeys

— exactly the physical conditions that could propel them into an hallucinatory trance.

When they returned from these out-of-body journeys, the shamans informed the community about what they had learnt and painted some of the strange beings and scenes they had encountered. Hence the existence of cave art.

Lewis-Williams realised that the strange geometric patterns the ancient San painted were the same 'entoptic phenomena' experienced by Western volunteers many millennia later.

As for the monstrous half-man, half-beast therianthropes, the shamans believed that to enter the otherworld they had to adopt various animal forms and the paintings depicted them at various stages of their transformation.

The fact that similar images can be seen in cave systems across the world supported Lewis-Williams's remarkable theory that they were all the work of shamans and priests who had entered states of deep trance.

Besides ritual dancing, and eating or drinking hallucinogenic plants, these trances may have been achieved through physical stress such as body-piercing, starvation or sensory deprivation in the caves where the paintings were created.

I had disturbing confirmation of Lewis-Williams's theory when I tested it for myself in the company of present-day shamans in the Peruvian Amazon. Under their guidance, I imbued a drink made from a sacred plant known in the language of the Incas as ayahuasca — which means, literally, the Vine of the Dead.

I drank this bitter brew ten times in all and the visions always began with a parade of geometric images, much like those depicted in ancient cave art and described by the human volunteers in modern laboratory experiments.

Soon these visions of nets and strange ladder-like structures, multiple squares and furious zig-zags were replaced by other apparitions including a black and yellow snake which transformed before my eyes into a powerful jaguar, and, terrifying beast-man figures such as a huge insect-like humanoid and a strange figure which was half man and half crocodile.

The images closely matched those that the Peruvian shamans report from their own trances. Intriguingly, many of them routinely record their visions in spectacular multi-coloured paintings.

All this left me sure that David Lewis-Williams is right that such trances were the inspiration for prehistoric cave art. But I found myself disagreeing with him on one fundamental point.

In Lewis-Williams's view, the entities encountered during the trances have no existence in

reality — they are merely illusions thrown up by our fevered brain chemistry when we are in altered states of consciousness.

I wondered how he could be so confident about this. We might feel very sure that there is no more to reality than the material world in which we live, but we cannot prove that this is the case.

Theoretically there could be other realms, other dimensions. Indeed, that possibility is not only central to all the world's great religious traditions but also a common hypothesis in modern

Is this how we can lift the veil on other worlds?

quantum physics, which suggests that an infinite number of 'parallel universes' may exist alongside our own.

If so, then perhaps the brain is as much a receiver as a generator of consciousness and can be fine-tuned in altered states to pick up wavelengths that are normally not accessible to us.

Perhaps, by this means, shamans throughout the world, and throughout history, have found a way to lift the veil that separates everyday reality from supernatural otherworlds. Perhaps, in doing so, they have made genuine contact with powerful spirits that dwell in those worlds.

Perhaps those that have followed them — as I did, in a small way, in those dangerous experiments with sacred plants — have done the same. In which case, the visions I saw were not mere hallucinations. They were real.

ONE of the most compelling pieces of evidence for this possibility lies in the extraordinary consistency of the supernatural visions experienced by human beings over the aeons.

Unless we accept that their origins are in some sense 'real', it is difficult to understand how such similar, strange encounters have been reported with such regularity across so many different cultures.

The therianthropes of European and African cave art find a mirror image in the art of ancient Egypt, which features creatures such as Anubis — the dog-headed guide of human souls in the underworld — and the crocodile-headed god known as Sobek.

Similarly, the ancient Mayan civilisation that flourished in South America believed in a being known as the Celestial Monster, a grotesque hybrid of human, reptilian and animal parts.

Greek mythology contains satyrs, half man, half goat, the minotaur — with a man's body and a bull's head — and the centaurs, a phantasmagoric combination of man and horse.

Popular culture keeps alive the legend of the werewolf, and tales of mermaids — part human and part fish — are common around the world. Even the Bible contains visions of human-animal hybrids. In the Book of Ezekiel, the Old Testament prophet describes apparitions of creatures with four faces — those of a human being, a lion, a bull and an eagle.

Ezekiel also reports the heavens opening and visions of fire and light, large revolving wheels and disembodied eyes — all of which have also been described by people under the influence of the sacred plant substance ayahuasca.

A concoction identical to ayahuasca can be made by combining acacia and Syrian rue, two plants that grow widely in arid areas of the Middle East, but I am not suggesting Ezekiel or other prophets necessarily ingested psychoactive substances.

Far more interesting is the possibility that they — and countless others — have been able to experience their visions naturally. Research commissioned by Harvard Medical School in America tells us that two per cent of the modern population have the ability to fall naturally and spontaneously into deep states of trance.

Although it cannot be proved, I think it highly probable that around the same proportion of humanity has always been born with brain chemistry in just the right state of flux to permit them visions, prophetic knowledge and encounters with spirits, without recourse to psychoactive plants or physical methods of trance induction such as dancing.

That these visions have consistently thrown up images of strange, animal-human hybrids is — to say the least — tantalising. But it is another set of creatures that recur in cave art that should really give us pause for thought.

Deep in their rocky labyrinths, in the low guttering light cast by the torches and stone lamps that we know were used at the time, the

shamans of the prehistoric era chose to paint pictures of dwarfish figures with extremely distinctive features: large domed foreheads, narrow, pointed chins and big, slanting, almond-shaped eyes.

There are examples in many European caves. The first time I saw one was at Pech Merle in France, and there are four particularly menacing specimens engraved on the walls of the cave of Los Casares in Spain.

I also found myself staring into one of these eerie and unsettling faces in the Drakensberg Mountains of South Africa, as I examined a rock shelter filled with the cave paintings of the San bushmen.

If these dome-headed dwarves sound familiar, it is because they are almost identical to the descriptions of elves and goblins which have been part of our folklore since the Middle Ages. More disturbingly, they have an uncanny resemblance to the aliens who feature in modern-day reports of UFO sightings.

Extraterrestrials have been described in these terms since the very first cases of alien abductions were reported at the dawn of the space age. One of the earliest took place in 1961 and concerned an American couple named Barney and Betty Hill, who were supposedly kidnapped by the occupants of a UFO that followed their car one night.

According to the Hills, their captors were small humanoid beings with 'rather odd-shaped heads, with a large cranium, diminishing in size as it got toward the chin. And the eyes continued around to the sides of their heads'.

Similar images of alien faces have become a staple of far-fetched films and TV shows such as the X-Files, and it could be argued that the Hills and other alien abductees were simply borrowing these images from popular culture.

But how do we explain the appearance of such figures in the art of our prehistoric ancestors?

Personally, I have never had any great interest in the UFO phenomenon and have always regarded alien abduction stories with a mixture of indifference and scepticism. Yet, to my utter astonishment, I found myself seeing almost identical 'alien' faces during my ayahuasca visions in the Amazon.

It was one of the most perplexing and disturbing moments of my time with the Peruvian shamans. The creatures in my vision didn't look friendly — on

The creatures looked harsh and sinister

the contrary, they were terrifying and sinister, a harsh, commanding presence.

I also saw what could easily be described as space ships, rotating in the sky and pulsing with life, and had the distinct feeling that I was going to be taken up into them.

In other words, I was having what could easily be interpreted as an alien-abduction experience — while in the grip of the same kind of visions that inspired our ancestors to create their cave paintings tens of thousands of years ago.

Could it be that spirits, fairies and aliens are really all manifestations of the same supernatural entities, and that human beings can perceive them when — knowingly or unknowingly — they enter the right kind of trance?

If so, then we might expect there to be overlaps in the way that people are said to have interacted with these beings over the centuries. And sure enough, when I examined the evidence, I was taken aback by the extent of the common ground.

Consider, for example, the way that alien abductees describe ascending to UFOs. They talk of floating, levitating or gliding upwards, often enclosed inside a beam of light. Some talk of thinner strings of light, like ropes or wires, that fasten onto their bodies and haul them into the sky.

Almost exactly the same language appears in the testimony of shamans, gathered by anthropologists, as they describe their psychic journeys into the spirit world.

A typical account comes from the Kalahari in Africa, where a shaman describes how performing a ritualistic dance enables him to see 'lines or strings of light that go up into the sky ... they are white in colour or shiny like silver metal ... you just float away with that rope'.

Other shamans — from as far apart as Siberia, Australia and North America — talk of these 'ropes' or 'cords' being let down by boats, birds or 'flying shields'.

As I read these accounts, there

With my own eyes, I saw the face of an 'alien'



were often moments when I wasn't sure whether I was reading a shaman's testimony or a UFO report.

I discovered parallels of a far more disturbing kind when I looked at the many cave paintings throughout the world, which depict what appear to be wounded men.

Shot through with arrows and spears like prehistoric St Sebastians, these are believed to symbolise the suffering of shamans undergoing the journey into the otherworld — an ordeal described vividly by tribes who still practise shamanism today.

They portray it as an agonising process in which shamans must undergo a symbolic death and then resurrection.

They talk of black devils who thrust lances through the shaman's head, pierce his neck and tongue and dismember his body before throwing the pieces in different directions.

These accounts forcefully remind me of my own sensations of being smashed and dismembered when I carried out my early trance experiment in Bath. But they are also very similar to the distressing experiences reported by supposed alien abductees.

These abductees consistently describe being subjected to painful and incomprehensible surgical procedures. Some of the most disturbing stories have been reported by Dr John Mack, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, who interviewed many people who believed they had been abducted.

His patients included 'Catherine' who described a metal instrument 'maybe a foot long' being inserted about six inches into one of her nostrils.

'I could feel something breaking in my head,' she claimed. 'The alien broke something to get it through, to get it into my brain. I don't know what it was. I want to know if it's going to heal.'

Another of Mack's patients, 'Eva', saw a grey spaceship, panicked, blacked out, then found herself on a table in a room with two beings inspecting her. I was in a foetal position, my back to them. They were doing something to my spine. My entire spine was tingling and cold. It was awful. It felt as though they were going inside my body with some very sharp instrument and inserting it between my flesh and my skin.'

In yet another extraordinary link, John Mack's research also reveals the frequency with which abductees describe aliens as having both humanoid and animal characteristics.

As Mack puts it, the aliens 'appear to be consummate shape-shifters', and often make their first appearance as owls, eagles, monkeys or even deer before transforming into something more closely resembling human form.

Once again, we are back with the therianthropes first seen in

prehistoric cave art. So what are we to make of this dense web of connections running from prehistoric shamanism through religion, folklore and fairytales to UFOs?

To date, scientists have been unable to offer any convincing theory. Some have tried to suggest that the links are somehow generated by a 'library' of extraordinarily detailed mental

Their bodies are smashed and dismembered

images, sensations and information which is hard-wired into our brains.

They speculate that it is the same library for all of us, and that it can be accessed only in altered states of consciousness.

In that case, however, we would need to explain not only how such an eerie and otherworldly mental archive was compiled in the first place, but also why it is so important — presumably to our survival — that evolution has gone to the trouble of retaining it.

Certainly, if its contents are purely imaginary, it is very difficult to see how it would have conferred any evolutionary advantage — rendering us vulnerable in the real world as we concentrated on non-real things instead.

On the other hand, if the shamanic view of the world is right and supernatural beings are real and can give us guidance and help in our lives on earth, then we can see immediately how knowing about them would have vastly increased our ancestors' chances of survival.

In my view, it is beyond serious doubt that spirits, fairies and aliens are each locally customised adaptations of the same extremely puzzling and mysterious core phenomenon, perceived according to the prevailing culture and preconceptions of their time.

Of course, if we do accept that such spirits are real, and that they have found ways and a variety of quasi-physical forms — of which 'aliens' are only the most recent — in which to manifest themselves in our material universe, then this poses some equally difficult questions.

What business do they have with us? Why are they here? As I will describe in Monday's Mail, my research suggests an answer to those questions that is as unexpected as it is disturbing.

■ ABRIDGED extract from SUPERNATURAL: MEETINGS WITH THE ANCIENT TEACHERS OF MANKIND by Graham Hancock, published by Century at £18.99. © Graham Hancock 2005

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VISITORS FROM BEYOND

FROM the dawn of civilisation, man has been tantalised by glimpses of the supernatural — from the monsters depicted in prehistoric cave art to fairies and alien abductions. But could they ALL be encounters with the same mysterious beings from a parallel dimension? In a startling new book, bestselling author Graham Hancock suggests just that. This is the second of two exclusive extracts ...

THE SWARM of UFOs was spotted above the city of Basel in Switzerland just after sunrise one August morning. According to witnesses, 'many large black globes were seen in the air, moving before the sun with great speed and turning against each other as if fighting. Some of them became red and fiery and afterwards faded and went out'.

Five years earlier, there had been an equally spectacular display over Nuremberg in Germany. Flying discs and globes were sighted in large numbers, whirling in the sky near the sun. Onlookers described 'great tubes in which three, four and more globes were seen'.

All of which sounds strange enough, but the dates involved are even stranger. For astonishingly, these UFO sightings — recorded, with engraved illustrations, in contemporary broadsheets — happened five centuries ago: the Basel incident in 1566, the Nuremberg display in 1561.

Their significance was pointed out by the great Swiss psychologist Carl Jung. He wanted to show that the UFO phenomenon has an extraordinarily long history, even though 'flying saucers' did not seize the public imagination until after World War II.

Jung's inclination was to treat UFOs as 'a 99 per cent psychic product' — a projection of our own unconscious minds — yet he admitted he was baffled by their 'apparently physical nature'.

This is a problem that becomes even more puzzling when we move from UFOs to supposed alien abductions, a subject that had not received any publicity at the time Jung was writing in 1958, but which has since generated thousands of weird and vivid accounts.

The belief that you have been kidnapped by alien entities is generally taken as a sign of an unbalanced mind, and provokes ridicule. Yet extensive studies of 'abductees' in the U.S. have failed to link their experiences with any kind of psychological disorder or emotional disturbance.

Psychologist Elizabeth Slater, who conducted in-depth tests on a range of abductees to see if their stories could be explained by mental problems, concluded simply: 'The answer is a firm no'.

Given how bizarre some of these stories are, this is remarkable. After being transported onto spaceships by 'beams of light', abductees routinely describe being forced to undergo humiliating medical examinations



by
Graham Hancock

possibilities entirely, but the evidence I have gathered suggests that these phenomena are something far more interesting and mysterious — and that they offer tantalising clues to the fundamental origins of belief in the supernatural.

In the first part of this series, I explored the idea that the human universe may run in parallel with other dimensions that are normally invisible to us.

I suggested that these parallel universes may become visible to us only when we are in states of deep trance and hallucination — triggered by drugs, esoteric rituals, or a natural capacity for visionary experiences that seems to exist in around two per cent of the population.

I also argued that 'aliens' may simply be the latest incarnation of the occupants of these other worlds — supernatural beings who have manifested themselves to us in many different guises over time, from the spirits depicted in the cave art of our prehistoric ancestors to the fairies of the Middle Ages.

As I tried to show, there is considerable evidence to suggest this might be so, because the images of cave art, fairy lore and UFO testimony have so many fascinating similarities and connections.

But this begs the question of what such supernatural beings might want with us. And the answer — as suggested by alien abduction stories — is quite astonishing.

One classic abduction report comes from a rich young Brazilian named Antonio Villas-Boas. The 23-year-old was working on his father's farm one night in October 1957 when he allegedly saw a UFO land nearby and was forced inside it by four small beings with large heads.

He was stripped naked and a blood sample was taken from his chin. Then a small, nude female with the ethereal looks of a fairy — thin blonde hair, large slanted eyes and high cheekbones — entered the room and began to embrace him.

'Her body looked human, her feet were small and her hands were long and pointed. She was about four-and-a-half feet tall', Villas-Boas recalled. 'Two vigorous bouts of sexual intercourse followed, leaving the young man feeling that he had been used like a good stallion to improve their stock'. He was then thrown out into the night.

Were this an isolated story, it would be easy to mock. But other abductees talk of the aliens creating and rearing hybrid children — born of human mothers or fathers — in what resemble 'battery' conditions.

Some recall being taken to a part of the spaceship where they were shown large numbers of hybrid babies stacked up in rows of tanks.

One woman described the tanks as resembling 'drawers in a cabinet', each filled with hundreds of 'little foetuses'. Another woman claimed to have seen cases stacked from floor to ceiling and lit from behind. She described them as containing 'baby versions' of the aliens, 'all in a liquid'.

Of course, this sounds like pure science fiction — but broadly similar stories stretch back far into history. There are even reports of UFOs, and of humans interbreeding with alien-like beings, in the pages of the Bible.

There we can read about the prophet Elijah's ascent to heaven in a 'whirlwind' associated with a

Fairy changelings, alien babies and a truly astonishing question — are there spirits from another dimension guiding our lives?

'chariot of fire', and of Ezekiel's vision of mysterious creatures on

The Bible tells of women having monstrous babies

board great 'wheels' that 'lifted them up from the Earth'.

We can also read descriptions of what sounds like a superior race of beings with whom humans must have dealings and 'who come from a far country, from the end of heaven'.

Most significantly of all, chapter six of the Book of Genesis tells us of mortal women having intercourse with heavenly supernaturals, and bearing them monstrous hybrid babies. These 'Sons of God' apparently 'came unto the daughters of men and they bore children to them'.

All this has echoes in the beliefs of primitive societies such as the Warao tribe of eastern Venezuela. One of their modern-day shamans, or spiritual leaders, described to visiting ethnographers how he had followed in the tradition of his ancestors by entering 'a round white house in the sky'.

This was inhabited by spirits in insect form. One of them was a 'beautiful bee girl' with whom the shaman had repeated sexual intercourse and fathered four hybrid children.

Closer to home, there are numerous closely linked accounts from the Middle Ages onwards of humans falling for, having sex with and even marrying spirits in the form of fairies.

In Ireland, where fairies are known as the Sidhe, the story is told of two Sidhe women who loved a young prince and suddenly took him away into a fairy palace and kept him there for three years.

Similarly, English chivalric romances of the Middle Ages describe the plight of a young man seduced and kidnapped by the Queen of the Fairies to spend seven years serving her in Fairyland. These are, quite patently, abduction stories.

As for producing hybrid offspring, one of the most enduring ideas about fairies is their propensity for abducting babies from their cots and leaving behind strange half-human, half-fairy 'changelings'.

I could list many more examples but it is clear that these strange, unsettling themes have run through stories of supernatural encounters from time immemorial.

If they point to some underlying reality — a core of truth that different cultures and different ages have struggled to describe in their own terms — what can it be?

To me, it is as if the occupants of another, parallel world were seeking intimate, transformative contact with humanity in order both to give and to receive something precious.

The persistent suggestion among alien abductees is that they are being used to strengthen and enrich 'alien' stock, by passing on an infusion of human strength and physicality.

One abductee, Lori Biggs, who claimed to have been snatched from Redondo Beach, California, in 1970, said her captors told her that they were able to manifest themselves as beings made up out of light but that they were unable to hold this form for very long.

'They wanted to learn how to combine human solid form and their luminous form into a more permanent, more powerful being', Biggs said.

Can it be mere coincidence that the very same 'race strengthening' scenario was the one most often put forward to explain why fairies were interested in breeding with humans?

According to folklorist Peter Rojewicz, 'the most significant form of fairy dependence upon mortals' was precisely this need to draw on human strength to revivify their own population.

In folklore traditions across the world, says Rojewicz, 'humans are essential to fairies for a healthy bloodline'.

The Irish poet WB Yeats likewise believed that 'the Sidhe (fairies) need human robustness'.

But what does humanity receive in return during this unusual transaction? The answer appears to

be the gift of knowledge. Despite the traumas they report having suffered at the hands of their captors, many alien abductees appear to regard their encounters as important learning experiences by which their own inner resources are bolstered, either intellectually or emotionally.

One of Dr John Mack's patients, named only as Joe, reported that his

The aliens pass their wisdom to those they abduct

alien abductors told him: 'We are with you. We're here to help you. We're here to guide you through your difficult times'.

Another of Mack's abductees, Jean, an academic and lecturer, claimed that repeated abductions had greatly strengthened her creative powers and insights. They left her 'neurologically reprogrammed' and better able to 'take in knowledge and put it out for others'.

There are interesting parallels between this and the beliefs of societies where shamans continue to operate. According to these tribes, spirits from the otherworld bestowed great knowledge upon their forebears — teaching them skills such as healing, controlling the weather and how to husband animals.

Indeed, it is commonly suggested in such societies that all important wisdom, and knowledge of how to lead developed lives, was originally passed on by spirit teachers.

If we put aside the automatic scepticism of our age, this raises a profoundly significant possibility. Could it be that such imparted knowledge might explain the very birth of civilisation — the mysterious 'before and after' moment which occurred in human history some 40,000 years ago?

Before that moment, other than a very few scattered and isolated examples, there is nothing in the archaeological record left by our ancestors that we would instantly recognise as human behaviour.

(continued on page 12) 11

Mystery lights spark UFO alert

After it, we suddenly start to find evidence of a total evolutionary transformation — art, the use of sophisticated symbolism, innovative thinking and imagination: the signs that humanity had discovered its creative spark.

This dramatic and electrifying change — embodied in the spread of Stone Age cave painting — has been described by scientists as 'the greatest riddle in human history'. All the human qualities and skills that we value most highly appeared already fully formed, as though bestowed on us by hidden powers.

And perhaps that's exactly what happened. Besides being the world's earliest examples of sophisticated art, the cave paintings of the Upper Palaeolithic period are also the first definite evidence for beliefs in supernatural realms and beings.

Could it be that the spirit guides depicted in those paintings were the ancient teachers of mankind? Was it they who provided the catalyst that transformed anatomically modern but dull, uninspired and spiritually void human beings into behaviourally modern, spiritually aware ones?

So far, I have talked about such intervention in our lives as being the work of supernatural beings who might exist around us all the time in some parallel dimension. But there is another intriguing possibility that I find equally compelling.

It has been put forward by Swiss anthropologist Jeremy Narby, who believes that we are guided not by supernatural beings but by an otherworldly mechanism planted deep within our DNA.

In essence, his theory is that billions of years ago, hidden messages, teachings and revelations might have been coded into our DNA by mysterious entities in the hope that a creature clever enough to benefit from such information might one day be produced by evolution.

When we are in hallucinogenic states, perhaps we are able to access this information — and the spirits, fairies and aliens we think we see are in fact 'virtual' teachers in the equivalent of an incredibly vivid and interactive learning video.

The idea that our chromosomes carry some kind of communication seems far-fetched until we consider that, so far, we know only the function of three per cent of the chemical codes which make up our DNA.

The purpose of the remaining 97 per cent remains a mystery, but an American study suggests that it may be far from what scientists refer to dismissively as 'junk DNA'.

The research, at Boston University and Harvard Medical School, made ingenious use of a mathematical test known as Zipf's Law, which uses the relative frequency with which words appear in a particular piece of text to decide whether it is part of a genuine language — be it Russian, Hindu or Inuit — or whether the letters have simply been generated at random.

First, the researchers applied Zipf's Law to the chemical codes on the three per cent of DNA whose function is known.

Unsurprisingly, given that it is just a set of chemical instructions determining physical characteristics such as hair colour and height, this section of the DNA did not obey Zipf's Law. In other words, it had none of the recognisable features of a language.

Things were very different when the scientists conducted the same test on the remaining 97 per cent of our DNA. Astonishingly, this supposedly 'junk DNA' obeyed Zipf's Law in every case.

If its chemical codes had been books filled with pages of indecipherable printed letters, then this result would oblige us to conclude that the letters were not random alphabet soup, but words in an organised language.

It therefore seems surprisingly plausible that our DNA might really contain some kind of hidden messages for us.

But if so, who or what might have put them there?

One fascinating theory was put forward by Nobel prize-winner Francis Crick, the co-discoverer of DNA. He recognised a fundamental problem with the idea that all life on Earth evolved from the spread of the first DNA-based bacteria between 3.9 billion and 3.4 billion years ago.

He pointed out that DNA is such a complex mechanism that it must itself have evolved from something simpler, but there is no evidence that any such simpler thing ever existed on Earth.

In some sense the system appears to have been engineered, even 'created' before it ever went into action here — but by whom?

Crick's suggestion was that the

UNIDENTIFIED floating coloured lights that appeared in the night sky have left people baffled and asking if anybody's out there?

Residents and partygoers in Hainault were mesmerised by the unexplained lights that emerged as clear bright circles.

The Recorder has been contacted by people claiming to have seen the mysterious glowing shapes floating in the sky on Saturday from 9pm onwards.

Jaime Hansen, 25, of Limes Road, said: "I just saw

● **LOOKING SKYWARD:**
Richard and Jaime Hansen
9047



WEATHER USUALLY BLAMED FOR SIGHTINGS

UFOs and strange goings-on are nothing new to Redbridge.

A sighting was reported to the Ministry of Defence on November 11 1994 at 2.15pm.

An object the size of a round black beach ball that looked like a disc when it was stationary in the sky was seen.

It was spotted in Ilford and had no wings, according to accounts.

In 1982 two people witnessed a large hovering craft over Goodmayes Hospital, Barley Lane, between 4pm to 7pm.

Earlier this month, in neighbouring Havering, residents reported seeing funny orange lights.

They turned out to be lanterns, made from mulberry paper wrapped around bamboo

frames, that are like little hot air balloons with a wick that is set fire to so they float up into the air.

Redbridge Police received two calls from Hainault about Saturday's sightings — one at 21.21pm from Brocket Way and another at 22.55pm from New North Road.

Bad weather conditions are the reason for a vast amount of

weird object sightings, according to the National Air Traffic Services (NATS).

Heavy clouds and storms are responsible for most of the reports NATS receives.

A spokesman said: "What often happens is that low level storm clouds can have an effect on reflections on aeroplanes and how people see the lights on the plane."

Strange lights 'could have been a UFO'

STILL coming to terms with a strange sighting in the night sky on Sunday is a Bognor man who believes he may have seen a unidentified flying object, UFO.

Craig Latimer is appealing to anyone who may have had a similar experience to contact him to clear up the mystery.

Mr Latimer (41), from Richmond Avenue claims he

heard a similar but lower pitch noise of a jet in the sky as he was walking along Wakefield Way which leads on to the Lower Bognor Road, on Sunday at around 9.30pm.

"I heard what I believed to be a sonic boom and a few minutes later saw three white lights and a red one in between a triangle shape.

"I stood there looking at it, it was definitely flying in the sky and I



could hear it. It was very weird and I was quite amazed," a still stunned Mr Latimer told the Observer on Monday morning.

"It flew over me and went off towards the Chichester area making the same noise."

Mr Latimer is convinced that the sighting was not an ordinary plane. "It wasn't that high and the weather conditions were good."

And he claimed that as he continued to walk home towards the Martlets roundabout he started to feel physical symptoms which he also attributes to the UFO.

"I felt pain in three parts of my body, I had pains in my toe, a pain in my side and my neck became very stiff. It all came on together about five to six minutes after the sighting.

But when he arrived home he said his arm went numb and he started shaking — a feeling that remained with him the following day.

"In a way I would like to be proved wrong and need to know if anyone else heard or saw it."

And he asked: "What are these things flying around Bognor, where do they come from and what are they doing?"

"It shook me up a little bit and I can't understand it."

By Monday afternoon Mr Latimer was still concerned about his experience and believed that the sudden power failures on Monday afternoon could also have been triggered by the UFO.

The Observer phoned the Southern Coastguard, Ministry of Defence, Goodwood airfield and Gatwick airports, all of whom reported no untoward activity in the skies above the area.

Anyone who can shed some light on the sighting should contact Mr Latimer on 0774 786-0512.

Could there be a code hidden inside our DNA?

seeds of life and of all future evolution must have been sent here by an alien civilisation.

Their motive, he speculated, might have been to overcome the certain doom of a planetary explosion, or

● **IS ANYONE
OUTTHERE?**
The lights pictured
by Jaime Hansen

REPORT: URMI ACHARYA

urmi.acharya@ilfordrecorder.co.uk

these massive headlights from the window and there was no noise. I told my husband that it wasn't a plane, but we couldn't figure out what they were.

"They were huge and were white first and then changed to red. These things were just dancing around all over the place. It was so weird."

Her parents and neighbours also witnessed the lights. "At first there were two that floated over, then there was another two and then three sets of lights," she said.

VIEW FROM THE STREET

UNIDENTIFIED flying coloured lights in the night sky have left people in Hainault baffled.

Stargazers were left confused by the mysterious glowing shapes they saw on September 17, from 9pm.

It has emerged that these strange lights follow a series of UFO sightings in Redbridge.

In 1994 a beach ball-sized wingless sphere was reported to the Ministry of Defence flying over Ilford.

Twelve years earlier, two people witnessed a hovering craft over Goodmayes Hospital, Barley Lane.

Coloured orange lights were spotted earlier this month in Havering, but turned out to be lanterns, made from mulberry paper wrapped around bamboo frames, that float like hot air balloons.

National Air Traffic Services (NATS), attribute bad weather to many sightings, claiming heavy cloud cover and storms generate most UFO reports.

NATS argues that low-level clouds obscure lights on airplanes and can alter how we see the reflections.

But is there really anyone out there? And if there is, what do these intergalactic travellers want to contact people in Hainault about?

So, did residents really experience a close encounter of some kind?

The Recorder went to Manford Way, Hainault, to hear people's views.



I am not being funny, but you need Mulder and Scully on this one. We saw them up there about 11pm I remember. I heard a noise like an aeroplane. At first I thought they were lasers.

Jay Kelly, Hainault



When one lands in front of me I will believe it. I don't know why they would choose Hainault in particular, but there is a good landing spot in the forest.

Joan Johnstone, Chigwell



There could be something out there, you never know do you? Maybe they like the forest, maybe they like the Green. I don't know.

Monica Courtney, Hainault



I haven't seen any. To tell you the truth, the best thing to do would be to ask my little boy and little girl. I am very sceptical about it. There's funny things that fly up in the sky, this could be anything.

Sally Legon, Hainault



We didn't see it, but I believe in it. I wish they would take me away, I would be on holiday then. A woman at work saw them.

Tina Norman, Hainault



They could be here because of our one and only pub. Maybe they took a wrong turn and had wanted to go to Chelmsford or something.

Barry Warwick, Hainault



I thought they were hot air balloons. Where do they come from? I saw them about half past nine to half past 10. I saw 10 of them.

Nicola Andrews, Hainault



They're going to kill us all. I suppose they came here to see us, to see me. In all honesty I don't know.

James Williams, Hainault



I don't know really. I am on the fence. I don't see why not, maybe they were trying to land at the pub.

Peter Sparkes, Hainault



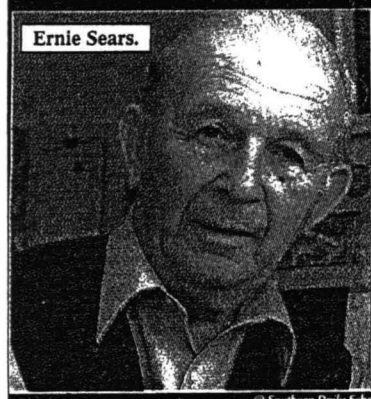
I don't believe in them, we haven't got enough information really. I don't know why they would come to Hainault - it's no different from anywhere else really.

Janice Sparkes, Hainault

WEEKLY NEWS, London, England - Jan. 21, 2006

LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS?

You'd better believe it!



Ernie Sears.

by Jeremiah Ware

The truth may be out there, but Ernie Sears still hasn't discovered what that is yet, despite his numerous extra-terrestrial experiences.

He claims to have witnessed a dozen unexplained sightings, an alleged military cover-up, and even openly declares that he's been abducted himself.

The sprightly 81-year-old is also the main spokesman for the Southampton UFO Group, a band of spotters who like to investigate UFO sightings.

Disappeared

When Ernie saw his first UFO, back in 1960, he didn't realise it was going to change his life.

He revealed to *The Weekly News*, "I was an insurance agent and was just doing my rounds in Gosport one cold morning, when I saw a shining object glinting in the sky over the Admiralty Surface Weapons Establishment, which is nearby.

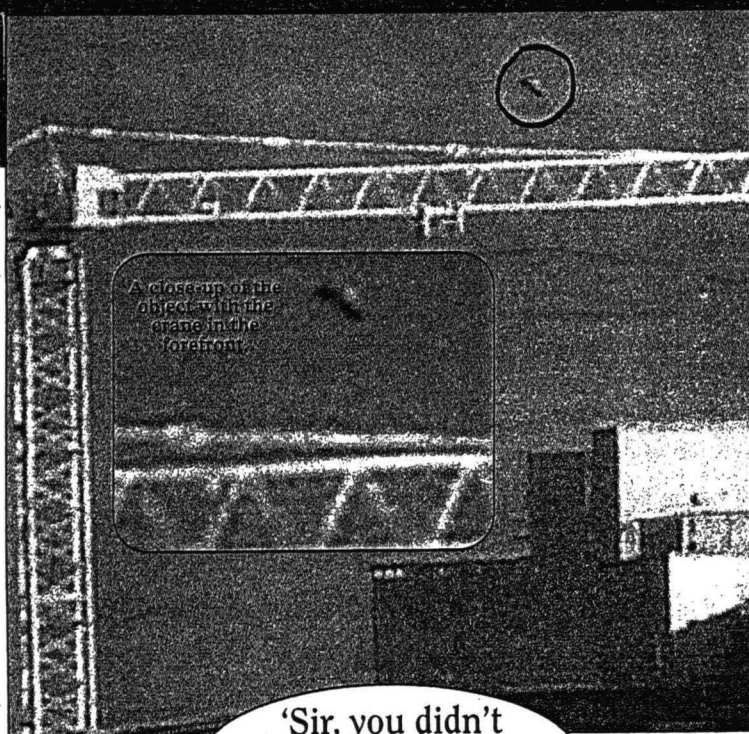
"I thought it was just a plane, so didn't worry about it, but then I heard the sound of approaching air force jets which came flying towards the object.

"As they got closer, it turned away, and just disappeared!

"When I got home, I phoned the air base to find out what the object was, and their reply is something I'll never forget.

"They said, 'Sir, you didn't see any jets and you didn't see any object'.

Ernie added, "The authorities have been denying things like that for years. They like



A close-up of the object with the crane in the foreground.

'Sir, you didn't see any jets and you didn't see any object'

to keep a tight lid on it, mainly because aliens could be a threat to our defences.

"But I wanted to learn more, so I read lots of books on the subject and joined a UFO club."

However, it wasn't until 17 years later that Ernie came into contact with extra-terrestrials again.

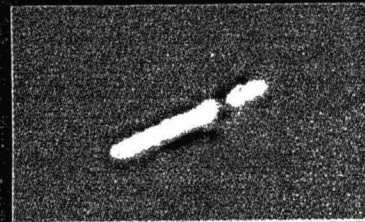
"I was putting the cats out when I saw a triangle of light floating in the sky," he said.

"It was totally silent, and looked metallic. But, when I turned my head, it simply vanished."

A year later, the sightings came thick and fast, and Ernie had his most-bizarre encounter ever.

"Again, I was out in my garden at night, when this black object came over the top of me," explained Ernie.

"This one had a faint, low humming noise and lights around the edges, then it



These mysterious UFO-like objects at Portsmouth Harbour were captured on film by a member of the Southampton UFO Group. But Ernie claims to have been taken aboard a similar alien aircraft.

disappeared over the top of the row of houses.

"It returned the following night but, although I was ready with a camera, none of the pictures came out well.

"But this second time, one of the lights flashed down and hit me. In the next instant, I felt like I was in the solar system, looking past Mars and the other planets.

"I can only remember going to the UFO and back, but not what actually happened onboard.

"I remember seeing lots of little, blue aliens that were quite tubby creatures, and certainly not frightening.

"They took me into the ship which didn't have doors, but was entered through this jelly-like substance. They were being watched over by a grey alien with big eyes and sloping face.

"It felt very real.

Encounter

"I have to accept the fact that I believe I've been abducted. I have a scar on my wrist that I can't remember ever occurring.

"I also remember having a vision of seeing big tanks like test tubes holding hybrid alien/humans that were growing.

"I can only explain these things as I remember them," said Ernie. "I don't know what it all means, and it really doesn't bother me if people don't believe me.

"I DO believe it and, when you have a one-to-one encounter like I have, it's very convincing.

"When it happens, you become more aware of a great, big, awesome situation in advance of us — both spiritually and scientifically.

"As these pictures here show, there's something in the air that's obviously alien."

Ernie Sears conducts illustrated lectures for a fee and can be contacted on 023 804 56000, or www.sufog.freemove.co.uk

ALIEN ROMANCE A BEAUTIFUL SINGER CLAIMS TO HAVE HAD NIGHTS OF PASSION WITH AN EXTRA TERRESTRIAL. JAMES ELLIS INVESTIGATES

Reptile dysfunction

This is the first in our series of explorations into the weirder side of life. Each week we will look at a bizarre incident which defies the usual boundaries of human existence

David Bowie may have sung about Loving The Alien but jazz singer Pamela Stonebrook claims to have gone one further and made love to an extra-terrestrial. The 45-year-old says her out-of-this world lover was a 6ft reptilian – a human-lizard ancient alien hybrid, the type whose existence has long been championed by David Icke. Stonebrook, who records under the name Intergalactic Diva, says she had just come to terms with being abducted by what she calls 'grey aliens' when she had her first reptilian love tryst.

'I woke up with a start to find a man who looked like a Greek god making love to me,' she says. 'I had had so many weird experiences I thought I may have been dreaming. He was telling me telepathically all the things a woman wants to hear and, as I didn't feel threatened, I decided to go with it and close my eyes. The encounter then became more aggressive and I could feel the entity getting larger inside me. I was so startled, I opened my eyes to find the god had shape-shifted into a reptilian.'

Intergalactic lover

Stonebrook claims she had two more visits from her intergalactic lover during 1996 and, although she became less afraid of their encounters, it seems the Earth didn't move for either of them: neither reached climax.

She says there were physical signs of her experiences, such as scratches but decided against seeking medical proof. 'I don't need a doctor to tell me I've made love to someone,' she says. The experience prompted Stonebrook to carry out her own research into abductions, astral projection – which she claims to have done from an early age – and aliens. Like many lotharios, the alien failed to leave a forwarding address but Stonebrook



Out of this world: The reptilian alien pictured above is an artist's impression of Pamela Stonebrook's (pictured left) extra-terrestrial lover

The reptilian is not the only alien believed to have visited us:

Greys: The most widely reported type is the archetype used in sci fi. They are 1m tall bipeds with big, black oval eyes and grey skin.

Human types: Almost identical to us. Some believe they are the offspring of abductees and are slaves of greys. Others say they are the father race of mankind.

has her own theories as to his origins.

'They could possibly be interdimensional beings who can operate in our physical reality,' she says. 'Or manifestations of our own past lives – the entity felt very familiar to me. The exciting thing for me and other experiencers is that new strands of science, such as quantum and hyperdimensional physics, back up our claims.' Perhaps unsurprisingly, Stonebrook admits

to having taken large amounts of psychedelic drugs but believes this could have opened her mind to the possibility of experiences from other dimensions. 'Studies show that 30 per cent of experiencers have used psychedelic [drugs] at some point,' she adds.

Publicity stunt

Stonebrook also rejects the accusation that her claims are simply a publicity stunt to sell more records. 'In many ways, this has been detrimental to my career,' she says. 'People laugh at you and this has brought me nothing but animosity. If you can handle it, great. If you can't... I don't care. It has allowed me to help other experiencers deal with what's happened to them. And for that alone, it's worth it.'

Find out more about Stonebrook at www.intergalacticdiva.com. She is also featured on a new Discovery Channel series, *The World's Strangest UFO Stories*, which begins on January 15 at 10pm.

EVENING NEWS, Scarborough, England - April 27, 2006

'23 UFOs over county last year'

SCARBOROUGH is out of this world – and that's official!

Figures released by the Ministry of Defence under freedom of information rules reveal the East Coast is a hot-spot for UFO sightings.

According to records, some 23 sightings of mysterious objects in the sky were seen across North Yorkshire last year, with a cluster of sightings over Scarborough.

The objects spotted in North Yorkshire account for nearly 15 per cent of the 158 incidents in the UK recorded by the MoD.

Disillusioned UFO investigator Russ Kellert, who is giving up after almost 20 years, said: "I have been saying for five years that this area is the UFO capital of the country."

HERALD, Tamworth, England - April 20, 2006

Man reports strange activity in our skies

IT seem the truth really is out there in the skies in and around Tamworth, with reports of UFOs from residents.

A light skimming the sky was what Amington resident Tim Nolan saw from his home at about 10.30pm last Friday.

He found it hard to believe the light's swift and sudden movements could have been those of an aircraft.

Describing the scene, Mr Nolan said: "At first I thought only I had seen it."

"Then after telling my friends, my mother and brother, we all saw the same

light flying back and forth across the sky slowly getting further away.

"I knew it was in no way a aircraft of this world by the speeds it moved at and how quickly it changed direction.

"This happened for about 15 to 30 minutes, looking up and towards the town centre from the Amington area.

"I would be interested to know if anyone else witnessed this unexplained light which was definitely not a aeroplane or any other aircraft from this world."

It was not the only unexplained sighting in Tam-

worth as a couple from Gillway have also spouted mysterious lights in the sky.

Christine Price explained: "On several occasions my husband has seen strange ethereal looking lights swooping round the sky in the Hints area."

"We have seen this apparition again from our garden."

● If anyone else has had similar 'UFO' experiences or has an explanation as to what could be behind them, please contact the *Herald* via the address or email address on the letters page, or phone 01827 848600.

GAZETTE, Clacton, England - Nov. 3, 2005

Second UFO is spotted off coast

ANOTHER Clacton man has reported seeing a UFO off the coast.

A fisherman spoke of his shock after seeing strange lights off Holland-on-Sea last week.

But now Wayne Spriggs from Clacton said he has seen flying lights of the same

description four times.

He said: "It is just like the fishermen said. The lights are red, blue and white, and change as it moves."

"It is a triangular shape, and there's definitely no noise. I know because we are right over the flight path,

and all the others make sound."

He said it moves slower than a plane and faster than a helicopter, and they have only seen it at night in the past three weeks.

"It's really not very high. I've never seen anything like it before," Mr Spriggs added.

TIMES, London, England - May 9, 2006

WEATHER EYE PAUL SIMONS

Foo fighters may be fooling us



MANY UFO sightings could actually be balls of glowing gas in the atmosphere, according to a confidential report by the Ministry of Defence (*The Times*, May 8).

The four-year inquiry concluded that many sightings could be electrically charged gasses, known as plasmas, moulded by the wind into flying saucer shapes and which appear to fly at extraordinary speeds through the sky.

But what are these plasmas? One possibility might be foo fighters – mysterious balls of light reported by both Allied

and German pilots towards the end of the Second World War. Both sides thought that they were enemy weapons, although they never harmed the aircraft or pilots.

For example, on December 22, 1944, an American pilot with the 415th Night Fighter Squadron flying over Hagenau, Alsace, encountered two 'large orange glows' which climbed rapidly towards him. "Upon reaching our altitude, they levelled off and stayed on my tail," the pilot reported. He took evasive action, but the pair of lights would not budge. "After staying with the plane for two minutes they peeled off and turned away."

Foo fighters remain a mystery. No known technology could have performed their feats; neither could any electrical phenomenon already understood.

EASTERN DAILY PRESS, Norwich, England - May 11, 2006

Hacker could be extradited to the US

A British man accused of the "biggest military hack of all time" today lost the first round of his battle against extradition to the United States.

Gary McKinnon faces more than 50 years in prison if

convicted in the US of sabotaging vital defence systems.

Lawyers for the 40-year-old had argued he could even be sent to Guantanamo Bay as a terrorist suspect – despite claiming to have only accessed Pentagon computers looking for information about UFOs.

But yesterday at Bow Street Magistrates' Court District Judge Nicholas Evans dismissed the objections as "fanciful", and ruled McKinnon should be recommended for extradition.

He now has six weeks to make representations before Home Secretary John Reid

makes a decision on his fate, which can be appealed.

Speaking after the hearing, McKinnon vowed to continue resisting attempts to remove him from the country, and portrayed himself as an amateur hacker who used a dial-up modem to access sensitive government networks from his bedroom in Wood Green, north London.

McKinnon, who was released on conditional bail, said he "regretted" his actions, but insisted he had been motivated only by curiosity.



MYSTERIOUS WEST

Geoff Ward explores the alternative universe

You can contact Geoff Ward by email at g.ward@bepp.co.uk

A MAZING film footage of mysterious lights hovering over crop circles in the West Country is to be shown at the 11th annual Unexplained Mysteries conference at Dorchester on Sunday, and it will be the first time the films have been seen in public.

One of the films was shot near Alton Barnes in Wiltshire by Kerry Blower, of East Kennet, near Marlborough.

She was filming the landscape around a crop circle when suddenly a "glistening diamond" appeared at the top of a tree and moved down to hover over the formation. Then a second light appeared, waited for two people to pass, and then dropped down to the crop.

"It was incredibly exciting, but I was nervous too," Kerry told me. "The way the lights moved seemed intelligent, as if they were looking for something. I can't find any logical explanation of what they are. It's totally intriguing."

Only a few weeks ago Kerry encountered the same phenomenon at nearby Woodborough Hill, but didn't have her camcorder with her that time.

Conference organiser David Kingston of Chickereil, Dorset, who will be speaking on the 2005 crop circle season, is excited by the films.

He said: "Kerry's footage is really incredible. We are recording more of these balls of light, and they are not the natural Earth lights which are due to the compression of quartz in the Earth, which causes a discharge."

"These don't follow that pattern because they seem to be intelligently guided. They will approach a hedge and go up over it. Some appear prior to crop circles forming, and others afterwards."

The question is: could these lights be connected with the creation of crop circles? Lately, David, who has had a lifelong interest in the paranormal, UFOs and the "unexplained", has been working on "Project X" with university psychology departments and a worldwide research team investigating such matters.

It was in 1957, while serving in the RAF on Christmas Island for Britain's nuclear tests, and also in Australia, that David saw his first UFOs. "With the knowledge I gained in the military I have recently started to provide remote-viewing courses which I believe is a skill that should be used for the benefit



Forum of the unexplained: Organiser David Kingston and below left, a classic crop circle

First screening will throw new light on circles

and peace of mankind, not as a military weapon," he added.

Also speaking at the conference is John Mayo, of Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, whose life changed in 1994 when he discovered his gift of healing. At work at the family joinery business one morning, he heard that his wife Hazel had been in a road accident.

SHE escaped serious injury but shock left her with severe post-traumatic stress, a permanent headache, a swollen leg she could not bend, and she fell into depression. One day, because Hazel was in so much pain, John placed his hands on her head and her headache

disappeared. And after John placed his hand lightly on Hazel's knee, she regained full movement.

John later closed his joinery firm to become a full-time healer and now has an international reputation, treating animals as well as people.

Other speakers include Barbara Lamb, a hypnotherapist from California who specialises in extraterrestrial contacts and abductions; researcher Ian Crane who will ask

what really happened on 9/11 in New York and 7/7 in London; and Howard Middleton-Howard, author and Egyptologist, on the mysteries of our ancient origins.

■ Tickets for the conference, at Dorchester's Corn Exchange, are still available at £20 in advance or £25 on the day. For more details, e-mail dorchester.conference@virgin.net or call David Kingston on 01305 830057.

Big cats brought to book

★ MERRILY Harpur launches her book, *Mystery Big Cats*, at Ottakar's, Dorchester, at 6pm, next Tuesday.

Writer and cartoonist Merrily of Frampton, Dorset, who was the organiser of the first national Big Cats Conference in Leicestershire last month, also runs the Dorset Big Cats Register.

Her book, published by Heart of Albion at £16.95, and with an introduction by John Michell, is the first serious and comprehensive study of the British big cat mystery which has spanned four decades since the "Surrey puma" scare in the mid-1960s.

STRANGE encounters with spheres of light are indeed on the increase, says Alan Foster, of Meare, near Glastonbury, who is an author, lecturer and researcher on UFOs, crop formations and paranormal and environmental issues.

Various theories say they are balls of plasma energy, intelligently controlled artificial spheres, remote-viewers, ghosts, spirit guides or guardians, interdimensional entities or extraterrestrials — or even all of these!

"The opaque spheres seen in people's photographs, that are not necessarily visible with the physical eye, may well be actual consciousnesses or beings from other realms,"

Searching for souls in other dimensions

said Alan. "Their very existence stimulates debate and is an issue of great importance. Many people in these changing times feel that the dimensions are merging, or the veil is thinning, and perhaps this is also a reason we are more likely to see these spheres at the current time."

"It is important that we become more aware of the existence and continuation of the soul, as it actually enhances feelings of self-empowerment and

removes the fear of the transition at the time of death. It also allows us to recognise on a soul level that we are equal to all other beings, even if they are technologically, or even spiritually more advanced."

"Self-empowerment, and the recognition of our continuance on a soul level are necessary attributes as the environmental, technological and ufological realities become ever more real. To me, the

spheres, or spheres of consciousness, help to galvanise a belief in a bigger reality, and that there is more to life than just the material plane."

However, bearing in mind the strong military presence on Salisbury Plain and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory at Porton Down, near Salisbury, Alan reminded me of the 1996 book *Psychic Warrior* in which David Morehouse describes the CIA's

Paranormal Espionage Programme, his experiences as a military remote-viewer, and "energy alarms" for detecting the presence of remote-viewers or other foreign energy sources.

"This relates to the advanced technologies allegedly used at certain military bases and secret underground bases that can literally detect the arrival of the subtle energy field of an out-of-body entity or remote-viewer's consciousness," said Alan.

"As our modern camera and video technologies develop more advanced shutter speeds and light sensitivity this may be enabling ordinary people to capture images of subtle energy fields as well."

HERALD EXPRESS, Torquay, England - April 29, 2006

Shoppers baffled by 'UFO' over Trago Mills

WAS it a bird? Was it a plane?

The best guess so far is that it could have been a man on a jet pack.

Retired teacher Barry Marsh was travelling along the old Bickington Road near Newton Abbot when a large "twig like object", similar to the shape of a jet pack, was seen rising into the air above Trago Mills.

Mr Marsh said the object was causing some commotion with pedestrians stopping to look before the UFO finally moved from above Trago Mills and over to Haytor.

He said: "It was at 10.25 and we saw something rise 200ft to 300ft in the air."

"It was moving up with some force, it wasn't drifting like a balloon."

"The best way that I can

think of describing it is perhaps a twig or a jet pack."

"It was something like out of James Bond."

"As we drove along people on the other side of the road were looking up at it and pointing."

"I don't think it was a balloon by the way it was travelling. "Lots of people must have seen it. I'd be interested to find out what it was."

A spokesman for Devon and Cornwall Police said they had not received any calls concerning the mystery object.

Trago Mills in Newton Abbot were also unaware of any UFO's.

MALTON & PICKERING MERCURY, England - April 26, 2006

UFO reported

MALTON: AN unidentified flying object (UFO) was spotted over Malton in late October last year, it has just been revealed.

The UFO was described as "three lights in a triangle formation" by the person who reported it. The official Ministry of Defence record of reported sightings was released under the Freedom of Information Act.

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.]

March 26, 2006 — *CIUFOS/LaPampa*, La Pampa, Argentina — Argentina: A New Sighting in Parera — On March 18, 2006, six witnesses reported a large light for several minutes at the property belonging to Adolfo Ziegenfuss, located in the jurisdiction of Parera, province of La Pampa (Argentina).

Ruben Ariel Lara, 37, Roberto Fernandez, 53, and four minors aged between 8 and 16, witnessed a source of light which they described as "three to four times the size of the full moon" as they walked through the fields at 22:30 hours on the date in question.

The luminosity was detected at some 3.00 meters of the place where the witnesses were located, who advised researchers that "the light appeared over the field, ascending to a considerable height before descending, engaging in these maneuvers in four separate maneuvers."

Fernandez added that "it was round, spun on its vertical axis while emitting some very distinctive red, green, blue, orange, yellow and silver lights." The ascent was up to "some 60 degrees over the horizon."

The witnesses, who were trapping "peludos" (armadillos) at that time, were completely overwhelmed and frightened by the sighting, deciding to withdraw from the field and run back to the farmhouse, located some 2 kilometers from where the event occurred.

It should be noted that mutilated animals were found at this location and that in July 2005, a huge "Australian-type" water tank containing 70,000 liters of water was found completely drained from the evening to the morning. — CREDIT: Raul Oscar Chaves

April 18, 2006 — *www.ovni.net* — PUERTO RICO: ANIMAL MUTILATION IN SAN SEBASTIAN — Type: Animal Mutilation — Day: Early hours of April 18, 2006 — Place: Urb. Pepino near San Sebastian — Time: 02:00 a.m. — Witnesses: Maria Velez, her mother, neighbors, researcher Wilfredo Gonz-Ellez, Dr. Eric de Juan Torres (veterinarian of the Borinquen Veterinary Clinic, responsible for the necropsy, etc.) — Evidence: photos, field research data and necropsy — Summary: Maria told researcher Lucy Guzman that her mother had a dog with three puppies. On Monday, April 17, 2006, at around 8:30 p.m., Maria heard her dogs barking frantically.

In the early hours of Tuesday, April 18, at around 2:00 a.m., the neighbor's Dalmatian broke its chain and was barking at the door leading to the rear of Maria's mother's house. Maria's mother hollered at the dog to make it stop barking, and the animal withdrew.

Maria's mother's dog did not bark, nor was any sound heard from the pups (mixed breed - poodle with mutt). No other sound was heard aside from that.

At around 11:00 a.m., April 18, 2006, Maria's mother found one of the pups dead. It gave the appearance of having been auctioned through its rectum. The tail had been severed as if with scissors (the tail was found on the scene). The area, which was made of cement, showed no signs of blood. No other laceration or bite on the body was found except for the affected area in the rectum, which was completely cored out, and "some gooeey, yellow secretions."

Maria also reported that at the time of the events no one heard anything except for the owner of the Dalmatian, who noticed that his other dog was restless inside the house and kept running from the living room to the door leading outside. Aside from this, no one has reported anything else amiss on the ground or in the air, nor has anyone seen anything or perceived strange odors at the time of the events, etc.

Maria phoned researcher Wilfredo Gonzalez of the NASAIC organization, who took photos from all angles and of the affected area, conducting field research. He later took the pup to a friend of his to perform a necropsy. During the course of a phone conversation between Lucy Guzman and Wilfredo Gonzalez on Saturday, April 22, 2006, he told her that when he reported to Maria's mother's house, the woman had thrown the dead puppy into a trash can. Flies were covering the pup and he was forced to spray chemicals to kill them. He conducted his field research and took the carcass to Dr. Eric de Jesus Torres of the Borinquen Veterinary Clinic to perform the necropsy.

Field Research: Researcher Wilfredo Gonzalez photographed the area from a variety of angles, even the injuries presented. He verified the presence of possible prints, points of entry or other evidence, inspecting the perimeter. Noting that the area in which the events occurred is practically inaccessible for any animal, since the area is an alleyway between two residences. The walls of these two residences represent walls 10 feet tall on each side, and at the end of this alley is a cyclone fence without any holes and in perfect condition. Furthermore, this fence is covered by zinc plates. There is also another gate made of galvanized pipes and cyclone fencing in the front of the alleyway. The house fence, which stands 4.5 feet, is made of cement and cyclone fencing and is also in perfect conditions.

Conclusions reached by Researcher Wilfredo Gonzalez based on the findings of Dr. Eric de Jesus Torres: The tail was severed by some type of cutting instrument, as it presented a clean cut. The wound was an open wound through which almost the entire rectum was removed; there was no tissue since it (sic) was removed and the entire border of the wound consisted of irregular edges. Unlike the tail, which was a clean cut, the open wound had a size of around 2 inches in circumference. All that was left were the hind legs. No blood spots were found. During the necropsy, Dr. Torres indicated that the small animal betrayed no other signs of piercing injuries or scratches. Furthermore, he indicated that the animal had part of its intestines removed as well as the right hemisphere of its heart. No blood exam was conducted since the animal was in a histolytic condition. With regard to the viscous substance, this could not be verified, since the animal had been sprinkled with fly-killing insecticide, thus altering the substance's chemical composition. Therefore the chemical tests would not shed faithful and precise data. Dr. Torres concluded that he cannot say that the mutilation was performed by a dog or any other animal, since there aren't sufficient elements to reach a conclusion. — CREDIT: Lucy Guzman, *Ovni.Net*, and Wilfredo Gonzalez



Big on BIGFOOT

Upcoming conference attracts investigators, curiosity seekers

By JANICE R. KIASKI
Staff writer

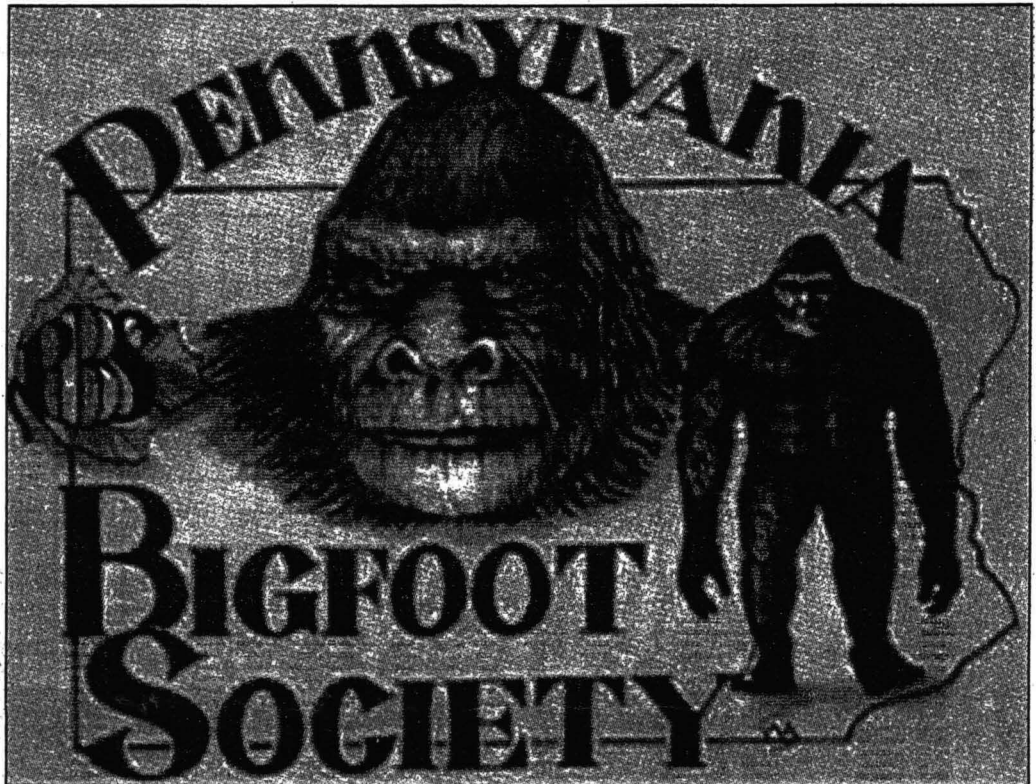
Eric Altman, the director and co-founder of the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society, said he doesn't have any concrete answers when it comes to Bigfoot, a subject that has fascinated the 35-year-old Pennsylvania resident since he was 10 years old.

"I have studied hundreds of reports, spoken with hundreds of witnesses, investigated over 100 cases and have traveled all over Pennsylvania and parts of Ohio during my investigations," said Altman.

What he has learned, however, is that there is a common thread among the reports, including those filed through the society's Web site at www.pabigfootsociety.com or 24-hour hotline at (888) 718-9818, ones that include claims of odd, unfamiliar sounds and screams from the woods and big footprints found in the soil and snow.

"The creature's description is usually the same — an upright walking animal covered in hair that is described anywhere from black, brown, gray or white in color. The animal has been described as closely resembling humans and primates, shows traits of being nocturnal and is very elusive and shy," said Altman, who earlier this summer pursued reports of a sighting in Erie County, Pa., as well as possible footprints found by hikers at Salt Fork State Park in the Cambridge area — bigger than Altman's size 13 boots.

Altman's enthusiasm for what he says is not a paranormal creature or something from a UFO or another dimension naturally spills over into the more than 85-member PBS,



which he helped organize in 1999 with a very specific mission: To investigate reports of Bigfoot sightings and activity.

Doing this means using audio and visual equipment to record any evidence, then using the data collected to further help study and protect what Altman said are yet-

to-be discovered creatures although reports of the Sasquatch date back hundreds of years.

The society gets media attention from time to time, usually around Halloween but also during the fall when press releases go out to announce its East Coast Bigfoot Conference/Expo, a tradition of

seven years that averages anywhere from 250 to 500 people.

This year's event will be held Saturday at the Pitzers' Townhouse and Restaurant at 101 S. Fifth St., Jeannette, Pa., east of Pittsburgh. Doors open at 11 a.m. for the conference that runs from noon to 6:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person with children age 18 and under admitted for free.

The conference/expo will feature displays of photographs, collected evidence, vendor tables for Bigfoot researchers and authors and organizations that sell Bigfoot-related merchandise.

There's also a "Big Bigfoot Auction" to help raise money to defray the cost of the event. Everything from Bigfoot T-shirts, hats, artwork, movies, books and bumper stickers will be up for bid.

Several speakers from Washington state, Maine and Maryland will discuss Bigfoot-related sightings and news, too, according to Altman.

They include:

- **RICK NOLL** — The Washington state resident has been investigating reports as far back as the late 1960s. He is a former Bigfoot Field Research Organization member and is well known in the Bigfoot community, Altman said.

- **SCOTT HERRIOTT** — The Californian is an investigator who in 1992 claims he captured a Bigfoot on video during an investigation. He has two documentary short films on the subject.

- **BOB CHANCE** — An environmental studies teacher, Chance investigates sightings from the Maryland and southern Pennsylvania area. He has been investigating reports as far back as the 1960s.

- **TIM CASSIDY** — An environmental studies and biology student at Unity College in Maine, Cassidy has worked as a Department of Natural Resources officer in many state parks across the United States and had his own experience of sighting a creature during the 1990s. Knowledgeable on wildlife

(continued on page 18)



COLLECTING EVIDENCE — Checking out footprints and other evidence is one of the things that volunteers with the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society do, all in an effort to help study and protect what are yet-to-be discovered creatures although reports of the Sasquatch date back hundreds of years.

Contributed

and the outdoors, Cassidy has been investigating Bigfoot sightings and reports for more than 25 years.

"The conferences are open to the general public and we see attendance by other Bigfoot investigators, researchers, enthusiasts and curiosity seekers," Altman said, noting the event is designed to educate the public about serious scientific studies being done on these animals.

"Groups such as ours are collecting data to prove the existence of these animals and to educate the public about these animals," Altman said, emphasizing that his goal is to first prove to himself that Bigfoot truly exists. "Conferences like this help to get the word out to the public that groups such as ours are investigating these creatures and reports and trying to educate the public that these creatures exist and it's a matter of time before they are proven."

The society, which dismisses the tabloid aura of Bigfoot, conducts year-round expeditions and investigations on Bigfoot sightings in Pennsylvania and the surrounding areas and invites people who suspect they have seen a Sasquatch to contact the hotline or submit a report through the Web site. Names are kept confidential.

Not all reports pan out, according to Altman.

"Some people report what they think is a Bigfoot. Some reports are misidentifications of bears, other wildlife or humans. People also report hearing strange sounds and noises in the woods they think might be a Bigfoot," Altman said. "We really have no proof that these sounds the person is reporting is Bigfoot, unless we see the animal making these sounds."

Suffice it to say, though, that there are sounds, footprints and sightings of an unknown nature and until all possibilities can be ruled out, and known causes or animals eliminated, the likelihood of Bigfoot is alive and well.

People are interested in the Bigfoot phenomenon with good reason. "I suppose because it hasn't been proven to exist yet and it is an animal that is so closely

FYI:

■ Doors open at 11 a.m. Saturday for the 2005 East Coast Bigfoot Conference/Expo at the Pitzers' Townhouse and Restaurant, 101 S. Fifth St., Jeannette, Pa. Admission is \$5 per person with children 18 and younger admitted free. The event runs from noon to 6:30 p.m.

■ For information, call (724) 374-5555 or visit the Web site at www.pabigfootsociety.com

■ To report confidential sightings, visit the Web site or call the 24-hour, toll-free hotline at (888) 718-9818.

■ To become a member of the society, membership applications are available at the Web site. Annual dues are \$20 per person or \$30 per family.

related to humans," Altman said. "People want to know why for so many years an animal can continue to be reported and sighted, yet science has not listed the animal as a known documented species," he added.

The society has about 50 active members — those who are physically able to go out on field investigations, according to Altman, who said Bigfoot sightings involve an upright walking animal anywhere from 6 to 12 feet and weighing between 300 to 1,000 pounds, very broad-shouldered, barrel-chested and curious.

The earliest reports of Bigfoot sightings in Pennsylvania date back to the 1830s, according to Altman, who said the Chestnut Ridge area of Pennsylvania in Westmoreland County has had many such reports since the 1950s.

"We continue to monitor this area and hike and camp there," he said, noting the society is a pro-active group, not a re-active one because the investigators are out in the field looking all the time, at least as much as their schedules of work and family allow. "We have found footprints in that area on three different occasions and some of them look pretty impressive."

The society's Web site lists links to other Bigfoot groups,

"My own experience of seeing footprints and hearing things in the night gets me excited that something's out there. I can't explain it and I can't determine what made it or caused it, but I'm always hopeful that something is out there."

— Eric Altman, director, Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society

including the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization. It has a sightings-by-region section with county listings from all 50 states. In Ohio, it shows four reports in Harrison County, six in Columbiana County and seven in Jefferson County, most recently in 2004 apparently in the state Route 213 area of Steubenville.

"My own experience of seeing footprints and hearing things in the night gets me excited that something's out there. I can't explain it and I can't determine what made it or caused it, but I'm always hopeful that something is out there," he said.

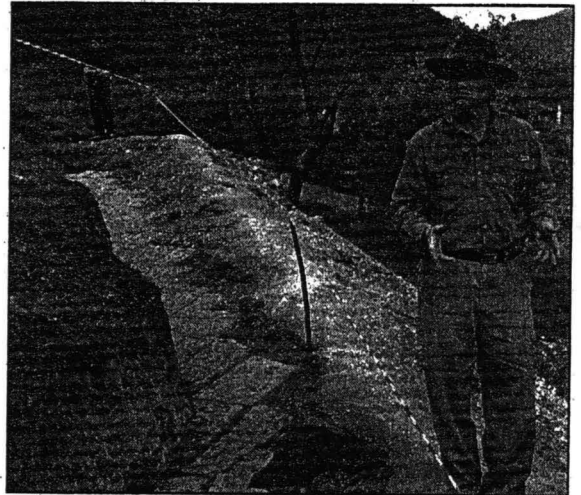
While there are more questions than answers when it comes to Bigfoot, Altman said the research remains in its infancy with possibilities far from ruled out.

"It's going to happen and I hope it does in my lifetime," said Altman who was 10 when he saw a Sunday afternoon showing of the docudrama "The Legend of Boggy Creek," then "The Creature from Black Lake," then "Sasquatch: The Legend of Bigfoot."

Altman's interest led to the library to read books on the subject, a hot topic especially in the early 1970s with sightings in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

"I read reports of these happening close to my house and I was hooked," said Altman, who notes people who come to the conference discover that "we're not whackos or off-the-wall oddballs."

"We're normal, everyday people who have an interest in this and treat it seriously and scientifically."



Associated Press/HIDAJET DELIC

Semir Osmanagic notes geometrically cut stone blocks that are part of what he says is a pyramid near Visoko, Bosnia.

Claims of pyramids feed Bosnians' hopes

Do hills hide an ancient civilization? Town tries to cash in on excitement

BY TOM HUNDLEY
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

VISOKO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — To the untrained eye, it's just a big hill in a landscape full of big hills.

But to Semir Osmanagic, it's a pyramid bigger than the Great Pyramids of Egypt, "proof," he says, of a previously unknown civilization whose accomplishments dwarf those of the ancient Egyptians.

"What I know is that under that soil is the most magnificent construction project on the face of the planet. We have the greatest pyramids ever built right here in Bosnia. It is confirmed. All of the scientific evidence confirms this," he said.

Osmanagic, 45, a native of Sarajevo who moved to Texas in the early 1990s, knows how to think big, and he thinks there are at least three ancient pyramids hidden in the hills of Visoko. He has named them Sun, Moon and Dragon.

Bosnia, a land fractured by a decade of war and sorrow, desperately wants to believe. Fueled by credulous reports in the local and international media, thousands of the curious have made their way to this corner of the country, about an hour's drive northwest of Sarajevo, to see for themselves. Most come away convinced that Osmanagic is on to something.

The excitement in Visoko is palpable.

The town's fanciest hotel recently changed its name from the Hollywood Motel to the Pyramid of the Sun Motel. At least one cafe has done the same. Shops along the scruffy main street hawk pyramid key chains, T-shirts and baseball caps.

Scores of local people, eager to help uncover the pyramid, have volunteered their services, and Osmanagic has set them to digging with picks and shovels.

Professional archaeologists think all of this is nuts.

In an open letter sent to local newspapers, a group of 21 archaeologists and other scientists from Bosnia denounced Osmanagic's project as preposterous.

He is undaunted by their slings and arrows.

Osmanagic, who has degrees in economics, politics and history, admits he is an amateur, but he says he has had a long interest in pyramids, having studied the pre-Columbian pyramids of Central America and written a book on the subject.

He also is enough of a showman to dress the part. He wears

a rakish bush hat, and the local media have labeled him "the Bosnian Indiana Jones." He does not discourage this. Nor does he shy from hyperbole.

"They laughed at Galileo," he said. "My discovery will change human history."

The big hill in Visoko, the one Osmanagic has named the Pyramid of the Sun, does look like a pyramid, sort of. Osmanagic noticed the resemblance during a visit about a year ago. He said that subsequent satellite imaging and thermal analysis have convinced him that the hill is, in fact, a man-made pyramid.

How it came to be completely covered by forest and vegetation is a bit of a mystery, Osmanagic concedes.

In recent weeks, Osmanagic's diggers have uncovered what may or may not be evidence of human construction along the hill's flanks, not exactly proof of anything earth-shattering because the top of the hill contains the well-documented ruins of a 12th-century fortress and relics of the Illyrian Iron Age.

Last week the excitement grew when Ali Barakat, a member of the Egyptian National Geological Survey, visited the Visoko site at Osmanagic's invitation.

Barakat said that a polished stone slab unearthed near the top of the hill was evidence of some kind of human construction.

Could it be a pyramid? "Yes, maybe it could be," he said.

Nedžad Secerovic hopes so. Secerovic lives in a house on the Pyramid of the Sun's eastern slope. For three generations, his family has scratched out a meager living from the ungenerous soil, with never an inkling of what might lie beneath.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I think there could be such a thing," he said.

Last month, when the curiosity began to arrive, Secerovic converted his front yard into a parking lot.

On a recent weekday morning, it was full.

Secerovic is still not sure whether the pyramid is real, but his profits certainly are.



Contributed

BIGFOOT ENTHUSIAST — Since age 10, 35-year-old Eric Altman of Jeannette, Pa., has been interested in Bigfoot and now serves as director of the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society, which was founded in 1999 and has more than 85 members.



Photo illustration by Christina Stuart, Octavio Diaz, FLORIDA TODAY

Sights set high. Palm Bay resident Gary Leggiere says, "I believe a show like mine could help draw in young people who might want to be our next astronauts and engineers."

Late-night radio host wants to be Brevard's Man on Mars

BY BILLY COX
FLORIDA TODAY

In the spring of 2004, several months after landing on Mars, NASA rover Opportunity took photos of a rocky outcropping on the wall of a Meridiani Planum crater.

Of particular interest was a tiny but compelling formation with curving, segmented features. Mission controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory decided to analyze the target's composition by smashing it with the rover arm. They then posted before-and-after photos on NASA's Web site.

The sequence ignited a firestorm of Internet chatter, much of it contending the space agency had destroyed a Martian fossil reminiscent of prehistoric crinoids, the plantlike marine creatures

'The Martian Revelation'

Gary Leggiere's "The Martian Revelation" 3-hour talk show airs on WMEL-AM 920 starting at midnight Saturday.

Upcoming topics: Debates and discussions of Martian biology and climate; industrialization of space; planetary Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence; space tourism, advanced aerospace technology

For more info:
www.marsrevealer.com

that dominated Earth's seas during the Paleozoic Era. But the controversy — the latest chapter in a long-running debate about life on Mars — unfolded largely off the radar of the mainstream media.

Now, from this broth of steaming po-

lemics emerges yet another NASA critic: a former pizza delivery driver who, by his own admission, has no formal training in science or communications. But what 33-year-old Gary Leggiere does have is the swagger of his own radio show, with which he plans to push theories advancing not only Martian exobiology, but evidence of civilization as well.

"I believe a show like mine could help draw in young people who might want to be our next astronauts and engineers as a result," says the Palm Bay resident, whose three-hour show on WMEL-AM 920 runs Saturday nights from midnight to 3 a.m. Sunday. "I think if we do it right, we can shake things up and make a difference."

If you think Leggiere's concept



Christina Stuart, FLORIDA TODAY

Face it. Local radio talk-show host Gary Leggiere holds a photograph of the so-called "Face of Cydonia." He traces his interest in Mars to this photo.

sounds eerily like Art Bell and George Noory — those late-night radio kings of conspiracies on the high frontier — you'd be right. In fact, Leggiere's graveyard shift puts him in direct competition with Bell, whose "Coast-to-Coast" talk show runs on WMMB-AM 1240 in the same timeslot.

But with America's space program at a crossroads and the shuttle headed for mothballs, WMEL co-owner and vice president of sales/marketing Vernon Harper says the station has decided to give Leggiere free air time, at least for now. He reasons Leggiere's musings on extraterrestrial life might generate popular interest in manned missions to Mars in a way that more conventional policy wonks cannot.

"Gary's here on the Space Coast where Mars is serious business," adds Dr. John Brandenburg, a plasma physicist working with the Florida Space Institute at the University of Central Florida. "It might be a pipe dream to people in Boston. But here, people say, 'What'll it do to real estate prices?' That's why it's good to have somebody like that talking about the more unconventional aspects of Mars, even if you don't believe it. He sort of represents the democratization of space."

Last Saturday's debut actually marked the second go-round for Leggiere on WMEL, where he briefly celebrated similar themes in 2002 until running into cash-flow problems. A self-described jack-of-all-trades whose range runs from carpentry to house painting, Leggiere is recovering from a February auto accident that derailed his job of delivering pizzas across south Brevard.

Undaunted by his lack of a college degree ("I'm a taxpayer, so I've got a stake in where this country is going in space," he says), Leggiere traces his interest in Mars to the so-called "Face of Cydonia," a region in the northern hemisphere popularized by controversial science writer Richard Hoagland. Hoagland, whose 1987 book "The Monuments of Mars" argued for artificiality of Martian landforms due to their geometric properties, was Leggiere's first guest.

"I know a lot of people call (Hoagland) a quack," says the New York native, "but with Mars, it's all about following the water. Mars was once a much warmer, wetter planet, and I think we've already found fossils. And I think those fossils are leading us up to what the Face represents, which is intelligent life."

NASA considers Hoagland's theories about Martian cities so radioactive it will no longer dispatch a scientist to discuss them, says a JPL spokeswoman in Pasadena, Calif. Therefore, rebuttals are left to proxies such as Dr. Phil Plait, an astronomy professor at Sonoma State University in Rohn-

ert Park, Calif.

Plait, who skewers Hoagland on his his www.badastrology.com Web site, says Leggiere and anyone else who divines pyramids, faces or even crinoids on Mars are experiencing pareidolia, the illusion of detecting a recognizable feature amid randomness, such as Jesus in a taco.

"We see patterns because our brains are hardwired to seek them out in all the random noise around us," says Plait. "We see alien features on Mars because Mars is an alien planet shaped by circumstances that aren't like anything on Earth. Even geologists get baffled. But the first assumption we should always make about Mars is that we're looking at geological origins."

"The latest argument (for life on Mars) is methane in the atmosphere. But I don't know why they're so quick to rule out a geological explanation."

But at least one scientist thinks shows hosted by outsiders such as Leggiere help keep the debates lively and honest.

Cocoa Beach's Brandenburg, who appeared on Leggiere's program during its previous incarnation, doesn't think the image photographed by Opportunity is a fossil. He suspects it's the shell of a crystalline deposit, but he fully expects Mars to eventually yield fossils, and perhaps even oil.

"JPL is not looking for fossils," says Brandenburg, who's immersed in propulsion research for space travel. "If they actually found one, they'd probably order the rover to keep on driving to look for more interesting rocks. Our system of science today actually mitigates against the startling revelation. Most scientists are uncomfortable with controversy. They tend to be people who are very solid and are not interested in Earth-shattering stuff."

At WMEL, Vernon Harper makes no apologies for the parochial considerations behind scheduling Leggiere's show. After all, America's commitment to Mars exploration is good for the Space Coast's economy. And if Leggiere can create additional incentive for going to the Red planet — however controversial it may be — all the better.

"The timing is absolutely right for something like this," he says. "And Gary's so focused on Mars, I don't know if I've met anybody, outside a college professor, with as much knowledge as he has."

Leggiere says his show is designed to take new NASA administrator Michael Griffin at his word.

"Griffin says he wants to change the culture at NASA and the way it does business," Leggiere says. "I'm looking forward to seeing how serious he really is."

Contact Cox at 242-3774 or boox@fltoday.net

Sasquatch patrol coming to Price County

Bigfoot Field Researchers
Organization to conduct two
mid-summer expeditions

Ryan Stutzman, THE-BEE

An international group that purports a dedication to unlocking the mystery of bigfoot plans expeditions to the woods of Price County beginning next month.

The Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization, or BFRO, will conduct two, three-day back-country outings in search of sasquatch sign. It is not yet clear exactly where in Price County they intend to go.

Approximately 25-45 participants will be charged \$400 per vehicle for the privilege of tagging along to "base camp." There, they will learn what the BFRO claims is exclusive knowledge for detecting evidence of bigfoot — and possibly even hear or see one of the

creatures.

The search party will camp in tents, and food is the responsibility of each participant, according to the BFRO Web site, www.bfro.net. The expeditions are scheduled for June 22-25 and June 29 to July 2. The first expedition is booked, but the second still has space available, according to the Web site.

Local sasquatch reports

The expedition was spurred in part by the accounts of a local man who claims to have seen a bigfoot on two different occasions in the Lugerville area. Don Young told THE-BEE that the eyewitness sasquatch accounts, which are featured on the BFRO Web site but are not attributed, are his. Young says his most recent sasquatch sighting was in September 2003 in a cedar swamp near Rock Creek Road.

An enduring national curiosity

Nationally, a small but dedicated contingent clings to the possibility that a large primate has eluded mainstream science for hundreds of years in the deep forests of Asia and the Americas. And most die-hard skeptics openly share an amused endearment for the story.

The most common point of skepticism is that nobody has ever produced a sasquatch body or skeleton.

Sasquatch are described as a sort of man-like ape with unusually large feet. They

are said to be 7- to 10-foot-tall, and many who claim to have seen the creatures say that they carry an unbearable stench.

Reports of sasquatch sightings have come from areas as diverse as Ohio, Illinois, Oklahoma and Connecticut, but bigfoot lore is most commonly associated with the primal forests of the Pacific Northwest.

BFRO is based in Southern California and is headed by a man named Matt Money-maker. Money-maker and the BFRO are widely cited in paranormal news circles and have been featured in national dailies such as

USA Today.

throw a tag on it."

Kelly said old Lugerville myths refer to an elusive "creek devil," a giant, hairy, bi-pedal creature that thrives stealthily in the swamps.

"I would take it with a grain of salt," Kelly said. "It makes me kind of laugh, actually."

The area where Young says he saw the sasquatch is primarily county forest land. THE-BEE asked Eric Holm, a Price County forester, whether he has ever seen any evidence of bigfoot.

"Well yeah," he said sarcastically. "But I didn't tell anyone because I didn't want people to think I was crazy."

Holm said one of his colleagues wears size 15 boots, and that person might go bare-

foot in the Lugerville area before the expedition arrives.

BFRO prides itself on detecting hoaxes, according to its Web site.

Holm, like many other skeptics, hopes he is proven wrong.

"I hope they find one," he said.

POST, Denver, CO - May 24, 2006 CR: P. Noonan

Theories on recent cattle mutilations sort of alien

ROCKY MOUNTAIN
RANGER
VIEWS FROM THE WEST



RICH TOSCHES

The tales of mysterious livestock mutilations go way back on the Colorado flatlands, back at least to 1967 outside of Alamosa, where Snippy the horse died a strange death.

Snippy had been skinned in a bizarre way. The cuts were sharp and precise. There was no blood at the scene. Snippy's owner said when she touched the horse's flesh, it oozed green fluid that burned her skin.

There were, of course, reports of

Eads UFOs in the area that night.

Beam ahead, so to speak, to Monday. To the parched land near this tiny town just 40 miles from the Kansas border. Chuck Bowen, 54, a rancher and a photographer, gazes across the 13,000 acres his family has owned since the 1940s. He takes a step, and the dust around his boots swirls in the relentless wind.

Two of his cows have died freaky deaths. And then he hears the word "alien," and he smiles. It's hard, frankly, for down-to-earth Bowen to imagine

why extraterrestrial beings would hover over his remote meadow, carefully snatch away the faces of two cows and then dart back into the twinkling stars.

"You would think," he said, "they'd have something more important to do."

And yet Bowen wonders what on earth could have killed his Angus cows and surgically removed the skin from the same side of both cows' faces, leaving the carcasses otherwise intact in the

undisturbed grass of the sprawling ranch.

"The grass around their legs was still upright, still tall," he said. "When an animal dies it usually thrashes around and disturbs the ground. This was like the cows had been gently laid down in the grass. Like they'd been lowered."

Oh, and there's this little tidbit that jacks up the spooky meter another notch in Bowen's head: The ranch, originally owned by his grandfather, sits on the site of the infamous Nov. 29, 1864, Sand Creek Massacre, in which some 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians were killed by U.S. Army soldiers. Bowen and his wife, Sheri, have spent decades sifting through the dirt, uncovering about 3,000 artifacts of that horrible day. Everything from cannonball fragments to metal arrowheads to soldiers' uniform buttons.

In February and again in April, not far from that main battlefield and down by the towering cottonwood trees that stood even back then, Bowen found the dead cows.

"Both of them had the skin sliced off the left side of their faces in exactly the same pattern," he said.

"The cut was a perfectly straight line," Sheri Bowen said. "You could tell it was done with a knife."

Ahead of a thunderstorm on

Monday, the noon sun pushed the thermometer past 85 degrees and the foul odor of a cow carcass danced in the air. Lying on the ground amid a colony of prairie dogs was the body of one of the Bowens' cows. This one went down, as best Chuck can figure, about April 1. Its black hide was weathered, but the precise slicing of the skin around its jaw and snout was plain to see.

Kiowa County Sheriff Forest Frazee and deputies examined both carcasses. Frazee said a veterinarian told him an eagle might have sliced the skin from the cows' faces. And that the brittle winter grass around the bodies had not been stepped on.

"That grass breaks. It's easy to see a footprint. No one came anywhere near those cows," Frazee said. "So I don't really know what happened. I do know that I don't believe in the boogeyman."

The Bowens — seemingly about as regular and ordinary as people can be — live about 30 miles south, in Lamar. They run about 90 cows on the family land, and the two deaths have left them rattled.

"Coyotes wouldn't go anywhere near the carcasses for weeks and weeks," Sheri Bowen said. "They just left them alone. And Chuck's metal detector, the one we use to find artifacts, it gave a reading of foil over the entire body. Aluminum foil."

"I've heard all the stories, but



Rich Tosches | The Denver Post

Sheri and Chuck Bowen stand near a windmill-powered watering hole on their family's 13,000-acre ranch near Eads. The ranch is on the site of the infamous Sand Creek Massacre.

I have a little trouble with the alien thing. Aliens killing our cattle just doesn't make any sense."

Chuck shakes his head. "Both cows had the exact same patch of skin taken from the same side of their face," he

said. "And to be honest, it's a little creepy."

Staff writer Rich Tosches writes each Wednesday and Sunday. He can be reached at rtosches@denverpost.com.