

UFO

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POST-INTELLIGENCER, Seattle, WA - April 23, 2007

A mystery wrapped in a strange black rock

THE STRANGE SUMMER OF 1947

JUNE 21: Harold Dahl says he saw six doughnut-shaped aircraft, about 100 feet in diameter.

JUNE 24: U.S. Forest Service employee Kenneth Arnold says he saw nine similar flying saucers south of Mount Rainier.



AUG. 1: A B-25 airplane leaves McChord Field in Tacoma and crashes near Kelso. A United Airlines captain says that "metal or lava" associated with the mystery flying objects was on board.

2 FLYERS DIED IN CRASH ON 'DISK' MISSION

Army Officers Had Facts Supplied by Idaho Man

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 2 — (AP)—A Fourth Air Force officer at Hamilton Field said tonight that two officers killed in a plane crash near Kelso, Wash., yesterday had gone north to talk with Kenneth Arnold, Boise businessman-pilot who first reported seeing flying "saucers" in June. Meanwhile, the Idaho Statesman, Boise newspaper, announced that Capt. E. H. Smith of United Air Lines told the Statesman he had given the pilot and co-pilot of the ill-fated plane six pieces of "metal or lava" to take back to Hamilton Field for inspection.

Is chunk from outer space or just a piece of poppycock?

BY CASEY MCNERTHNEY
P-I reporter

Unidentified flying discs. Secret military missions. Government cover-ups.

The story Philip Lipson and Charlette LeFevre have been researching for years has almost all the elements of a made-for-TV movie.

As the story goes, a government employee swore he saw flying saucers three days after a Tacoma man said similar UFOs spewed metal and lava onto his boat. There was even a man in black.

A witness later recanted his statement — some say out of fear — after a military plane supposedly transporting classified debris exploded into flames.

"You don't want to know how complicated and bizarre this is," said LeFevre, who, with Lipson, runs the Seattle Museum of the Mysteries on Capitol Hill.

SEE THE B-25 CRASH ARTIFACTS

Seattle Museum of the Mysteries is at 623 Broadway Ave. E. General admission is a \$3 suggested donation. Children 15 and younger are free. Hours vary. Large groups are asked to call ahead: 206-328-6499. The museum's Web site is www.seattlechatclub.org/Arnold.html

MORE ONLINE

FBI documents relating to the Dahl sighting: goto.seattlepi.com/r687

Lipson and LeFevre believe that 60 years ago a plane that crashed in Kelso contained slag from a UFO. They've tracked down newspaper stories and testimony, and gathered the clues at their museum.

But it's the black chunk of rock they keep locked in a glass case that may be their best clue, and a scientist may test the rock this week.

UFO DEBRIS?



SEATTLE P-I

Officially, the story is poppycock. The government dismissed it as such decades ago.

Damaging debris

On June 21, 1947, Harold Dahl was salvaging logs near the shore of Maury Island. Dahl said that at 2 p.m. he saw six doughnut-shaped aircraft, about 100 feet in diameter.

He said five of the metallic aircraft, which didn't appear to have signs of propulsion, circled above one, which dropped to about 500 feet and spewed what he thought was 20 tons of metal and molten rock.

Dahl reported to co-worker Fred Crisman that the falling debris injured his 15-year-old son, killed their dog and damaged the boat's wheelhouse.

Three days later, U.S. Forest Service employee Kenneth Arnold said he saw nine similar flying saucers between Mount Rainier and Mount Adams. The Associated Press published Arnold's claims that when one of

the aircraft dipped, the others did, too.

The day after Dahl's sighting, a man in a black suit arrived at his Tacoma home in a black 1947 Buick, Dahl said later. Books by UFO historians say the man in black threatened Dahl, saying that if he cared about his family, he'd never speak of the incident again.

He spoke of it at least one more time in July 1947, when he met with Arnold in a secret meeting in Room 502 of Tacoma's

Winthrop Hotel. Arnold wrote about the meeting in his 1952 book, and said they were also joined by United Airlines pilot Capt. E.J. Smith — another who claimed to see the discs — as well as Air Force Lt. Frank M. Brown and Capt. William L. Davidson.

Smith told The Idaho Statesman that Brown and Davidson were given six pieces of "metal or lava."

The chunks were loaded onto a B-25 bomber at McChord Field to be shipped to a California military base, according to the now-defunct Tacoma Times.

B-25 crash

It was still dark in the early morning of Aug. 1, 1947, when a fire erupted in the left engine of the B-25.

Longview police officers reported watching the B-25 circle over Longview and Kelso, leaving a streak of smoke behind the burning motor.

When attempts to extinguish the fire failed, two other crew members — Sgt. Elmer L. Taft and Tech. Sgt. Woodrow D. Mat-

thews — parachuted to safety. Brown and Davidson, who some believe knew there were UFO parts on the plane, stayed with the bomber.

The B-25 crashed into the base of three alder trees. Brown and Davidson's mangled bodies were thrown clear.

On Aug. 3, 1947, an Associated Press report said the men died investigating flying saucers.

Black chunk

Kelso resident James Greear heard about the crash 10 years ago and had made several attempts to find clues. He found almost nothing in the woods until earlier this month, when Bob Davenport told him the exact location. Davenport, now 75, was 15 at the time of the crash and one of the first people to rush to the wreckage.

Greear went to the crash site April 15 with Lipson and LeFevre.

In the north fork of Globe Creek, a friend of Greear's found a black chunk slightly larger than a softball that looks as if it could

have once been lava.

"We are not making any claims of what it is," Lipson said.

But he and LeFevre are hopeful.

"You can tell it's been liquid because it's all full of bubbles," said Bill Beaty, a research engineer in the University of Washington's Chemistry Department. He plans to have a colleague analyze the chunk this week.

"We have to look at the bedrock in the hill and see what's there," he said. "If it looks like that, then it's probably the same."

"If this is totally different than the bedrock that's there, then this will be very interesting."

Rarely spoke of sighting

Though popular among conspiracy theorists, Dahl's claim that a UFO spewed debris onto his boat is likely to remain folklore.

"I didn't know anything about it until 2003 when a man from Sacramento sent me about 50 pages of research about it," said Dahl's 76-year-old daughter, Louise Bakotich of Aberdeen. Though Arnold insisted his sighting was real, Dahl rarely spoke of his sighting after 1947, and often said it was a hoax when he did. Charles Dahl, who was supposedly injured by the falling debris, didn't confirm the injuries before his death, his sister said.

The Army and Air Force have repeatedly denied that UFO fragments were on the B-25 flight. An August 1947 document, said to be from FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, states that the story of the B-25 having flying disc fragments was a hoax.

Those statements, however, only fuel the curiosity of UFO researchers such as Lipson and LeFevre.

"We're starting where they left off 60 years ago," LeFevre said. "There's a lot more out there."

P-I news researcher Marsha Milroy and P-I librarian Lytton Smith contributed to this story.

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NEWS-REVIEW, Roseburg, OR - April 5, 2007

Keeping you connected

Local UFO sighting activates Alien Daze

The UFO Festival is still more than a month away, but at least a couple of locals already are seeing an Alien Daze.

A woman called the News-Register on Tuesday to tell us about a blue, balloon-shaped object she spotted early Tuesday morning, hovering over an abandoned RV sales lot across from Walnut City Lanes at the south end of McMinnville.

She said the strange flying machine flashed its

LETTER TO READERS

lights and sped off, heading northwest along the path of Highway 99W. She said a friend chased after the airborne enigma in his car, but couldn't keep up, as it soon went out of this world.

The caller asked if anyone else had contacted the newspaper to report a similar sighting. No one else had, nor has anyone since. That leaves her and her friend as the only known witnesses.

Unfortunately, the caller didn't have a camera handy, as Paul Trent did in the spring of 1950. The Telephone Register, predecessor of the News-Register, published Trent's photos on June 8, 1950, a month after he snapped a pair of airborne saucer-like objects from his farmhouse 11 miles south of town.

The event has taken on a new dimension as local folklore. Decades later, it inspired the McMenamins pub chain to found the local UFO Festival, which has soared in popularity since its inception eight years ago.

Stay tuned to the News-Register frequency, both in print and online, to find out more about the return of Alien Daze next month.

Ty Walker
News Editor

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Doug Moe
THE TALK



LAST SUMMER I was contacted by a Canadian computer systems engineer named **Gord Heath**.

Heath had read a column I had written about the mysterious disappearance, in 1953, of an F-89 Scorpion jet over Lake Superior. The jet had been dispatched from the Kinross Air Force Base in Michigan to track an unidentified craft spotted on the Kinross radar.

The F-89 was at Kinross on temporary assignment. Both the jet and its two-member crew, pilot **Gene Moncla** and radar observer **Robert Wilson**, were based in Madison at Truax Field. They were at Kinross as temporary replacements for personnel engaged in gunnery maneuvers in Arizona.

News accounts from 1953, including a report in *The Capital Times*, said that Kinross radar tracked both the F-89 and the unidentified craft as they flew over Lake Superior. From the cockpit, Moncla said, "I'm going in for a closer look." Moments later, the two radar blips merged on the screen.

What happened next, nobody knows, though there are abundant theories. In any case, the Truax F-89 and its two crew members were never seen again. Some in the UFO community have theorized that the jet was gobbled up by an extraterrestrial ship. U.S.

officials at first insisted that the unidentified radar blip was an off-course Canadian airliner, a version consistently denied by the Canadians.

After my column last August — which had been prompted by a Canadian newspaper story on the incident — I heard from Heath, who, it was immediately clear, had done a great deal of research about the Kinross disappearance. He'd even made several visits to Madison.

His purpose in contacting me was to impart startling news: A dive company, on its Web site, was claiming to have located what looked to be an F-89 Scorpion jet on the bottom of Lake Superior. If true, it would almost certainly have been the Truax jet that disappeared in 1953.

As it turned out, the dive company's "find" appears to have been a hoax, although that is not certain. This much is: The Web site has disappeared.

Over a few weeks late last summer, as the story unfolded, Heath and I spoke on the phone and exchanged numerous e-mails. He told me his last visit to Madison had been quite recent, just last July. A Canadian documentary film crew had accompanied him, Heath said.

Heath was friendly, articulate, and impressively well-versed in the lore of the Kinross incident. But at some point during our communication it dawned on me that for Heath, something more was at work than finding the truth behind a mysterious event in U.S. Air Force history. Heath, I came to realize, be-

lieved that in some complex way he possessed memories that could only be the memories of Gene Moncla, the F-89 pilot. And he believed that the F-89 had indeed been abducted by a UFO in 1953.

I am not a big believer in either reincarnation or extraterrestrials, so I didn't pursue that line of inquiry with Heath last year. I'd enjoyed our communication and left it at that.

Now, though, the documentary film that was partly shot here last summer is not only finished, it aired twice in the last few weeks on Canadian television.

The film is titled "The Moncla Memories," and this week I spoke with its creator, Canadian filmmaker **David Cherniack**.

Cherniack said he was working on a two-hour documentary on UFOs for the Canadian History Channel when he met Heath and decided Heath was worthy of a film himself. The film crew, traveling by RV, came to Madison last summer and shot film of Heath in Moncla's old Madison residence.

Cherniack said that more than a film about UFOs, this documentary is about "memory, and how we construct our memories." What he liked about Heath, he said, "is that he has never been a true believer in his own recollections. He knows that they are potentially suspect."

Which makes Heath different from many others who insist they have been touched in some way by aliens. In the new film, Heath details the memories and images that led him to the startling conclusion of his relationship with Moncla. One memory includes Heath's

parents being present on the alien ship when Moncla was abducted, and Moncla being told he cannot return to his old life but might instead be reborn as another human. Gord Heath was born nine months after Moncla's F-89 disappeared.

In the film, we learn Moncla's family has had a mixed reaction to Heath's memories. Cherniack, the filmmaker, suggested, and Heath agreed, to a DNA test. They would need a member of the Moncla family to participate as well, and an unidentified male agreed to the test.

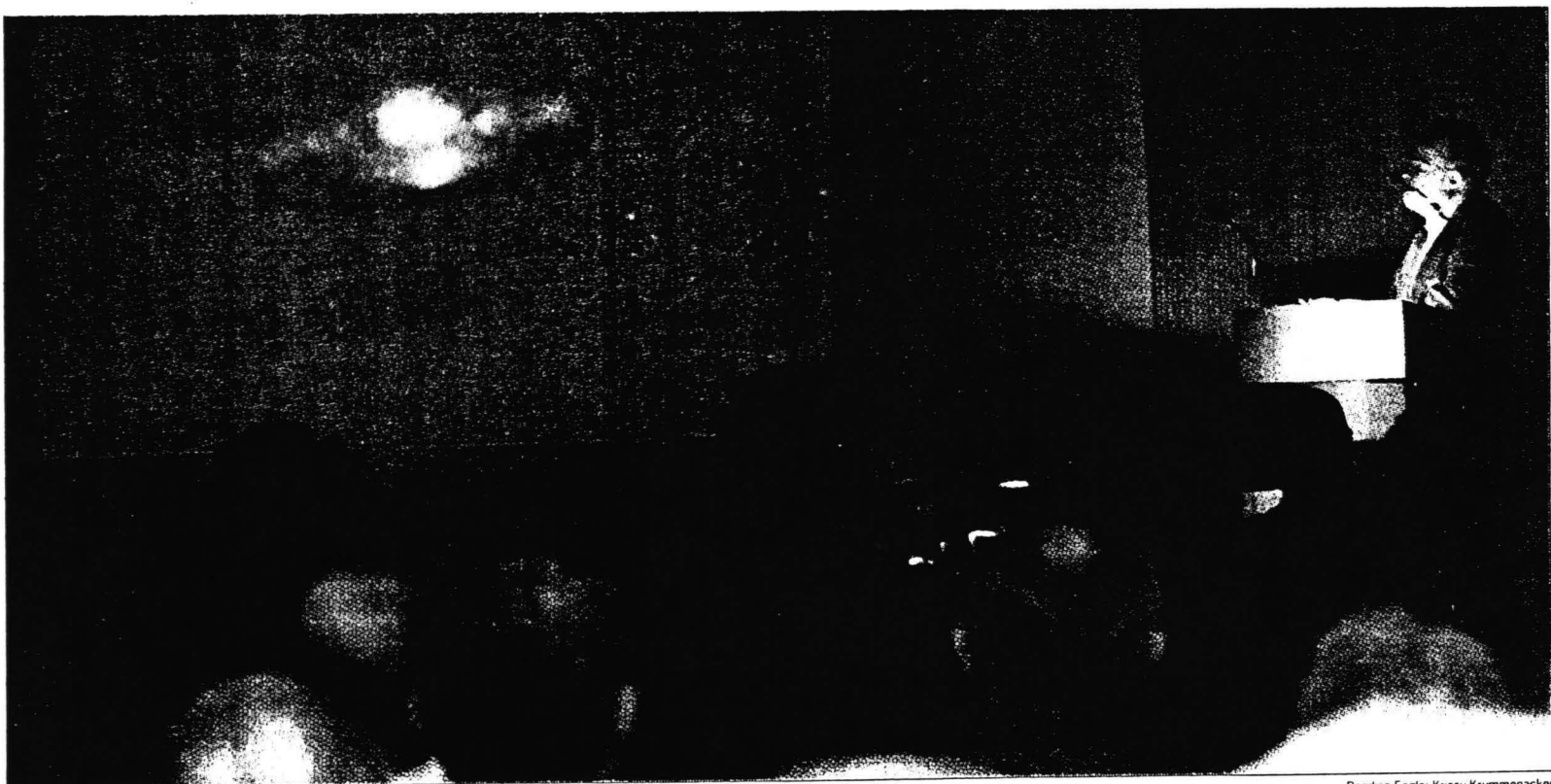
As it happened, Heath was with Cherniack in the filmmaker's RV last year when the results of the test were sent. Cherniack didn't look at the results himself. He set up his camera and asked Heath to open the e-mail, which would reveal whether or not Heath was genetically related to Gene Moncla.

Heath sits at the computer. "What does it say, Gord?" a voice asks off-camera.

Heath reads from the screen: "The result is consistent with males who do not share a common male lineage."

There was no match. Heath, though, still has his Moncla memories, and questions linger, including what really happened to the Truax F-89 over Lake Superior in 1953. Late in the film someone says, "There are some mysteries out there we can't answer. They just have to stay a mystery."

Heard something Moe should know? Call 252-6446, write P.O. Box 8060, Madison, WI 53708, or e-mail dmoe@madison.com



Reading Eagle: Krissy Krummenacker

Nuclear physicist turned UFO-ologist Stanton T. Friedman speaks about UFOs to a crowd of more than 200 at the Reading Public Museum on Wednesday night.

Discussing his (space)craft

Pre-eminent UFO specialist Stanton T. Friedman offers interstellar tales to a sold-out crowd of enthusiasts at Reading Public Museum.

By Dan Kelly
Reading Eagle

Alien beings have confined mankind to earth.

They won't let us travel the universe until we learn to get along with each other.

"If you were them, would you want us out there?" nuclear physicist turned UFO-ologist Stanton T. Friedman asked a sold-out crowd of UFO enthusiasts at the Reading Public Museum on Wednesday night.

Coincidentally, a privately developed rocket that carried hopes of cheap access to space was lost minutes after launch from the Marshall Islands on Tuesday.

Or was it a coincidence? "I think we're quarantined here," Friedman said, his wild eyebrows bristling against his thick, wire-rimmed glasses.

Arguably the foremost UFO specialist in the world, Friedman spoke for more than two hours as the rapt audience listened in the darkened auditorium for evidence of life on other planets.

"I'm fascinated by this stuff," said Brett A. Fortley of Reading, who came to the Friedman lecture with his wife, Marcia L.

"I believe there is something else out there and I believe it is humanoid. I've believed it since I was a kid."

Museum officials said Friedman's presentation was the first to sell out in recent memory. A total of 218 people attended, capacity for the museum auditorium, officials said.

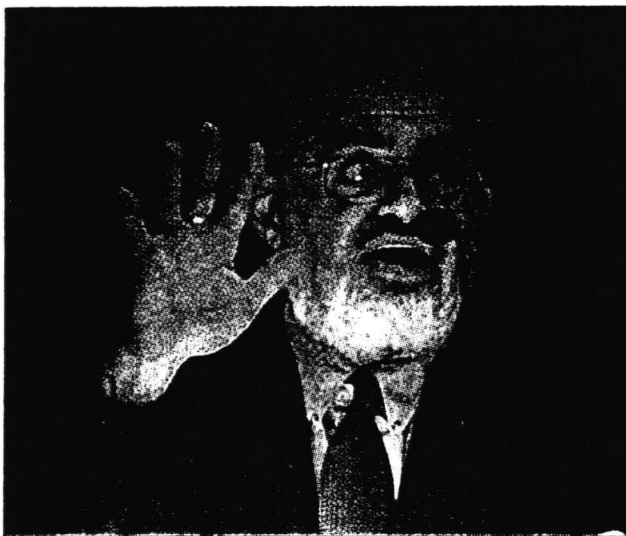
Friedman said he worked as a nuclear physicist for a half-dozen companies over 14 years on a number of failed or canceled projects involving early efforts to harness nuclear technology before he got interested in UFOs.

"I read a book called 'UFOs: Serious Business,' and found it very interesting," Friedman said. "I shared it with a neighbor of mine who was an engineer and he was even more impressed than I was."

Before long, Friedman said he began reading up on UFOs, the Roswell incident and other reports of aliens visiting Earth.

He has a theory on the Roswell affair, a 1947 crash in the New Mexico desert believed to involve an alien spacecraft.

"We were developing three things: nuclear power, rockets and powerful electronics in the form of radar that indicated to



Stanton T. Friedman, who says aliens won't let us travel the universe until we learn to get along with each other: "If you were them, would you want us out there?"

them that we weren't too far, maybe 100 years, from interstellar travel," Friedman said.

Because all three of the advanced technologies were being tested in the Southwest and New Mexico in particular, it made sense that the first crash of an alien craft would occur there, he said.

"If they were trying to keep an eye on us, that's where they would be," Friedman said.

The two efforts to disprove

the alien space crash in Roswell — weather balloons and crash test dummies — can easily be debunked as government lies, Friedman said.

"Weather balloons don't move that fast," he said. "And the crash test dummies they put on display were the size of pilots, 6 feet tall."

"The bodies they found were 4 foot tall."

■ Contact reporter Dan Kelly at 610-371-5040 or dkelly@readingeagle.com.

Stanton T. Friedman

Age: 72

Born: Elizabeth, N.J.

Family: Wife, Marilyn; three children; one grandchild.

Residence: New Brunswick, Canada. Holds dual U.S. and Canadian citizenship.

Education: Bachelor's and master's degrees in physics from the University of Chicago, 1955 and 1956.

Employment: Fourteen years as a nuclear physicist for General Electric Co., General Motors Corp., Westinghouse, TRW Systems, Aerojet General Nucleonics and McDonnell Douglas.

Avocation: Since 1967 has lectured on UFOs at more than 600 colleges and to more than 100 professional groups in all 50 states, nine provinces and 16 other countries.

Publications: Author of more than 80 UFO papers. Co-author of "Crash at Corona: The Definitive Study of the Roswell Incident." Author of "TOP SECRET/MAJIC," the story of a group formed in 1947 to probe UFO crashes.

Awards: UFO Magazine's Lifetime Achievement Award, 2002.

TV: The documentary, "Stanton T. Friedman IS Real," was broadcast in Canada in 2002.

The truth is out there, somewhere, about aliens

Has anybody heard of the Baian Kara Ula Mountains? Or what they have in common with an ancient grave near Shantung? Who can tell me what the Prince Regent River Valley, Australia, and a mysterious rock near Navai, Uzbekistan, Russia, have in common?

Anybody?

Well, believe it or not, all these places are thought to contain ancient carvings depicting extraterrestrial aliens. According to Erich von Daniken, author of "Chariots of the Gods," "The past teemed with unknown gods who visited the primeval earth in manned spaceships."

And I believe him.

From references to ancient vimanas aircraft to pictures depicting the crucifixion of Christ, extraterrestrials seem to have played an important part in history. So why is there a controversy over their existence?

Because some refuse to believe in anything they haven't experienced firsthand. They share the opinion of Davis High School senior Jeffrey Pack, who says he would only believe, "If I saw one myself or was abducted, because then at least I would know!"

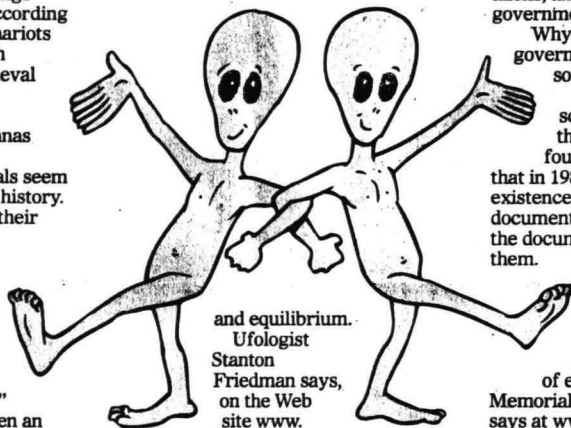
OK, so maybe you have never seen an alien firsthand, but what about evidence that says they exist? The Center for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence says, on its Web site (www.cseti.org), that "the existence and authentication of top-secret documents confirming the retrieval of crashed ETs and their occupants, the numerous photographs and films showing ETs, the reports of thousands of credible civilian and military observers all provide compelling evidence for the ongoing contact between ETs and humans."

Skeptics still hold onto their opinions. Their reasons range from Layton High School freshman A.J. Grayden saying, "I am just hard to convince, and with so many frauds and scams going on, I wouldn't be surprised if the 'evidence' wasn't real," to psychologist Carl Jung's opinion that UFOs are no more than a mandala visualized in the sky by people yearning for harmony



Emily Stevens

TX. Morgan High



and equilibrium. Ufologist Stanton Friedman says, on the Web site www.bright.net,

that polls show a high majority of people do believe in UFOs, especially those with a higher education (or perhaps a higher intelligence).

If so many people believe, why don't they share their stories? Simple; they don't want to be considered weird. But a good friend of mine, who wishes to remain anonymous, did tell me about his alien sighting, which matches hundreds of other sightings and abduction stories.

He and some friends were camping. It was late at night when they walked beyond the campfire. In the sky he saw a "dancing star." Below the star, his friend pointed out a smaller orange orb. They turned back to the campfire around 11:30 p.m.

A few minutes later, they looked up again to see three of the dancing stars. Suddenly they realized their blazing fire

was gone. When my friend looked at his watch, it said 3:30 a.m. In the space of only a few minutes, they lost almost four hours! He then went on to describe the craft as it came closer to their camp.

Sound crazy? Maybe to you, but many people do believe. According to a Newsweek magazine poll, 48 percent of Americans think UFOs are real, 29 percent think we have already made contact with aliens, and 48 percent think there is a government coverup of UFO knowledge.

Why would anyone believe the government would cover up something so monumental?

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, former scientific consultant on UFOs to the U.S. Air Force, says in a letter found at www.ufoevidence.org, that in 1980, researchers learned of the existence of 156 top secret UFO-related documents. When they filed a request for the documents, they were denied access to them.

So the government is hiding a few documents.

Why would they want to keep extraterrestrials a secret?

Dr. Steven M. Greer, chairman of emergency medicine at Caldwell Memorial Hospital in North Carolina, says at www.disclosureproject.org, "If the government came clean with what it knows about E.T. technology, we could upgrade the planet. We could wean ourselves off oil and other fossil fuels and implement a cheap, safe energy."

I can't say whether he is right or not, but considering how much money the government has invested into our current energy systems, his argument makes sense.

So where does that leave us? Are aliens out there, or are we really alone? The controversy will continue until one side releases more information and who knows how long that will take. (Everyone knows how stubborn the government is.)

Until then, however, I think I will keep an eye on the skies. Just in case.

Emily Stevens is a senior at Morgan High School. E-mail her at skiddlyoop020@hotmail.com.

Geneseo crop circle 'genuine event'

'Something unknown was at work'

By Stephen Elliott
selliott@qconline.com

One thing is clear to those who studied a crop circle in Geneseo last summer. It wasn't mechanically produced.

"The indications we do have suggest to us that this was a genuine event," said Nancy Talbott, head of the BLT (Burke, Levengood, Talbott) Research Team, Inc., Cambridge, Mass. "What I mean is, this was not mechanically created. It means something unknown was at work, as we have seen in other cases."

► The three circles, about 50 feet in diameter and touching each other, did not appear to be man-made.

JoAnne Scarpellini, investigator/retired neurochemist who traveled to Geneseo to perform tests at the crop-circle site

What that unknown is may never be known.

Last August, a rural Geneseo farmer discovered part of his soybean field had unusual rings in it. He contacted the Henry County Sheriff's Department.

When the BLT Research Team heard about it, the group of scientists sent a soil tester, JoAnne Scarpellini of St.

Louis, to investigate.

The retired neurochemist said then that the three circles, about 50 feet in diameter and touching each other, did not appear to be man-made.

According to BLT's Web site, www.bltresearch.com, there is no real answer as to why crop circles appear.

Ms. Talbott said there have been obvious hoaxes through the years, but many circles go unexplained. Much of the documented observation is anecdotal, such as animals acting strangely or electrical equipment not working.

"Farmers frequently report unusual disturbances among farm animals during nights when crop circles form nearby, particularly reporting that their cattle bellow loudly and/or their dogs bark unabatedly for hours," according to the Web site.

In August 1991, Blue Grass, Iowa, farmer Delmar "Snowball" Meyer found a large crop circle in his cornfield.

"The deputy was out, and he couldn't believe it either," Mr. Meyer said Wednesday. "I had been farming forever. I said to the sheriff, 'this is crazy, but I've got a crop circle.'"

Nearly 16 years later, he and his wife, Carol, still have the newspaper clippings from that experience. It never was solved.

Former Davenport attorney and educator Jim Hodges took an interest in the incident. He talked to Mr. Meyer, took pictures, even rented a helicopter to drop inside the crop circle.

"One of the things that does stand out in my mind, when the farmer (Mr. Meyer) was good enough to take me out to the field, his collie dog absolutely refused to walk with us," Mr.



John Greenwood / staff

JoAnne Scarpellini, investigator for BLT Research Team, returns to her vehicle with soil samples and soybean plants from a crop-circle site west of Geneseo in August, 2006.

Hodges said. "I tried to pick him up and drag him in. He got very ferocious."

Ms. Talbott said scientists were hoping to see something different in the composition of the soil at the Geneseo site. "There have been reports in the past of changes in the nitrogen levels in crop circle soils. We don't see that in this case."

Nitrogen levels can increase during lightning strikes, she said. "Farmers know if they live in a lightning-strike area, their soil will be richer in nitrogen."

The Geneseo case is like others across the United States and throughout the world, said Ms. Talbott, who has traveled the world investigating crop circles.

Quad-Cities Online
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"There are a number of scientists involved in this. But, you've got to remember, just like you and me, they have mortgages to pay and children to raise."

There are anywhere from 15 to 40 crop circles reported in the U.S. each year, she said, adding that crop-circle season starts when things are growing.

"The season has started. Here in the U.S., we start hearing about them in May and it carries through to October. In Red Bluff, Calif., they have found three lovely little circles. There was something else reported in Louisiana where 25 circles were randomly placed in a field."

Jim and Christine Dahl, the Geneseo landowners, planted corn this spring in the spot where the soybean crop circles were.

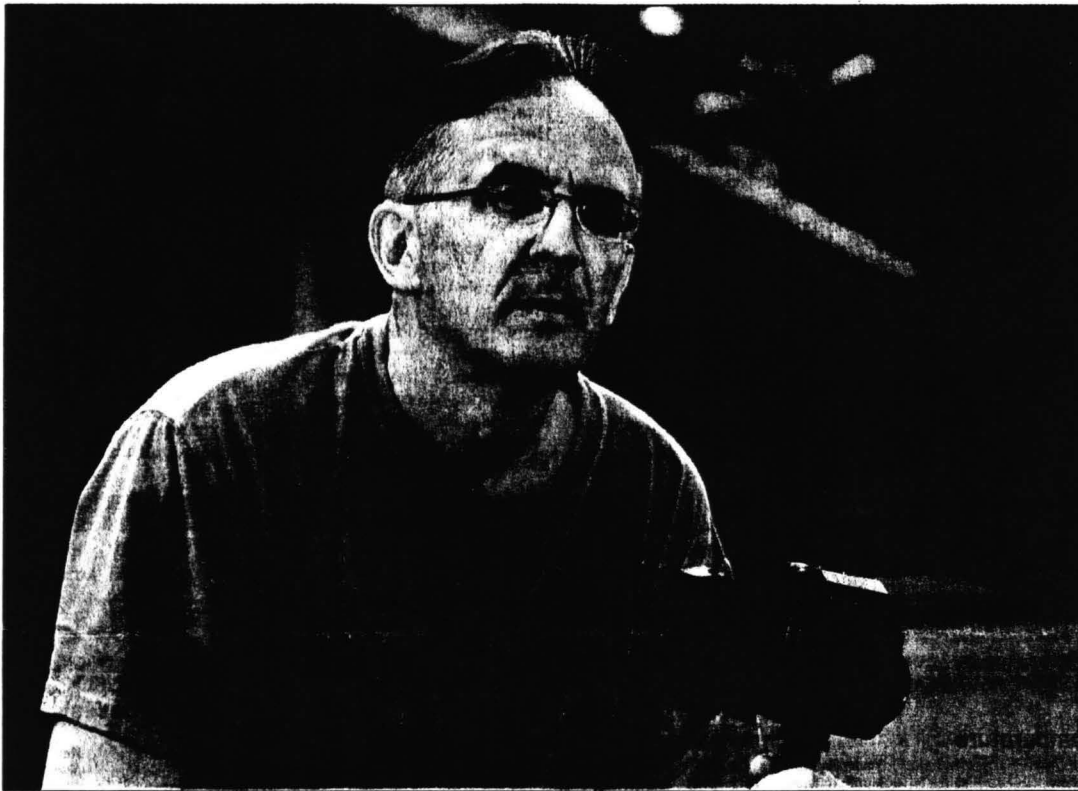
Mr. Meyer said they likely won't see a change in growth.

"It's something you can't explain," Mr. Meyer said. "We heard different stories from people afterwards, saying there were lights in the sky when this happened, that their wells got real cloudy days after that."

"We had a call quite a while later from someone in Wisconsin saying he and his son were driving from Wisconsin someplace and all of a sudden, they were in a motel in Bettendorf."

"And they didn't know how they got there. So much stuff happened."

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE



Eliza Wiley IR Staff Photographer

Warren Aston is researching the Udo Wartena case involving possible UFO incidents in the Townsend and Helena areas.

Researcher investigating Helena UFO encounters

By MARTIN J. KIDSTON
IR Features Writer

It was back in the 1960s, down in New Zealand, that Warren Aston watched a small point of light approach a satellite, circle around it, and then vanish at a high rate of speed.

Aston, who has carried that memory with him for more than 40 years, has emerged as one of the world's foremost UFO

researchers, traveling far and wide to collect and investigate unusual stories across cultures.

Arriving from Australia, Aston spent Friday at the Montana Historical Society in Helena, browsing old papers before heading to Townsend in hopes of finding the location where Udo Wartena allegedly boarded a UFO in 1948.

While in Helena, Aston also hopes to interview sev-

eral friends of Leo Dworshak, a man who also claimed to have boarded a UFO in North Dakota in the 1932.

Aston, who travels the world conducting interviews on the topic, says the two Montana stories are among the most credible he's ever encountered.

"I grew up at the beginning of the space race," Aston said. "It took me into a bigger world than my lit-

tle country town. To me, this is just another part of it. We see our own future when we see these things happening."

While clearing a ditch in the Big Belt Mountains in the summer of 1948, Udo Wartena, a Dutch immigrant, saw what he described as a ship.

The ship looked like a blimp, but more pointed and

wheels moving in opposite directions created the ship's gravitation. The ship also used energy from the stars for power and momentum.

While Wartena kept his story to himself for much of his life — just as the aliens had asked him to do — he finally wrote the details down, then confided in two of his closets friends just before his death.

The story didn't hit UFO circles until Aston got hold of it. He released the details at a UFO symposium in Michigan in 1997. Aston still describes the story as one of the most convincing he's ever heard.

"I was the original investigator for the Wartena story," Aston. "He'd said all they wanted to do was get water. It was their energy source. They split the water from the oxygen and hydrogen, and used the hydrogen to power their craft."

Aston said the details are impressive, being that the encounter took place 60 years ago. But Wartena didn't divulge his story for more than 50 years, leading some to wonder if the details could have been mixed with mankind's own emerging technology.

Wartena's close encounter wasn't the only story to bring Aston to Helena. Leo Dworshak, who lived in the McHugh trailer court for years, wrote a small book on his experience.

Dworshak claimed to have seen a UFO land while exploring with his brother in North Dakota in 1932. He also said he boarded the UFO and met its alien occupants.

"The first time we just saw the ship," Dworshak told the IR in 2003. "The second time we entered the UFO and we were in there with the aliens. They showed us the whole ship."

Dworshak detailed the way the spacecraft landed, how it looked, and how an invisible force-field had kept him and his brother at a distance.

The pair watched the UFO rotate "in a complicated way." The flashing, colored lights formed an outer shell, "like a band or a belt," that circled the vehicle at its widest point.

"The inner shell seemed to be standing still, or perhaps turning the other way," Dworshak had said. "It was totally silent and produced

no cloud of exhaust fumes or smoke."

The ship returned night after night. Eventually, Dworshak said, the aliens invited him and his brother to come aboard.

After he was disinfected, the aliens gave Dworshak a tour of the craft. They also showed him the future — one that included the home computer and the rise of Nazi Germany.

Much of our knowledge, Dworshak had said, is a gift from an alien race — left behind for us to find, to study, and to contemplate. The aliens also told him that "No one will ever believe you when you tell them about us."

Some still don't, but Aston is inclined to believe Dworshak's story. Unfortunately, Dworshak passed away three weeks ago, and Aston never got his face-to-face interview.

"I'm meeting people who knew him and worked with him over a period of time," Aston said. "Both of their stories have some things in common. Did they run in the same group of people? At this stage, I think, possibly not."



RICH TOSCHES
Rocky Mountain Ranger

UFOs make Yuma man's life a pit stop

Yuma
He plopped down in a big chair in his sturdy old home on Main Street in this northeast Colorado town, a village nestled in a land where alfalfa grows quickly, time passes slowly and when it turns black at night, well, all kinds of things can dance across the sable sky.

Big Tim Cullen says it was a night like that so many years ago when the lights of a UFO rose over the grassy hills and settled alongside his car. He says he got a good look.

"It was 100 foot long, 20 foot wide and about 10 foot high."

And then it was gone.
On Sunday, just a few weeks shy of the 29th anniversary of that night in 1978, Cullen leaned back in the chair and talked of the night the spaceship came down. It hovered along Colorado 59 between Yuma and the smaller town of Joes, he says. And even though he doesn't remember this part, Cullen said the aliens took him that night and implanted a strange metal chip in his left wrist — a chip he wouldn't find until 1998.

Cullen isn't alone, of course. Thousands claim they've been abducted by aliens. Hundreds of thousands say they've seen UFOs. Heck, just a few weeks ago a well-respected former Arizona governor said he saw a UFO hovering over Phoenix while he was in office.

"When I saw it, I said, 'this is definitely a UFO,'" ex-Gov. Fife Symington said of the 1997 event. "It was absolutely breathtaking."

Which leads to the obvious question: Arizona had a governor named "Fife"?

And another question: How come it took Cullen 20 years to discover the freaky alien implant in his left wrist? The answer: it took him that long to whack his left thumb with a hammer.

Cullen, 55, stood up Sunday morning and disappeared into a back room of the house where he and his wife have lived for nearly three decades. He came back with an X-ray and held it against the living room window. The images, taken at a Yuma medical clinic, clearly showed a small spot in the wrist, a white triangular image lodged in the tissue above the bones.

Cullen didn't say a word. Not that he's shy about this. He's been featured on lots of UFO-type websites and even on a Learning Channel show called "101 Things Removed From the Human Body."

But sometimes, he doesn't know what to say. Or what to think.

"It's all so strange," he said quietly.

Crash kicked off sightings

It all began April 2, 1978. He awoke from a dream about a terrible car crash. Seven days later, the car he was driving rolled five times, according to the police report. Cullen, then 27, suffered a broken neck and other injuries. About seven weeks later, on May 30, while returning from a doctor's appointment in Denver, his neck still encased in a protective collar, the UFO appeared from the darkness where Vernon Road slices

(continued on page 6)

not as thick in the middle. While the ground sloped away, the ship remained on a level hover.

"As I stood there, a stairway was let down and a man came down this and started walking towards me," Wartena wrote in 1980. "As I was somewhat more than interested, I went to meet him. He stopped when we were about ten or twelve feet apart."

A being that appeared like a man came down from the ship. The being asked Wartena if they could take some water. Wartena watched as they lowered a hose from the ship. The being then invited Wartena to come aboard.

"After we had entered the ship, I had noticed that the sound I had heard outside was hardly noticeable," he wrote. "So I asked him what caused the noise or humming. He said this would be a bit complicated, but he would try to explain so I could understand."

The man said two fly-

Sightings

UFO report targets Milford incident

By JOANN LIVINGSTON
Daily Light Managing Editor

A more than 30-year-old report has surfaced alleging UFO sightings in southern Ellis County — an area that has also seen rumors in the past of having a “big foot” type inhabitant.

“It’s a fascinating report and seemed a very credible report.”

Vike Report founder Brian Vike on the Milford sighting

Report founder Brian Vike told the *Daily Light* in a telephone interview Monday evening.

Describing himself as a “pretty-level headed fellow, although I’m into UFOs,” Vike said, saying what he does is take in all reports sent to his site without judgment. “You have to leave everything open. ... Anything’s possible. It sounds nutty, but again, anything’s possible.”

Of the hundreds of reports Vike has received since he started researching UFOs in mid-2000 — 900 from 2006 alone — the majority are from the United States.

“I just love talking to these people,” he said, noting the popularity of his Web site, which at any given

In a radio interview Sunday on the Canadian-based Vike Report, a woman identified as “Kathy” said she and her husband had several encounters of the first kind — sightings of a UFO — during about a six-month period when the couple lived in a farmhouse in Milford.

“It’s a fascinating

experience with UFOs was as a teenager in 1970 near Pueblo, Colo. She said she was driving alone on a highway at night when a brightly-lit object came up quickly behind her on the roadway, lighting up the inside of her car before disappearing into the night.

“It was almost as if it singled me out,” she said, saying her next experiences were when she and her husband moved to Milford, where they lived in a farmhouse “in the middle of cotton fields.”

It was a summer’s evening when she said she stepped outside to look at the stars and saw a low-flying light coming

“I watched it and as it got in front of the house, it made a 90-degree angle turn, and when I saw that, I thought, ‘That’s not right.’”

“Kathy,” a former Milford resident describing her UFO sighting

toward her.

“It was flying about as low as a prop plane would fly but there was no sound,” she said. “I watched it and as it got in front of the house, it made a 90-degree angle turn, and when I

sightings) somewhere.”

It’s not just current sightings on which he receives information. As with Kathy, Vike also is receiving information from people’s past sightings. He attributes this in large part to the Internet and its ability to bring together people reporting similar type experiences.

“With the Internet, it’s so open, it’s nonstop,” he said, noting the topic is of definite interest, with a Google search Monday evening yielding

almost 5 million results.

Vike said he posts the reports he receives and — with rare exception — leaves them open as to what may or may not have happened.

“I believe people are intelligent. They can read it and figure it out for themselves,” he said, saying the sightings can often be explained away as a planet such as Venus or an aircraft. Through his work, he said he’s developed a number of sources, such as in the military, who are able to

help him identify what someone may have actually seen.

“While I believe that though, I wasn’t there to see it, so I leave them ‘as is’ mostly,” he said as to why the majority of the reports he’s received remain in an open status.

E-mail JoAnn at editor@waxahachiedailylight.com

(continued from page 5 - POST, Denver, CO - May 9, 2007)



Tim Cullen of Yuma holds up X-rays that he says show the alien implant in his left wrist — a tiny, triangular white object. It’s his psychic powers that made the aliens want to study him, he says.

Rich Tosches |
The Denver Post

through the hay fields and meets the highway. Cullen and his wife, Janet, stared.

“It didn’t make any noise,” Cullen said.

And that was that.

Until he saw another UFO two years later, in 1980, in the exact same spot along Colorado 59. And then, a third encounter of the “Yipes!” kind came in 1994, 40 miles to the south near the cemetery in Cope.

“That one had blue and white lights,” he said.

The story goes quickly then. Cullen whopped his thumb with the hammer in 1998 while trying to drive a steel rod into the ground for a cement project. The ensuing X-ray showed the odd chunk of metal.

“I knew then what had hap-

pened,” Cullen said. “I knew it was an alien implant from that first encounter in 1978. There was lost time that night. I have to assume I was abducted.”

They want our powers

Weeks after the X-ray, Cullen talked to a reporter at the Yuma newspaper. Word reached the UFO community. Websites trumpeted “The Cullen Abduction.” In 2000, he said, he traveled to a clinic in California and had the alien, well, thing removed from his wrist. No one knows what the thing is, he said.

But this is what he believes: the aliens chose him because of his psychic abilities. In addition to the dream of the 1978 car crash a week before it happened, Cullen said there are constant psychic moments in

his life. Aliens, he surmises, don’t have that power. They are gathering information via these implants from Cullen and others like him.

He got out of his chair then and went to the door. Outside his small home on the Colorado grasslands, branches with tiny new spring leaves rustled in a fresh wind. From his front steps he looked to the west. Storm clouds gathered on the horizon.

“I am totally open to the idea,” said Symington, the Harvard-educated former Arizona governor and an ex-Air Force captain, “that whoever they are occasionally pass this way.”

Staff writer Rich Tosches writes each Wednesday and Sunday. He can be reached at rtosches@denverpost.com.

time can have upward of 100 people online and visiting.

“The response and the interest in the topic is just incredible,” he said. “I was quite shocked, too, when I started. I just wanted a hobby (and) boy, did I get surprised. From the photos and the stories, I didn’t realize it would turn into what it has.

“It’s just nonstop, but it’s really nice to get the interest into this and have people put their reports in,” he said, saying the majority of the reports are explainable, but “a small percentage is really wild.”

Kathy’s report is one of the latter at this time, with Vike hoping that other people who lived in Milford at about the same time contact him with information that might provide some explanation for what she says she experienced.

Under its privacy policy, the Vike Report doesn’t identify anyone by last name and does use a pseudonym upon request, with Vike saying Kathy is a pseudonym for the woman who lived in Milford.

In her interview, which is available on the Vike Report Web site, Kathy said her first

couldn’t recall exactly how the incident ended, but did relate other instances where she and her husband were returning to Milford from Waxahachie and she would notice out the passenger window a light on the horizon that appeared to be following or paralleling their travel. It was usually about 10 p.m. when this happened, she said.

“It was just a white light, following us on the horizon,” she said, saying the last experience the couple had before moving from Milford was their being at home one evening when they heard a strange vibrating sound above their house as they were watching television.

They turned the television off and heard what Kathy described as a “vibrating, pulsing sound” that “vibrated the whole house.”

She said her husband offered up an explanation that it was probably “electricity going through the wires” — and neither of them ventured outside to see if there was another cause.

In her final recollection, Kathy said there was a calf born with a birth defect about that time in a nearby field. She said she saw the rancher, told him about the incidents she’d experienced and asked if he had ever seen anything strange. She said he ignored her, though, and turned around and walked away without a word.

Besides Kathy’s report, of the UFO sightings on Vike’s Web site, the nearest one to Ellis County is a report of a single, triangular-shaped object in the sky at about 9:45 p.m. March 25, 2007, on U.S. Highway 175 between Seagoville and Crandall.

“Basically I could see the shape and the direction it was moving because it was darker than the clouds behind it,” the person’s report indicates. “It was just below the cloud line and I got the impression that it was very large. It was also completely silent. It didn’t seem like it was going very fast, it was kind of just cruising along. The location was about a mile from the Wal-Mart on 175 outside of Seagoville.”

Vike said he welcomes comments or reports at his e-mail address of hbccufo@telus.net or through his Web site at <http://www.hbccufo.org>.

He said he’s personally experienced about three sightings he has no explanation for, saying his area of Canada was a major source for sightings around 2002.

“We were the UFO capital for two years running,” he said. “It was just a concentration of bizarre sightings (but) my area is dead right now. It seems to move around. All of a sudden, you’ll have a concentration (of

Veteran talks of the 'Foo Fighters'

By FREDERIC O. SARGENT
as told to ABBY WEINGARTEN

Frederic Sargent was studying economics at Colby College in Maine when the draft for World War II beckoned. In 1942, the 22-year-old joined the 415th Night Fighter Squadron of the Army Air Forces and studied at a series of radio schools.

For 3½ years, he was stationed throughout North Africa, Sicily, Corsica, Germany and England. As a corporal, he never flew, but his principal job was to take care of the lights on the landing strips for night fighters.

He peeled potatoes in the kitchen police and learned the mechanics of aircraft engines. In 1946, as the historian for the group, he wrote an unpublished account of his unit's interaction with foo fighters, titled "Foo Fighters and the 415th."

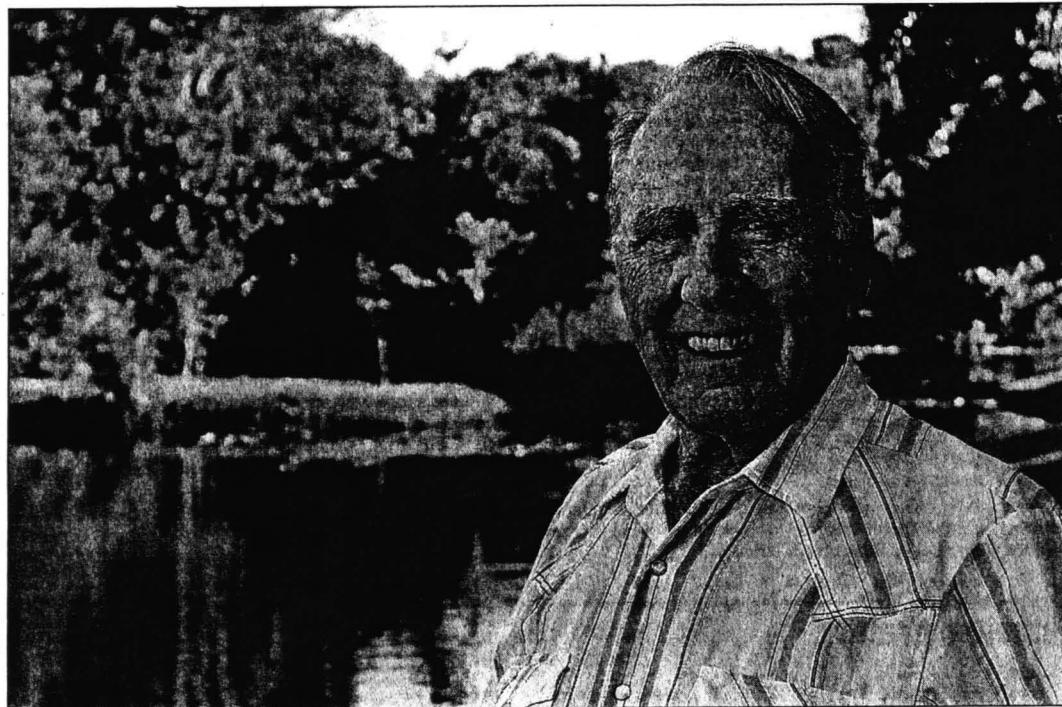
Sargent went on to teach economics at various U.S. universities before retiring to Sarasota with Shirley, his wife of 60 years. (Below are some of Sargent's writings and ruminations on the topic of foo fighters.)

The British developed radar and night fighting, so when the U.S. went into World War II, we had to learn everything from the British. My squadron was the first one to do that.

Our pilots and crew chiefs would go to England and Scotland to learn from the British. I was in the ground echelon, so I met up with them in North Africa.

Pilots in the 415th encountered and reported 'foo fighters' (or luminous, unidentified objects) during the night over the German-occupied Rhine River valley. The sightings were recorded between November 1944 and April 1945, when the 415th was operating from landing strips in Dijon and Ochey, France.

The sightings posed a baffling ques-



CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS / KATHRYN BRASS

Frederic Sargent's main job was to take care of the lights on the landing strips for night fighters. Below are several books he wrote.

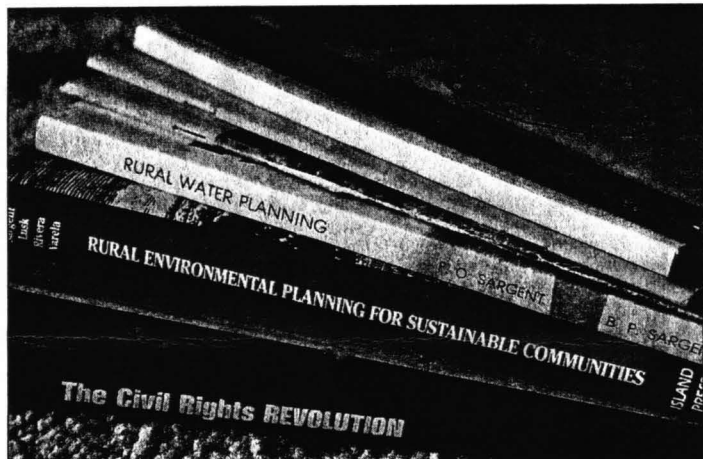
tion to air war buffs, scientists, the media and the public. What were they? The pilots could find no explanation that fit all of the sightings. The Air Force was in a position to answer the question, as they had sequestered tons of German air war records. But their focus was on developing the next generation of fighters and bombers, not in information dissemination.

The proliferation of sightings, or imagined sightings, of UFOs and flying saucers by people everywhere complicated the search for an answer. When the Allies captured the area east of the Rhine River, the foo fighter sightings ceased.

A few investigative air science researchers studied records and archives in Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom. Recent investigators point out a possible line of progressive development of radar invisibility from the foo fighter to the stealth fighter and bomber.

Eventually, as the U.S. becomes militarily secure, the Air Force will probably declassify its records of German World War II research."

Some excerpts from the unit's log:
Nov. 27, 1944: Lt. Edward A. Schleu-



ter returned from a mission and reported that he saw a red light flying through the air. It came in about 2,000 feet off starboard and then disappeared in a long red streak.

Dec. 15, 1944: A pilot's mission report stated: 'Saw a brilliant red light at 2,000 feet going east at 200 miles per

hour in the vicinity of Erstein. Due to AI failure, could not pick up contact but followed it by sight until it went out. Could not get close enough to identify object before it went out.'

Abby Weingarten may be contacted via e-mail at AbbyWeingarten@Gmail.com.

TRIBUNE, Chicago, IL - March 2, 2007

These guys are out of this world

In Congress this week, just about everyone agreed on everything.

At least they did at the 16th UFO Congress in Laughlin, Nev., which wraps up a week of activities Saturday.

The annual event provides a place where UFO enthusiasts can congregate without being laughed at, and where UFO authors and lecturers can thicken their wallets.

The idea that there is life on other planets is thrilling. The universe is so vast, it would be naive to think there's no life out there. But that's a separate issue from whether aliens have visited us.

Last I checked, there was not one good piece of credible evidence of that: not an alien rock or piece of clothing or video. And if they have the technology to travel light-years, wouldn't they have the technology to do so undetected by us Earthlings?

Skeptic and researcher Robert Shaeffer visited a previous meeting of the UFO Congress, and he tells a story where he dressed in black, from head to toe. When he walked in, everyone stared. One man



finally asked, "So are you one of those Men in Black?"

Shaeffer replied, "Sorry, I'm not at liberty to discuss that."

He expected a laugh, but instead, the man slowly moved away, confirming the somewhat paranoid spirit that seems to run through the typical UFO believer.

Here are some hot topics from this year's congress in Nevada—their attempts at demonstrating evidence of alien visitors:

>> A couple of congressmen videotaped an interview 10 years ago with a congress attendee who claimed to be involved with a crashed saucer recovery mission. The congress promised not to release it until the attendee gave permission, but it seems the attendee has disappeared (Men in Black?) so they're setting up the video screen at this year's conference.

AT THIS
VERY
MOMENT
SPACE
SHIPS
FROM THE
BEYOND
MAY BE
ON THEIR
WAY TO
DESTROY
OUR
PLANET!



>> Another participant will debut his research on the so-called Starchild skull, which "should soon prove to be the most important relic in human history." Lloyd Pye has been the skull's caretaker for seven years, and he claims it is most likely

a human-alien hybrid. Note that Pye also describes himself as a researcher in the field of "alternative knowledge," which I believe is a nice way of saying "subject that sounds important but doesn't exist at any major university."

>> How about a lecture on "Exopolitics: How Does One Speak To A Ball of Light?"

(I am not making this up.)
"Many people have made huge psychological investments in this 'alien visitor' world-view," Shaeffer said.

"It's like a religion to them, they can't understand why other people don't see the light."

That's how they counter the naysayers like me. They might explain that I am just part of the cover-up conspiracy.

Of course, any conspiracy would have to include governments from around the world. And as we see on a daily basis—whether it's celebrity gossip or political sources leaking dirt to the press—most people can't keep a secret. [REDEYE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR LARRY POTASH CO-ANCHORS 'WGN MORNING NEWS.']



James Greear of Rose Valley holds fragments of metal he found Sunday in Goble Creek. He believes the metal is from a B-25 bomber that crashed there Aug. 1, 1947, and was rumored to be carrying fragments of lava or metal that may have come from a UFO. A lava fragment found at the scene is now on display in a Seattle museum.

B-25 debris found

Goble Creek searchers uncover pieces of plane that crashed in 1947 while on mysterious mission

By Leslie Slape
THE DAILY NEWS

On a clear August night nearly 60 years ago, a doomed B-25 bomber left a trail of flame across the sky as it circled over Longview and Kelso before plunging into a narrow canyon near Rose Valley.

The Aug. 1, 1947, crash was caused by a fire in the left engine, the Air Force mission report said. The pilots, Capt. William Davidson and Lt. Frank Brown, remained with the plane and were killed. A third aviator was injured when his parachute collapsed, and a fourth escaped unscathed.

According to the mission report, the plane was carrying "top secret material" in the navigator's kit. The material was unspecified in the report, but a headline in the Kelsonian-Tribune described the pilots as "flying disk investigators."

As in flying saucer. As in UFO.

"The rumor was it was carrying some remains of a flying saucer that they were taking down somewhere to be checked out," said Ed Brock of Kelso. Brock, 76, went to the crash site about a week after officials

recalled Wednesday. He said he found "a lot of tore-up body skin pieces and a cylinder off of the engine" in the creek.

The searchers also found "a black lava rock, perfectly round, with kind of an indentation on top," said Greear's wife, Darlene.

Jim Greear, who owns the Mahaffey Road property now, has always hankered to find the crash site. He searched through the rugged terrain many times during the past 10 years or so, but found

nothing until Sunday, while slogging through muck with some neighbors and the curators of Seattle Museum of the Mysteries. The museum curators had instigated Sunday's trek.

"There's still stuff sticking out of the dirt or mud," Greear said. "I couldn't pull it out 'cause it's embedded too much."

They turned the rock and a couple of airplane parts over to the museum.

"We were just thrilled," said Philip Lipson of the museum. "Apparently,

cleared the scene, but all that he found up there in 1947 were scorched trees and a few metal fragments.

"What remained was mostly burnt and smashed," he said. "It looked like all the bigger pieces — wings, tail assembly — had been removed. It was just a burnt place

that area doesn't get too many hikers."

He said the rock "might be" from the plane's cargo — "which may or may not have been UFO fragments" — and it will be analyzed at the University of Washington. Meanwhile, the museum, which specializes in Northwest legends and lore, opened an exhibit on the crash this week.

Lipson said he and his co-curator, Charlette LeFevre, hope to return to the crash site on its 60th anniversary Aug. 1.

right by the creekside."

He's never been up there since, he said.

In 1952, the book "The Coming of the Saucers" by Kenneth Arnold quoted boat pilot Harold Dahl as saying he saw five flying disks come to the aid of a sixth wobbling in the sky above Maury Island (now Vashon Island) on June 21, 1947. The disks showered slag and ash into the water and onto the deck of his boat, killing his dog and injuring his son, Dahl told Arnold. Dahl said he turned over some of the debris to the Air Force. He later recanted his story.

When the plane crashed, it was carrying six fragments of "flying disk" debris to California for analysis, according to the Idaho Daily Statesman of Aug. 3, 1947.

Sunday, a team of searchers found what they believe might be a chunk of the plane's secret cargo, along with some airplane parts.

"I yelled, 'Yahoo!' " when he found an airplane part in Goble Creek, James Greear



Photos by Greg Ebersole / The Daily News

The Daily News front-page story and photo of the crash, "Air Force Day marred as B-25 crashes here," mentions nothing of flying saucers. The Kelsonian-Tribune story a week later called the pilots "flying disk investigators."

ON THE WEB

- Seattle Museum of the Mysteries: <http://www.seattlechatclub.org/Arnold.html>
- B-25 crash report: <http://www.seanet.com/johnco/b25crash.htm>

UFO expert: Deathbed revelations point to Roswell coverup

By Norm Starks
Special to the Gazette

BELOIT

It was a stormy night in the New Mexico desert July 3, 1947, when something unusual happened not far from Roswell.

Did an interplanetary craft crash and set off one of the most monumental cover-ups in history?

Donald R. Schmitt is convinced it did.

Schmitt, who spoke Tuesday

night at Beloit College on "The Roswell Crash: What Really Happened?" is the former co-director of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies in Chicago, and has researched the Roswell incident since 1989.

"I was a complete skeptic on the subject," Schmitt said in an inter-



Schmitt

view before his lecture on Tuesday. "I had publicly stated my doubts that the government could keep something of that magnitude a secret for that length of time."

But after interviewing hundreds of people, he's convinced that whatever happened in 1947 has been covered up by the military for 60 years. He said after talking to the witnesses who had handled debris from the crash site that he concluded "maybe we should reconsider and treat this as though it might possi-

bly be true."

Schmitt told a packed Richardson Auditorium on Tuesday night that the government has come up with four stories about what was recovered in 1947. First, an official news release announced they had recovered a "flying disk." This was quickly refuted by Pentagon officials who said it was only a weather balloon and a bombing target. Two other explanations have been officially offered, the latest in 1997.

NATIONAL POST, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - March 23, 2007



SCOTT TROYANOS / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Arizona governor Fife Symington drew scorn in 1997 for making fun of his UFO sighting.

Former governor's 'alien' admission

By Mary Vallis

A former Republican governor of Arizona says he saw an unidentified flying object in a famous incident 10 years ago while he was in office.

In interviews this week, Fife Symington insisted he witnessed a strange, otherworldly event on March 13, 1997.

The controversial incident has become known as the Phoenix Lights. Hundreds of residents of Arizona reported seeing a strange string of lights hovering in the sky on that clear night; some also claimed they had spotted a massive triangular craft.

"The lights were really brilliant. And it was just fascinating. I mean, it was enormous," Mr. Symington told CNN. "It just felt otherworldly. You know, in your gut, you could just tell it was otherworldly."

It was "probably one form of an alien spacecraft," added the Vietnam Air Force veteran, and challenged the U.S. Defense Department to prove otherwise.

Earlier this month, an official with the Air National Guard told the *Arizona Republic* the lights

were flares dropped during a night-time exercise.

Political experts and those investigating the Phoenix Lights say Mr. Symington's statement lends credibility to the UFO theory.

"It's going to have a huge impact on this story," said William Warwick, an investigative journalist who is organizing a conference for witnesses of the Phoenix Lights. Mr. Symington is the highest elected official in the country to admit to seeing the lights, he noted.

"I think it's going to embolden a lot of other witnesses that have a lot of other pertinent information, been holding back these past 10 years, to come forward and speak."

Bruce Merrill, a political scientist at Arizona State University, said Mr. Symington is a "bright guy" and "very credible person."

"The fact that people like that say they saw something and that it needs to be investigated clearly gives it more credibility," he said.

Mr. Symington, who worked as a real estate developer, was forced from office a few months following the sighting after he was convicted of bank fraud in his real estate dealings. The verdict was

overturned in 1999; Bill Clinton issued a pardon shortly before he left office two years later.

The Republican re-invented himself as a pastry chef and went on to co-found the Culinary Institute of Arizona, based in Scottsdale. He said he did not reveal that he had witnessed the lights in 1997 because he did not want to "stir the pot."

Indeed, he went to great lengths to make people laugh about the incident, staging a press conference and saying he would order an investigation. A member of his staff then paraded in front of reporters in an alien mask and handcuffs.

"Many witnesses were more than offended," said Lynne Kitei, a doctor who put her medical career aside to study the sightings. "They knew that what they had witnessed on March 13, 1997, was something extraordinary."

"And instead of answering their pleas for an investigation and explanation, their elected official was making jokes."

Mr. Symington now claims he was trying to introduce a little "levity" to the situation.

National Post
mvallis@nationalpost.com

CR: G. Duplantier

"I have it on good information they're now working on a fifth explanation," Schmitt said.

Only one of these explanations, Schmitt said, can be confirmed by the witnesses he's interviewed during his studies.

"The question is, which explanation are the witnesses confirming is the truth?" he said. "The government is asking us to believe the most elite Air Force unit in the country, the 509th Bomb Group based at the Roswell Army Air Field, did not know the difference between some neoprene rubber, some wooden sticks, and something truly extraordinary."

Schmitt said that on their deathbeds some witnesses finally revealed that what they saw "wasn't a balloon—it wasn't from here."

"Many of those witnesses were threatened, intimidated, paid off and made to take security oaths they would never reveal what they had seen," he said. "It's only been as they've neared the end of their lives that some of them have revealed the truth to other family members or to us. They're saying, 'It was a cover-up; the balloon was a hoax.'"

Why would the government want to cover up such an event?

"I think it was a cover-up of their ignorance," said Schmitt. "They had no idea who it was, where they were from, or what had crashed. So rather than admit their ignorance, it was easier to sweep it under the rug."

Schmitt said he wasn't trying to convince anyone or prove anything. He simply invited people to come to their own conclusions.

By Anthony Watt
watt@qconline.com

At first, she thought what she was seeing was something ordinary.

"As I pulled out of my driveway, I noticed it," Theresa Sinclair, 58, of Silvis said. "I thought it was an airplane that was very low."

It was about 6:30 a.m. March 23, and Ms. Sinclair was on her way to her job at the Rock Island Arsenal. What she saw through the open window of her car was a triangular shape in the sky, with bright red, green and white lights along its edges, outlining the shape.

When Ms. Sinclair first saw it, the triangle appeared to be over a high-rise building at the intersection of 10th Street and Crossstown Avenue. She couldn't say what distance it actually was away from her, but it appeared big.

Quad-Cities Online
www.qconline.com
We invite your comments on this story at www.qconline.com

She said she then looked away because she was concentrating on driving west on Crossstown, but when she looked up again, it was moving—fast.

"It just, like, zipped to Jewel (grocery store), then it zipped to over by Colona Road," Ms. Sinclair said.

She stopped her car at the intersection of Crossstown and 10th Street and got out to have a better look.

"I decided I was intrigued at this point," Ms. Sinclair said. "Then I looked up, and it was gone."

three or four minutes, she said. The whole time she observed the object, she did not hear anything like the sounds of jet engines or helicopter blades. It appeared to stay the same distance away from her the whole time.

"I heard nothing, I heard nothing at all," Ms. Sinclair said.

And apparently neither did anyone else.

Local and federal authorities, including the National Weather Service, the Federal Aviation Administration and Quad City International Airport said they received no reports of anything odd in the sky during that time.

Ms. Sinclair said she did not report it either. "I was just so taken aback by it," she said. She did tell some of her co-workers about it, though. Jokes about little green men ensued.

It just, like, zipped to Jewel (grocery store), then it zipped to over by Colona Road. ... Then I looked up, and it was gone.

Theresa Sinclair, Silvis resident

"You laugh, but stranger things happen," she told them.

The next day, Ms. Sinclair went out at the same time, but did not see anything. There wasn't a second show.

She said Wednesday that she's not on any medications, had not had any alcohol, nor suffered any recent blows to the head.

Many officials, and some local astronomers, also could not see anything. "I can't say," she said. "I would like to have been able to say it was a plane or a weather balloon," she said. "But I don't know. It was unidentifiable."

Silvis woman claims to have seen a UFO — maybe

DISPATCH, Moline, IL - March 29, 2007



FOREIGN NEWS

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

ARGUS, Brighton, England - Nov. 27, 2006

Mystery of orange UFOs

by ANDY DICKENSON

BRIGHT lights in the skies have baffled police and air-traffic controllers.

The unidentified flying objects have been likened to similar strange orange glows seen over Liverpool and Essex.

Witnesses said thousands of people may have seen the bizarre floating orbs.

Air-traffic controllers at Shoreham Airport and Brighton police said they had received inquiries about the UFOs, with as many as eight seen in the sky at one time.

James Gordon-Johnson, of Preston Park Avenue, Brighton, said he was leaving a restaurant in Shoreham with his brother at 11.30pm on November 18 when he saw "what appeared to be a very big orange light in the sky".

He added: "It was very, very bright but static - it wasn't rising or falling. Another one then appeared in mid-air. Then another."

"It must have been somewhere over Hove Lagoon but the lights were so bright thousands of people must have seen them."

"The next morning I got a phone call from a friend of mine who saw the exact same thing."

Mark Sztope, from Brighton, told The Argus he saw seven lights moving slowly in an easterly direction across the city at midnight.

He added: "I'm a big plane enthusiast so I know what the lights and characteristics of a plane look like at night, and I can tell you now that these definitely weren't planes."

A spokeswoman for Shoreham Airport said staff had received emails from people inquiring about the glowing objects.

She said: "We closed at 7pm so there was nothing happening here. We've no idea what they could have been."

Police said they also received a report

from a man in Hove who said he saw "approximately eight planes coming in over the sea, with no flashing navigation lights, towards Gatwick, in a dead line".

Officers contacted air traffic controllers at Gatwick who said they knew of no movement in the area.

Sue Heard, a police spokeswoman, said: "We were called out and made checks to establish it wasn't a known aircraft."

"It certainly seems pretty baffling on the face of it but there was a meteor shower on Saturday so maybe the two are connected."

A cloud of comet dust produced a Leonids meteor shower over the weekend, which managers of Herstmonceux Observatory said peaked on Saturday night with a display of shooting stars.

UFO spotters have also linked the orange lights to sightings in Liverpool and Essex, recently revealed as hoaxes created using open flames suspended under plastic bags to produce mini hot-air balloons.

But Mr Gordon-Johnson, 33, said: "These weren't meteors - there's no way they were meteors. They were far too big and bright and low in the atmosphere."

"They looked like they were about 3,000 or 4,000ft up. As I kept looking at them they just sat there. I was trying to think of explanations but couldn't think of one."

"It was very odd. If it was just a balloon you wouldn't have seen another just appear at the same altitude. There was no sound. Nothing at all."

Do you know anything about these strange lights in the sky? Call The Argus on 01273 544538 or email andy.dickenson@theargus.co.uk

CITIZEN, Fenland, England - Jan. 3, 2007

FESTIVE UFO MYSTERY

Story: Sarah Cliss
sarah.cliss@fenlandcitizen.co.uk

A WISBECH couple have been left baffled after seeing a bright light hovering in the sky near their home late on Christmas Eve.

The woman, who does not want to be named, first spotted what she described as a 'huge white light whirling in a clockwise rotation' above houses in the Fenland Road area as she took her dog for a late walk.

"I just looked up and there it was hovering over a house. It was so huge it covered the whole of the width of the top of the house."

"It was rotating very slowly and there were dashes of light coming out of it at regular intervals - a bit like petals on a flower."

"There was absolutely no noise, it was just hanging there in the sky. It was difficult to tell how high up it was and the light did not actually come down to the ground. It was slowly whirling. I just stood there watching it."

"But then I felt frightened and went quickly back home. My husband was already in bed but I made him get up and have a look."

'I have never believed in UFOs and things like that - but this has really got me thinking'

"He wasn't happy about being made to get up, but he couldn't believe his eyes when he looked out of the door," she said.

The couple stood watching the object for some time as it moved slowly overhead.

"It slowly moved up the road. It went over our house at about 2pm, that was the last time I looked out of the bedroom window and I could just see the end of it," said the woman.

And she added: "I feel a bit stupid, people might think I'm daft or I'd been drinking. But I don't drink and I know what I saw. It was definitely not an aircraft and it was not the police helicopter or anything like that."

"The police helicopter comes over this area a lot and I know what that looks like and it is also very noisy."

"But whatever I saw on Christmas Eve made absolutely no noise at all. I have never believed in UFOs and things like that, I'm just not that sort of person, but this has really got me thinking. We're totally baffled by it."

A spokesman for Cambridgeshire police said they had received no reports of any UFO sightings, or other odd sightings in the sky, but also confirmed the force helicopter had been nowhere near Wisbech at the time - it had been in the Peterborough area.

"I would love to know if anyone else saw it or has any idea what it was. I would definitely like to follow it up," concluded the woman.

■ What do you think? Have you seen a UFO recently? Post your views to Public Platform at the Citizen or www.fenlandtoday.co.uk

MAIL, Burton, England - March 6, 2007



Is this the urban spaceman . . . ?

WHILE hundreds of Burton and South Derbyshire residents watched Saturday's lunar eclipse, a Swadincote teenager who joined them was amazed by a different sight.

Scott Thacker, 14, thought he was taking a picture of the rare occurrence along with other people who had gathered in their gardens at 10.45pm on Saturday.

However, when the Randall Drive teenager looked back at the picture he'd taken just minutes before on his digital camera, he discovered a silvery white figure reminiscent of a character from any sci-fi film.

Scott's mum, Charlene, said: "Scott had gone to play snooker and was on his way home when he noticed that people were

gathering taking pictures and looking up at the moon."

"He took a picture and when he looked closer, he could see a figure."

"I was at work at the time and didn't even know that there was an eclipse, but he called me and said that I should see the picture."

When the family sat down to

look at the mysterious image on Scott's camera, they decided to enlarge it on their television screen to get a better look.

"It looked like a spaceman - it was really strange. You can see the leg muscles and everything. We were just so shocked, and don't know what it is or how it happened."

CITIZEN, Fenland, England
Jan. 10, 2007

UFO casually glided its way over my garden

I AM writing in response to an article by Sarah Cliss in the Citizen on January 3 regarding a lady from Wisbech who wishes to remain nameless.

Both this lady and her partner witnessed a UFO near their home on Christmas Eve.

I would like to say how pleased I am for them both after reading their story.

I have lived in Chatteris for five years now and, being a postman working in Somersham, I have the benefit of enjoying early mornings and early skies.

During these past five years I have had the absolute pleasure of witnessing several unusual sightings in the Fenland skies.

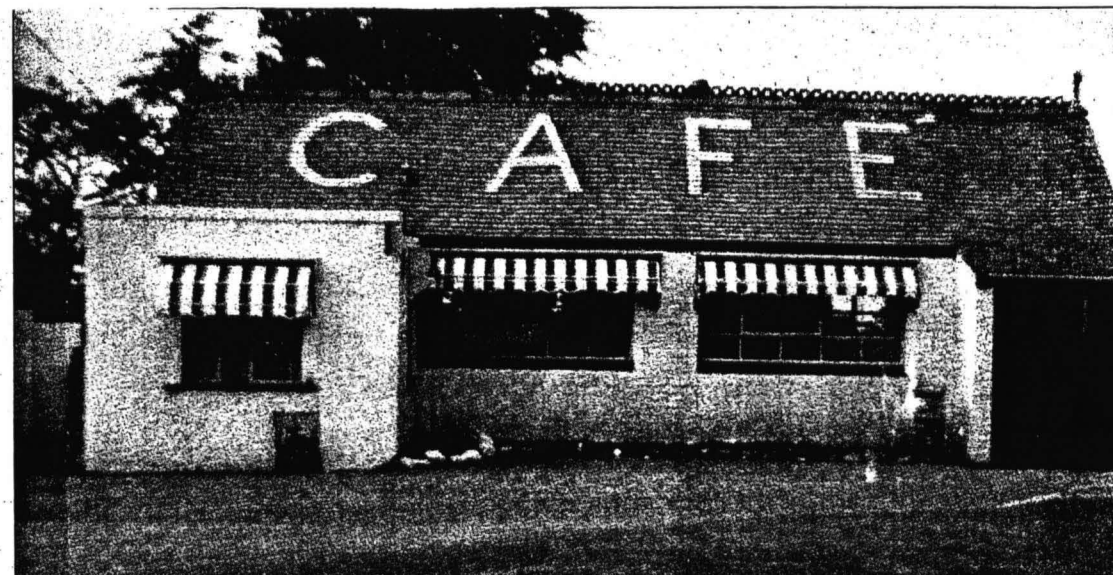
In truth I have been a keen ufologist for many a year now, having enjoyed many strange sightings, including one which displayed itself to me on a sunny summer afternoon when a very large UFO casually glided its way over my back garden whilst I was cutting the grass.

And so my reply to the nameless lady is feel special and fortunate about your sighting, you will never forget it. Stay observant and hopefully you can enjoy seeing more.

PAUL COADY,
Gideon Close,
Chatteris.



The Shamrock Cafe, which stood alongside the old A5 road between Wellington and Shrewsbury, was the site of perhaps Shropshire's most famous 'UFO' incident on a July night in 1981 when three women claimed to have been taken aboard an alien craft and examined by its occupants.



Close encounters of the Shropshire kind

AN increase in UFO sightings in Shropshire over Christmas and the new year has been reported to an international investigating body.

The county has in the past been a "flap area" – UFO-speak for a busy place for alien activity – which has recently gone fairly quiet.

But over the last few weeks a flurry of activity has been reported to the Shrewsbury-based UFO Investigation and Research Unit.

Phil Hoyle, who runs the unit, said sightings began on Christmas Day with a spherical craft being spotted hovering over the Stiperstones with light and flames coming from inside it.

The day after Boxing Day, two more two more similar spheres were reported flying over Bishop's Castle.

Then on January 3 two reports came in of the same sighting in the night sky over Wellington – a cylindrical object with flames emit-

An increase in activity in the skies over Shropshire over Christmas had little to do with Santa and his sleigh, according to a Shropshire group. Jill Core spoke to the county's UFO Investigation and Research Unit

ting, flying at great speed but making no sound.

"These spheres and cylindrical objects with flames are common descriptions. They have been sighted all over the world, but are particularly associated with Shropshire in Newport and Wellington.

Abducted

"For many descriptions there is a perfectly normal explanation, but we haven't been able to find one for these.

"They have been seen on and off for the past 70 years."

Shropshire was well-known in the 1980s to UFO enthusiasts as an area "targeted" by aliens.

In 1981 three women were allegedly abducted in the "Shamrock Cafe" case

on the old A5 turn-off for Uppington near Shrewsbury.

Val Walters, Rose Hawkins and Vivien Hayward underwent hypnotic regression to account for 20 lost minutes as they were driving home to Telford past the Shamrock Cafe one July night.

Their car slowed down as if the handbrake was on and they saw strange lights in the sky.

A craft became visible and beings came out who took the trio back inside and examined them.

"There have been 50 reports of people abducted in Shropshire over the past 20 years," said Mr Hoyle. "On the A5, in Shrewsbury, Wellington and on the Wrekin itself.

"A lot of them have been in

Leegomery where there have been multiple witnesses to abductions.

"Some people have been left severely disturbed. These are not people with mental illness or with past histories of seeing things. They are people from all walks of life who have found the experience profoundly disturbing.

"Some have left Leegomery, some talk about it and some won't."

His unit offers advice from trained counsellors, and runs support groups for people who feel they have been abducted.

Cows

Frequently, people making abduction claims independently report an identical scenario, with identical descriptions of the spacecraft and beings involved.

One of the more disturbing reports the unit has received recently is about mutilated livestock on the Shropshire-Wales borders.

"Farmers report cows or sheep that have died and

when examined are found to have had their internal organs removed.

"Yet there is no evidence of any incision made to the body, and no blood shed," he said.

"Scientific examinations of these cases show the use of molecular scalpels which can cut between cells caus-

ing no bleeding. It is technology far more advanced than ours."

Despite these "highly credible" sightings, abductions and mutilations there is no longer formal interviewing of witnesses or investigation into the sightings, he said.

Instead, those working for

the Ministry of Defence UFO project spend their time releasing formerly classified documents in answer to Freedom of Information requests from the media or members of the public.

Nick Pope, who ran the Ministry of Defence UFO project from 1991 to 1994, spoke out about the failure

to seriously address the issue in October.

It left the UK wide open to abuse by alien beings.

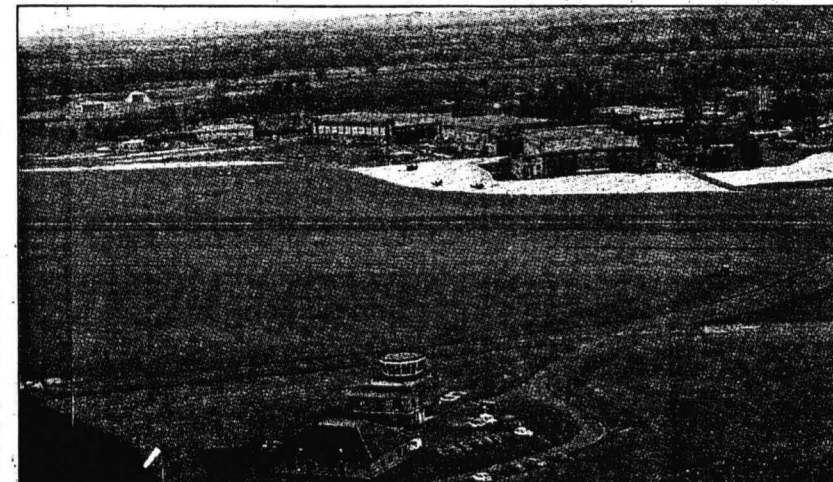
He said he was initially sceptical about UFOs, but access to classified files on the subject and investigation of a series of spectacular UFO sightings gradually changed his mind.

Among these he cited reports of a "vast, triangular-shaped craft" firing a narrow beam of light on to the ground and emitting a low-frequency humming sound that was spotted flying over RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury in Shropshire in 1993.

"Most of the witnesses were police and military personnel," he said.

"The consequences of getting this one wrong could be huge," he said.

"If you reported a UFO sighting now, I am absolutely sure that you would just get back a standard letter telling you not to worry. Frankly we are wide open," he warned.



RAF Shawbury: witnesses reported a "vast, triangular-shaped craft" firing a narrow beam of light on to the ground and emitting a low-frequency humming sound.

UFO light show stuns crowds

PEOPLE screamed and cars came to a halt when dozens of mysterious lights hovered thousands of feet above Archway.

The "squadron" of flying orange objects left passers-by staring skyward in disbelief at around 5.30pm last Thursday. Police received four calls within a matter of minutes.

Alix McAlister, 34, a market stall trader from Bredgar Road, Archway, said: "I just picked up my

son from nursery in Bredgar Road. I had just come out of the door when I noticed what was going on in the sky.

"There were a group of them - 10 to 15 of them moving together. My first impression was that they reminded me of a squadron of aeroplanes in formation. But they didn't have a proper formation and they were all moving at the same speed.

"I thought for a while that something was happening in the centre of London. Bombs and planes crossed my mind. But I realised very

quickly that they didn't look like any aircraft I'd seen before.

"They were coming from the north and moving south. And then they kind of stopped and they were hovering. There was no sound. They seemed to fade away and I saw more coming and then they stopped. It lasted about 10 minutes."

Designer James Zafar, of Palace Road, Crouch End, also watched the phenomena from Bredgar Road.

He said: "I parked the car and when I looked in the sky between the Little Angels nursery and the trees there were balls of light in the sky.

"They were all moving together.

They stopped and then they came on again and there must have been about 12 of these things all moving across the sky.

Crowds also witnessed the spectacle from nearby Magdala Avenue and Highgate Hill.

Tom Cull, of Summerlee Gardens, Fortis Green, 27, a vision mixer, had just finished a guitar lesson when he noticed a crowd of people staring up at the sky in Magdala Avenue.

He said: "There were at least 30 people watching. Cars had stopped. It was kind of eerie.

"What I found strange about these things was the way they moved. The fact that they were so high would suggest they were quite big."

Mr Cull saw the lights again when he returned home to Summerlee Gardens.

Another witness, a 49-year-old company director who did not want to be named, was about to enter Archway Tube station in Highgate Hill when he saw the lights.

He said: "It was pretty spectacular. All I would say was that they were two to three thousand feet up and there was at least 30 or 40 people who would have seen this. There was screaming going on and everything. It was pretty weird."

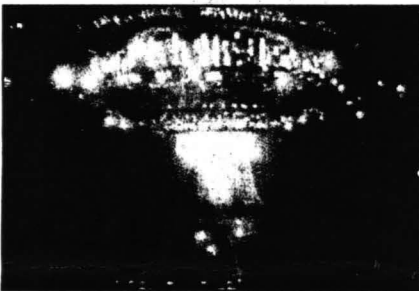
Less than 30 minutes later similar "strange orange lights" were spotted miles away above Kings Lynn in East Anglia.

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE... SOMEWHERE

WHILE no one is in any doubt something happened in the sky above Archway last Thursday, experts are at odds over what caused the spooky sight.

The truth is out there - and my search started with the account of eyewitness, James Zafar.

He said: "When I called 999 there was a big silence and then he came back on the phone and said we've



■ A SCENE from Close Encounters of the Third Kind: but was Archway really visited by extra-terrestrials?

Reporter CHARLOTTE TAMVAKIS tries to unravel the mystery of the 'Archway lights'

tracked it by radar. Then he said, 'you are really lucky, you've just seen a meteor or shooting star.'

"They definitely mentioned the radar and that leads me to think they know all about this."

But police would only confirm that they received a number of calls about the lights and that there was reference to radar and a meteor on their records. They could not say where this information came from.

And the Ministry of Defence (MOD) said it had had no reports of any "security incidents" - adding: "Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, MOD does not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting."

Time to speak to someone who knows all about what happens in the sky at night.

I contacted the Royal Astronomical Society - but it ruled out a cosmological explanation.

Press officer Peter Bond said: "It doesn't sound like aurora. Auroras are curtains of light and meteors last a few seconds and they leave a bright trail around them when they burn up. They won't last for 10 minutes.

"And it certainly couldn't be a comet either because comets don't move because they are so far away. They move position from night to night."

His conclusion was that the lights must be military aircraft or some sort of weather balloons.

Then a spokesman for the Meteorological Office ruled out weather balloons - along with any weather-related explanation.

He explained: "It's unlikely that it could have been anything to do with the weather. It was a pretty clear evening the whole night on Thursday. There were no storms or anything like that."

And astronomer and self proclaimed "UFO sceptic" Ian Ridpath also dismissed any astronomical or climatic explanations.

He believes the phenomenon was caused by "sky lanterns" or "UFO balloons" - one-off miniature hot air balloons that can be ordered online for use at parties.

Mr Ridpath said: "These things are always being reported. This very probably is the most likely explanation. What surprises me is that someone hasn't come along and said this is what they are."

And with Chinese New Year just around the corner, this certainly seems like a possible answer.

But witnesses and UFO researchers disagree.

Contact International UFO Research, based in Oxford, aims to "solve the enigma of UFOs - whether fact or fiction".

A spokesman said: "I'm not convinced by the argument. I asked witnesses if they thought there was a possibility it was lanterns and they said no."

He added: "What we try to do is get an explanation and at the moment we are still banging our heads against the wall."

Some people have even suggested the lights could be radio masts on top of Archway Tower.

But eyewitness Mr Zafar said: "They moved and then they stopped and then they moved again. They were under control. I totally disagree. I think someone is trying to dismiss the story."

And Mr Cull added: "I don't buy the balloon thing. When I first saw it, it was stationary and then it was moving above the hospital and then it moved towards the south."

For eyewitnesses of Thursday's extraordinary events at least, it seems the truth is still out there.

ings I have come across over the years.
Can anyone help? The girls would now be in their mid forties. Perhaps others may be able to help me with any other reports of UFOs seen in the local area.

JOHN HANSON
31 Red Lion Street,
Avechurch
B487LG Worcesterhire
0121 445 0340

school keep fit class during the early evening of January 29, 1976, when they saw a saucer-shaped object hovering over the suburb. It was still there at 10.30pm.
From the sketches submitted, a local UFO organisation it is clear that what the girls saw could not be explained rationally.
The object is fairly common to many other similar sightings.

Can anyone put me in touch with two teenagers at the time - Jill Taylor, of Broomfields Place, Basildon, and Doreen Moore, of Broomfield Mews - who were on their way to a

Want to get in touch?
Write to the
Standard,
Newspaper House,
Chester Hall Lane,
Basildon
SS14 3BL. You can
also e-mail:
readerletters@
nqpl.com

CITIZEN, Fenland, England - Jan. 10, 2007

CHRISTMAS 'UFO' WAS CLUB DISPLAY

Story: Sarah Cliss
sarah.cliss@fenlandcitizen.co.uk

REPORTS of a UFO spotted in the skies over Wisbech on Christmas Eve have prompted dozens of Citizen readers to speak up.

Last week we reported how one couple had been left baffled after spotting a 'huge white light whirling in a clockwise rotation' above houses in the Fenland Road area late on December 24.

They described how the mass of light had lingered for several hours before finally disappearing.

There were various theories on just exactly what the phenomenon was, with some believing it truly was an alien visitor, other younger readers even thought it could be Father Christmas, and one man took it to be a religious sign or possibly the Aurora Borealis.

But it appears the mystery has been solved with dozens of readers pointing out the likely source as the laser light display which has been lighting up the sky above Jack's Nightclub on Nene Parade.

However, a father from Leverington, who didn't want to be named (who also thought it was the laser lights from Jack's), said his eight-year-old daughter had spotted the bright light as she was getting ready for bed on Christmas Eve and was convinced it was Father Christmas.

And Mickie Stacey of Railway Road, Wisbech, said: "Myself, daughter, her husband and my mother-in-law saw it as well - we used it as 'Santa' to get our daughter to bed."

Another man from Coldham spotted the light as he

'We are not invaded by aliens - just decorative lights'

cycled from his home to attend the midnight mass service at Elm.

Jimmy Watkinson said: "I am quite religious and I saw it as some kind of sign, because it was Christmas Eve. I felt drawn to it and tried to cycle towards it."

Meanwhile, a Citizen reader, who did not wish to be named, rang to say how he had seen a petal-like light formation in the sky between March and Friday Bridge around 7.30pm on January 2.

"It was definitely round and definitely moving," he said, adding: "It looked like a big flower."

Simon Holmes, of Emneth, was just one of many to point out the lights were coming from Jack's, others included S Spencer, who lives in the Victoria Road area, who said: "In regard to the 'UFO' lights on Christmas Eve, I saw them from my back garden, and I thought I was seeing things, so I called my sons to have a look and they explained that the lights were probably from a laser display at the nightclub."

But while the majority knew the lights were from Jack's they were also quick to admit they did look a bit like a UFO in the night sky.

Karen Smith, of Boyces Road, said: "We are not being invaded by aliens, just decorative lights for the nightclub."

"I have seen them myself and yes they do look a bit like a UFO at night."

Darren Horspole, of Leverington Road, said: "My family and I were travelling back from a family party at Upwell

on Christmas Eve only to see the same image in the sky.

"I must admit it did seem a bit weird, but as we drove over Freedom Bridge the source of the object became clear."

"It was an outside disco light positioned on the top of Jack's Nightclub shining into the sky. So no alien landings this Christmas!"

Finally Steven Sewell from Emneth, who did really recognise it was decorative lights reflecting on the underside of the low clouds, said: "Or could it actually be visitors from another planet, coming to the Fens to get a job before the Bulgarians and Romanians arrive here?"

But one March man, who did not want to be named, whose hobby is sky watching, said that whilst he had not seen the Wisbech phenomenon he had seen an unexplained flying object above his home town in October.

"I log everything down and on October 21 I saw a boomerang shaped object about 30 to 40 feet across with a very low light on either wing. It was not making any noise."

"I have been watching the skies with strong binoculars for five years and have seen meteorites and things like that and I can also make out the satellites in space."

"I know all about the various aircraft including the Stealth bombers and things like that and I know what they look like - and this was like none of those," he said.

So maybe it is still a question of 'watch this space!'

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.]

The Incredible Saga of Joao Prestes by Pablo Villarubia Mausó — In 1946, almost a year prior to the famous incident at Mt. Rainier (USA) which heralded the start of the modern UFO age, a farmer died in a most hideous fashion in Brazil's back country. Within a matter of hours, a strange light had brought about the death of Joao Prestes Filho by intense burns, according to some witnesses, or as a result of his flesh falling off from the bones, leaving bones and tendons exposed--as others would claim.

The answer to one of the most disconcerting and horrifying cases in the history of ufology started in the small, noisome "Minas Gerais" hotel where historian/ufologist Claudio Tsuyoshi Suenaga and I had lodged in order to research several alleged Chupacabras attacks in the region. We were in the town of Sao Roque--47 kilometers away from the city of Sao Paulo (Brazil) when my roommate called my attention, breaking the silence of night, to the pages of a newspaper he had found in the room's grimy bathroom.

With a mixture of ecstasy and emotion, stumbling over words, the young Japanese-Brazilian read out the paper's contents, dated April 12, 1997: "The esteemed Roque Prestes died at 91 years of age on April 6th, at his home in this city, ... he was the brother of Joao Prestes (deceased)..." To our astonishment, we had stumbled onto the trail of the parents of Joao Prestes Filho, the man who died a terrible death on March 4th, 1946: after having been attacked by an unexplained light, his flesh began to fall off his bones in chunks, especially off his jaw, chest, hands, fingers, and feet, dooming him to die within a matter of hours. To the horror and helplessness of onlookers, some pieces of flesh remained dangling from his tendons.

The Hotel Minas Gerais was the mute witness to our insomnia and restlessness until dawn, when we contacted a son of the late Roque Prestes by phone. In a matter of minutes and at a brisk pace, we reached the modest home of sixty year-old Luis Prestes on the outskirts of Sao Roque. Luis was still in mourning for the recent death of his father, Roque--a former soldier of the constitutionalist revolution of 1932.

"Up to very recently, shortly before his death, my father recalled his brother's tragic passing on that distant year 1946. I was small--some 9 years old--but I clearly remember what happened to my uncle Joao. It was carnival week and Joao, who loathed such festivities, decided to go fishing and drove off in his cart. He lived in Aracariguama, a little village only 7 kilometers away from San Roque and a hitherto isolated and quiet community. My aunt went to the festivities with the children and left Joao's supper already made at home," Luis Prestes would explain as we looked on attentively.

"I was in Aracariguama when I learned that my uncle was dying at a relative's house. I wanted to go in, but it was forbidden, since I was too young and Joao's physical condition could have caused a traumatic impression. My father did see him, and Joao told him that upon returning home and opening the window, something resembling fire or a 'fiery torch' entered the room in which he was standing. He fell to the floor and felt that his body was on fire. Wrapping himself in a blanket, he walked over two kilometers into the village. My father said that Joao was only burned from the waist up, with the exception of the hair on his head. I managed to see my uncle when they removed him from the house to take him to Santana do Parnaiba by truck, where the nearest hospital was located. I remember that the sheets covering him were blackened, perhaps by the burns on his body. Joao died shortly before being admitted to the hospital," Prestes related as we caught his account on tape.

"A number of books published in English, Japanese and even Russian have said that Joao Prestes died in a hideous manner, with pieces of his body, such as his ears or parts of his face, melting off. Is this true?," I asked.

"No. His appearance, according to my father, who escorted him to the hospital, was truly ruinous, but it wasn't that extreme. He had serious burns all over his body. His flesh was dark and he presented no bodily injuries," explained our interviewee, making partial changes to the story which had appeared in books and hundreds of articles published on the case. "My father was a deputy policeman at Santana de Parnaiba and requested the assistance of the forensic unit to research the case, but I don't know anything about the results. The fact is that nothing burned in the room where Jose was when the fire appeared. He had no enemies or anyone who'd be interested in doing such a thing to him. Even as he died, he repeated that the light had attacked him and that it was 'otherworldly,' explained our interviewee. The following item of information brought us back to reality with a start. "Back then, people would constantly see fireballs known as 'assombracoes' (ghosts) in Aracariguama and its vicinity. Some believed they came from the gold mine that's now closed. Other weird things would happen, too. My late father told us that around 1922 he was able to see a lobisomem (wolf-man) while with my grandfather and an uncle. My uncle apparently threw a rock at it and hit its hand. The next day, a neighbor turned up with his hand bandaged. Other people told similar stories," Luis Prestes informed us. The idea that that the Sao Roque area could be some fantastic "window area" through which an astonishing variety and quantity of anomalous phenomena jelled in our minds.

The theory seemed to match the following data imparted by our informer. "Something equally scary happened to Emiliano Prestes, my uncle and Joao Prestes' brother. A few months after his brother's tragic death, Emiliano was walking through an Aracariguama forest, in Agua Podre--the same one from which the lobisomen appeared in 1922 and where the light burned Joao. A fiery torch appeared above him, causing the terrified Emiliano to run to a canyon's edge when the thing fell on him. All he could do was kneel and pray for his life. He told us that he felt an intense heat, but luckily, the fiery torch moved away and vanished." Luis's account added even further mysteries to the area.

The "fiery torch" or "fireball" was also seen on several occasions by Luis's father. The object would frighten horses and riders alike as they made their way through Aracariguama's dark nights to reach their humble abodes. "The lights were seen most frequently between 3 and 4 in the morning, and were three or four times larger than the Moon. People would feel their heat even at a distance, and they were able to move amazingly fast. My father stopped going to parties at night because of these lights," Luis Prestes recalled.

Further Aggressions

Before ending our interview, feeling satisfied by the new information shedding light on the Joao Prestes case, just as we were thinking to add nothing further to the proceedings, Luis Prestes gave us a valuable clue: the possible existence of the last witness have seen Joao's dying moments. "He's an elderly gentleman, but

very lucid and strong. He lives close to my neighborhood in San Roque. This is his address."

We immediately headed toward the residence of Vergilio Francisco Alves. Upon reaching it, his daughter advised us that her father was working in the fields in front of the house, clearing vegetation with a scythe. After some time had elapsed, Vergilio appeared. To our surprise, he produced his identity card proving his 92 years of existence in full health.

Seated on a threadbare sofa in his modest home, Vergilio explained that he was Joao Prestes's second cousin. "I was born and raised in Aracariguama. That's where I began working in the Morro Velho gold mine at the age of 15 or 16. There was a British engineer who couldn't write my name and called me *garoto de ouro* ("golden boy"). But I'll tell you what I know about the horrible death of Joao Prestes. It was in 1946 during the carnival season. He went fishing in the nearby Tiete River, riding in his cart, while the wife and children went to the festivities. It was the dry season and there was no rain. When he got back, he stabled his horse and fed it some corn. He put the fish in a pot and heated some water with firewood to take a bath. When he changed clothing, a sort of beam of light or yellow light had appeared in his room. He felt his body burning and that his beard, while short, was burning. Panicked, and unable to move his hands, Joao raised the door latch using his teeth and ran into the street barefoot, since he never wore shoes. He ran screaming to his sister Maria's house, near the Aracariguama church. He dropped on a bed and said he'd been burned. The police chief, Joao Malaquias, went over immediately, who told him there was no one to blame for what had happened, because his attacker 'had not been of this world.' This was followed by lightning and thunder, and a powerful rainstorm..."

This part of Vergilio's story reminded me of the Varghina case, which occurred in 1997 in Minas Gerais. A rainstorm the likes of which had never been seen in Varghina occurred after the appearance and alleged capture of one or more supposedly alien creatures. Significant atmospheric changes tend to occur in "fortean" cases.

"So, you were able to see Joao Prestes on his deathbed?" Claudio Suegana asked Vergilio Alves.

"Yes. My cousin Emiliano Prestes, who was my neighbor, called me over. When I got to Maria's house, I found Joao Malaquias, the sheriff, speaking with Joao. He was in bed and having problems using his tongue. His skin, which was fair, was toasted, reddish, as if he'd been roasted. His hands and face had the worst burns. The hands were twisted. His hair didn't burn, nor did his feet nor clothing. He was only burned from the waist up. His feet were torn up from running barefoot on sharp rocks."

"Did you see Joao's flesh falling off in pieces at any time?", I inquired.

"No, no. His skin was burned, but it wasn't falling off. I think that the *boitata* was to blame, since it had attacked him once before," Vergilio told us. Claudio and I exchanged looks of stupefaction as the lucid nonagenarian imparted his information.

"Please tell us about this other incident," we said, almost in unison.

"Well, when Joao was a *tropero* (cattle driver), he was still young and lived with his father in Aracariguama. One day at sundown, as he lead the donkeys over a hill, he saw a fire that fell from the sky--a fireball. He was near a chapel that had a cross, and he could feel the fireball passing him, almost knocking him down. Joao would tell me that at that spot you could sometimes see ten or twelve balls emerging from the sky. Some of them were red, others Moon-colored. Sometimes five or six of them would fall to the ground and explode. People would call them the *boitata* lights..." Vergilio explained.

I would like to digress to explain that the word "*boitata*" is of native origin and designated mysterious lights that would pursue and even kill the native Indians, according to Portuguese colonial chronicles and the stories of Canarian priest Jose de Anchieta in the 16th century.

Vergilio himself witnessed the apparition of one of these lights, which emerged from behind the mountain where the gold mine was and landed on Mt. Saboao, another hill where strange lights always appear. "We also called those fireballs *maes do ouro* (mothers of gold). There was also the "golden lizard," an elongated tongue of flame that moved in a straight line, slowly, without making a sound."

The mysterious Morro Velho gold mine is currently abandoned. Canadian general George Raston, who founded the mine in 1926, lived there until it was closed in the late 1930's.

While we ate some delicious plantains grown by Vergilio on his own farm, he told us that wolf-men had also been seen in Aracariguama, thus confirming the information provided by Luis Prestes.

"Who took Joao to the hospital?", I asked Vergilio in order to resume and finish our interview on the case.

"Malaquias, the sheriff, wanted to take him to a hospital in Sao Paulo, but the road was in bad shape and they went to Santana do Parnaiba. An investigation was requested from the police but no answer was found for the case. They only said that nothing had burned in Joao's house, since some had said that he had burned himself with a candlestick."

Road to Aracariguama

Still stunned by the new information in our possession about the Prestes case, we got on the only bus that makes the trip between Sao Roque and Aracariguama. Since 1946, when it was a village without electricity, running water and sewerage, Aracariguama hadn't grown much and poisonous snakes were still abundant. It is one of the region's oldest towns and has 7000 residents. It was founded some 350 years ago, and was home to the *bandeirantes*, the conquerors of Brazil's vast interior.

According to a report published in the 1960's by the late Dr. Walter Buhler, the police condemned Joao Prestes's house and it was later demolished, since his family was apparently afraid to return to the house, perhaps considered an accursed location.

In Aracariguama, we met with Fabiana Matias de Oliveira, head press secretary for the small township, and she led us to her uncle Hermes de Fonseca, nearly 70 years old and deeply knowledgeable about the history of the region and its occupants. As is the case with many Brazilians of his age, he continued working to earn a living, making small improvements to his farm close to the Town Hall. Hermes sat on a tree stump and told us about his life, his arrival in Aracariguama in 1945 and the fact that a rattlesnake had bitten his ankle--a scar he showed us proudly.

"I knew Joao Prestes. I remember the date of his death perfectly--it was March 5th, 1946. He left behind five or six children and a widow. I never got to see the body--only a few people did. But they said that it was burned. The press would later say that his body had melted, fallen to pieces," the septuagenarian told us.

"Weird things have always occurred here. A year after Joao's death, his brother Emiliano Prestes saw two fireballs rising and striking each other, rising again and repeating the same action, close to the cemetery. Suddenly the lights encircled him and he felt intense heat. He knelt and prayed until the lights left. Even today you can still see these lights, but with less intensity, over at Ibate, between Aracariguama and Sao Roque. When they strike each other they let sparks fly, but don't disintegrate. Giomar Gouveia, a champion jockey and owner of some stables at Ibate, saw a light hovering over his animals, giving off orange beams of light. This was in 1995," Hermes da Fonseca recalled.

Enthused by our interest, Hermes continued, remembering dates and details worthy of his appointment as the "official chronicler" of Aracariguama. In 1960, Celso Gomide, a bus driver, was on his way from Sao Roque

when he saw a red light that caused him to stop the vehicle. The light approached the cabin and Gomide, frightened, began to pray. The passengers were stunned by the uncanny light, which encircled them for some 20 minutes."

"In 1955," he continued, "I worked on the construction of a cable car in the Santa Rita cement factory. It was supposed to be used to transport rock from a local quarry. It was August 24th of that year and the heat was unbearable when myself and other workers saw an object drifting in the blue sky as large as a truck tire, very tall, aluminum-colored, spinning and giving off smoke--circles of white smoke. We saw it at a quarter past eleven, and by twelve o'clock, five or six FAB (Brazilian Air Force) airplanes arrived. They were smaller than the flying wheel, which distanced itself easily from the planes. On the following day, the *Folha de Sao Paulo* newspaper published an article about the fact that thousands of people in Osasco (near Aracariguama) had seen a flying saucer with the same characteristics."

Less than a kilometer away from the town is the graveyard. We found the local gravedigger, 53 year old Nelson Oliveira, who led us to the tomb where the mortal remains of Joao Prestes lay. On the cement box covered by earth, there rose a crudely carved cross and an identification number. Claudio and I felt knots in our throats as we thought about the last moments of Joao Prestes's agony. Regaining our composure, we asked Nelson, who had been a gravedigger since 1976, if he had seen anything strange in the area.

"Around 1989 I saw something weird, round, flying over the cemetery. It was like an upside-down hat made of aluminum, shining when it moved in a straight line and balancing. It was headed toward Sao Paulo," the gravedigger told us, using his own hat as an example.

During a personal interview with ufologist Antonio Ribera in Barcelona, he expressed the belief that Joao Prestes could have been burned by an alien ship's propulsion system. "I don't think the aliens wanted to harm or kill the farmer. They simply didn't know what would happen if they came too close to human beings," Ribera said.

We had much time to reflect upon the tragic death of Joao Prestes Filho as a ramshackle bus took us away from Aracariguama. "What do you think the light that killed Prestes was?" I asked Claudio. "Maybe ball lightning," he replied. "But, how can one explain the other lights and creatures in the region?" I insisted.

Claudio Suenaga said nothing. He shrugged and cast a last glance on the church tower of that accursed village.

The Prestes Case: A Study in UFO Intrigue

The Joao Prestes case only became known internationally as of September 1971, when ufologist Irineu Silveira announced the possible connection between the farmer's death and the UFO phenomenon during the 2nd Symposium on Extraterrestrial Life, held in Sao Paulo.

A number of investigators examined the case. Walter Buhler, one of Brazil's best known ufologists, believed that Prestes's burns were attributable to a candlestick. However, the majority begged to differ, accusing Buhler of belonging to the "angelical" party of ufology--the side that preaches that ETs have come to Earth to do good rather than harm. Others, such as premier ufologist Fernando Grossman, were able to interview direct witnesses to the case in 1974, such as former apprentice orderly Aracy Gomide. Based on information supplied by Gomide, Grossman and physician Luiz Braga reached the conclusion that Prestes's burns resembled "the indirect effects of a nuclear explosion, as occurred with certain victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Radiation affected living cells but not the dead ones, such as hair and the fabric of clothing. But, who in 1946 would have had a directed beam of powerful atomic particles anywhere near Aracariguama?"

"It's not an isolated case," Grossman commented during an interview he granted me in Sao Paulo. "There are many parallels between his death and others which occurred in the state of Para (Brazilian Amazonia) in the late '70s and early '80s." The researcher pointed out that on the day of Prestes's death, an Aracariguama councilman named Alencar Martins Goncalves saw a "fireball" near the cemetery.

Gomide's statements were internationally echoed and the majority of the articles appearing in books, magazines and bulletins based the Prestes case on this witness exclusively. Much of the information provided by the former orderly does not appear to coincide with the recollections of Luis and Roque Prestes and Vergilio Francisco Alves. According to Gomide, Joao, upon returning from fishing, jumped through a window to get into his house, given that his wife had locked the door upon leaving. It was at that moment that he would have seen the intense light that burned him. Gomide, who had worked as an Army orderly, was asked to care for Joao Prestes, with whom he held conversations during the latter's 6 to 9 hour agony.

The orderly disclosed that the flesh fell off the victim's arms, leaving exposed bones and tendons without any indication of pain. The most affected bodily parts were the face and arms but without presenting any darkening--rather decomposition, an explanation that doesn't jibe with the ones given by Luis Prestes and Virgilio. On the other hand, all three accounts coincide in that Joao's shirt and trousers, as well as his hair, remained intact.

Claudio Suenaga managed to recover Joao Prestes' death certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics and notary of Santana de Parnaiba. Gomide stated that Prestes had died between three and four o'clock in the morning on March 6, when in fact, the event occurred on March 4 at 22:00 hours and not on the 5th as was hitherto believed. Physician Luiz Caligiuri indicated the cause of death in the document as "cardiac collapse, generalized 1st and 2nd degree burns." Joao's age was believed to be 39, but the document indicates 44 years of age at the time of death.

Sao Roque, Santana do Parnaiba and Aracariguama: Window Areas

The region surrounding Sao Roque, Santana do Parnaiba, Aracariguama and other towns neighboring one of the most densely populated cities on Earth (Sao Paulo, with its 18 million inhabitants) has been the scene of unusual phenomena for many years.

The "Supysaua" Newsletter (March '95), published by the Grupo Ufologico de Guarujá, reported that three children had witnessed a glowing UFO on January 4, 1994 in Santana de Parnaiba, where Joao Prestes died. The object approached the backyard of the home in question and floated less than 15 meters over the witnesses. Its color was largely yellow and it possessed sparkling green and red lights. What was remarkable was that within the yellow light, the children could make out a semi-circular shape resembling a dome. The children were startled by the UFO's abrupt, zigzagging movements as it departed at high speed.

In that same year and region, a married couple witnessed from the "Lila" ranch on Km 41 of Castelo Branco highway, a spherical object measuring three meters in diameter which floated between the trees and made no sound whatsoever. It was red in color and was darker at its core. Its periphery was surrounded by several smaller, blinking lights, alternating between blue and red.

In 1993, a 12-year old girl named Regiane Barbosa da Silva witnessed on the same ranch a spherical object measuring some 5 meters in diameter. The UFO suddenly fired a beam of yellow light that covered the girl's body and lit the surrounding area. After the event, Regiane experienced headaches and eye irritation. Three months later, another witness spotted the same object at the same spot. The watchmen of the "Lila" ranch claim having seen two humanoids floating over a brook on the ranch's property.

An elderly Japanese woman who spent her youth in Santana de Parnaiba told Suenaga that she had

seen a half-wolfman, half-centaur being in the vicinity of Sitio do Morro. San Roque has also experienced one of the most intense waves of Chupacabras activity in all of South America.

April 25, 2007 — *IIEE*, Chile — CHILE: THE CHUPACABRAS RETURNS — Raul Nunez, director of Chile's *IIEE* and regular contributor to *Inexplicata*, recently made us aware of the efforts of Ivan Voreved, another researcher affiliated with the *IIEE*. Mr. Voreved has been investigating a series of new farm animal deaths in Chile's 6th Region in which the Chupacabras or IEA - Intruso Esporadico Agresivo (Sporadic Aggressive Intruder, the term preferred by researchers) appears to be the culprit.

Voreved notes that these attacks no longer appear to generate the media furor that they did six years ago, when Chile was wracked by its first major experience with the paranormal predator. The result has been a greater willingness on the part of experiencers to speak to serious researchers, in the awareness that they will not be laughed at or turned into figures of fun by big-city reporters. "These details," he writes, "could in time yield positive results towards explaining the phenomenon, which has achieved sociological proportions in many parts of the world."

On April 6, 7 and 8 of 2007, says Voreved, a series of strange events involving the presence of a strange creature took place in Pan de Azucar, a town in Chile's 6th Region. The witnesses, known only by their initials - J.C. and A.R. - report that at eight o'clock in the morning on April 7, A.R. discovered twenty-nine dead chickens in a coop on the property. The bewildered farmhand noticed that the birds gave the appearance of having been "crushed" by something, and one of them displayed a hole in its back that reached down into its entrails. The hen looked completely bloodless and all of the carcasses displayed a certain orderliness about them (*INEXPLICATA* readers will remember the meticulous alignment of the animal carcasses in Dorado, Puerto Rico during the 1995 wave of exsanguinations). Neither the owners nor neighbors could find an explanation to this event.

The story does not end here. Voreved adds that another unusual event occurred on a dirt road not far from the original attacks: some witnesses reportedly saw "something like a black trash bag" falling off the roof of a house. Upon closer inspection, it looked like a "dark spot" that moved, jumped, and then took to the air as the incredulous witnesses approached. The bizarre entity measured approximately a meter and half, according to their estimates, and the swiftness of its flight was amazing.

J.C. professes to be a skeptic in matters involving the Chupacabras or IEA, but has been unable to find a rational explanation to the events that occurred on his property. The witnesses to the dark creature that fell from the side of a house before flying away, remain deeply shaken by their experience; other local residents made them aware of similar happenings in the vicinity that have generally been ascribed to the Chupacabras, as the community was also a target for such activity earlier in the decade. Our thanks to Raul Nunez and Ivan Voreved for keeping us apprised of Chupacabras activity in South America. — Scott Corrales

April 27, 2007 — *El Centro*, Mexico — MEXICO: Possible UFO Photographed at Teotihuacan — A report by Victor H. Sanchez and Helios Rossell — Respected Mexican newspaper *El Centro* published a story on a possible UFO photographed during a ritual organized by successful TV producer Carla Estrada in the Teotihuacan Archaeological Zone, northeast of Mexico City. The full story appears on pages 40 and 41 of the newspaper in question, and reads thus:

"In what has become a tradition to TV productions by Carla Estrada, the cast of her new soap opera, *Pasion*, met at the Teotihuacan Pyramids to charge up their energy before shooting the episodes. However, no one could have imagined that at the moment the cast raised their hands skyward, an alleged UFO appeared in the photo, as can be seen in the image presented.... No one noticed this detail. What is more, it wasn't until the image was amplified that [our newsroom] was able to notice something strange in the sky. You be the judge."

A Remark by Prof. Ana Luisa Cid: "The article itself discusses entertainment-related information and about the actors that will play a part in the new telenovela. However, the paper decided to report on what was seen in the sky at the time. It should be noted that Mr. Miguel Castillo, *El Centro's* director, has made the following professional and objective statement, when asked by the undersigned: 'We would like to make clear that we only published the photo and remarked that it could be a UFO, as shown by the image. It would be up to experts like yourself to determine if this is so.'"

My personal opinion - and I said as much to Mr. Castillo - is that I consider two possible explanations for the Teotihuacan photo:

1) It could be an object of unknown technology that is not visible to the human eye, but indeed visible to the camera lens, perhaps due to its speed or by vibrating in a frequency that is imperceptible to us, particularly considering the area in which it was photographed and keeping in mind a study performed by Pedro Ferriz, the legendary Mexican ufologist, who suggested that the pyramids generated energy, envisioning the possibility that UFOs need such power to fly.

2) The second option is far more simple, since I cannot dismiss the possibility that a bird was picked up as the photo was taken, and due to given situations, the image presents an optical aberration. It should be noted that the region's fauna includes vultures, eagles, and hawks, among other species.

Finally, until its exact nature can be determined, it is fitting to classify the material as a "chance UFO," in the knowledge that the term "UFO" is not synonymous with extraterrestrial craft. — CREDIT: Ana Luisa Cid

May 11, 2007 — *Inexplicata: The Journal of Hispanic Ufology* — Spain: Fireball Reported Over Central Spain — The 112 Emergency switchboard collapsed due to the number of phone calls received. — Phenomenon 'very likely to have caused meteorites', according to one researcher (EFE) — Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Toledo and Valladolid are some of the provinces of the center of the Spanish peninsula that witnessed the transit of an "impressive" fireball, according to Josep M. Trigo of the Red de Investigacion sobre Bolidos y Meteoritos. The 112 Emergency switchboard collapsed by phone calls from spectators only a few minutes later. All witnesses agree that it was the "sudden appearance" of an "exceptionally bright" fireball that caused "great alarm" in small communities. "The luminosity of the phenomenon was such that it was even recorded by pilots from the Torrejon de Ardoz air base who were in flight at the time," noted Trigo.

To this researcher and Jose L. Ortiz of the Instituto de Astrofisica de Andalucia (CSIC), the case is "highly important" due to the fact that several communities in Ciudad Real were even able to hear the sonic boom produced by the meteoroid's entry under the 20-25 kilometer barrier, indicative of the "the possible arrival of meteorites on the surface." According to Trigo, many of these bolides do not produce meteorites as they are completely disintegrated, but the one seen on Thursday "was very likely to have spawned meteorites." The largest fragment of the last meteorite seen in Spain - in December 2004 - was "removed" by a team of French "meteor hunters," thanks to information provided by witnesses, added the researcher. The Spanish Historical Patrimony Law of 1985 protects all assets, including natural ones, and has posted penalties for those who engage in their illegal exportation. — CREDIT: Jose M. Garcia Bautista



A DREAM COME TRUE: Michael Rugg, owner of Rugg's Bigfoot Discovery Museum in Felton, is surrounded by models of Bigfoot. He's nicknamed these Alpha and Beta. In addition, he's got Delta and Gamma at his home.

Lucjan Szewczyk/
Press-Banner

Bigfoot no legend for valley man

By Chuck Anderson
Press-Banner

Mike Rugg scoffs at the supermarket tabloids on his wall that inject a comic angle into claims of Bigfoot sightings.

"Once you've seen Bigfoot, you never go back," he insists.

His own Bigfoot sighting at age 4½ in Humboldt County eventually led to the opening of Rugg's Bigfoot Discovery Museum in Felton in 2003.

Loquacious but soft-spoken, Rugg is completely serious in his belief about the existence of the large, hairy, two-legged creatures variously referred to as Bigfoot, Sasquatch, the Abominable Snowman and various indigenous names around the world.

In the past four years, he said, more than 150 local residents have gone to the museum to relate their stories of seeing or hearing a Bigfoot. Many sightings were local, he said, and one of the best known was reported in 1980 in the Valley Press, a predecessor to the Press-Banner.

The museum treats both the jokes about Bigfoot and the scientific evidence.

Just inside the front door, a visitor can view the tabloid headlines, Bigfoot cookies and other popular material.

"Up here, I let people have their fun," Rugg said.

Through a doorway, one is confronted with science. Rugg shows a film of Bigfoot walking, an artifact shot by Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin in 1967 in Washington. Though attempts have been made to debunk it, Rugg believes it's



"We're trying to educate people. I just tell people the facts, for a change. Most skeptics have their 'facts' ass-backwards. They don't want to listen."

— Mike Rugg
Rugg's Bigfoot Discovery Museum

authentic.

Visitors also can view skulls of large primates and a map of Northern California sightings.

"We're trying to educate people," Rugg said. "I just tell people the facts, for a change. Most skeptics have their 'facts' ass-backwards. They don't want to listen.

"Tens of thousands of people have experienced these creatures on every continent, and it's just a matter of time before we have real proof."

He cites primate authority Jane Goodall and other scientists who have come to the conclusion that Bigfoot exists. In June, the museum will sponsor a lecture in Santa Cruz by Jeff Meldrum, associate professor of anatomy at Idaho State University and author of "Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science."

At a glance

- **WHERE:** Bigfoot Discovery Museum
- **WHERE:** 5437 Highway 9, in Felton
- **WHEN:** Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekends through April 1; then, open 1 to 6 p.m. weekdays and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekends
- **COST:** Free
- **INFO:** 335-4478 or www.bigfootdiscoveryproject.com

Rugg maintains that there are more fossil records of bipedal primates than of chimpanzees and gorillas.

No Bigfoot has been captured, he says, because

the creatures are smart enough to view humans from afar.

"Mostly, they come out at night to forage when we're asleep," he said. "They're shy, for obvious reasons."

Rugg supports his Bigfoot interest with his work as a graphic artist. He also has built dulcimers. Earlier, he had an art gallery in what is now the museum.

■ To comment on this story, e-mail Editor Chuck Anderson at chuck.anderson@pressbanner.com or call him at the Press-Banner office, 438-2500.

Mutilated bull: No blood, no clues

By Bill Donovan
Staff Writer

GALLUP — Robert Allen wasn't surprised when the story of the cattle mutilation last October in the small town of Kanjilon, N.M. was buried way inside the local paper. After all, the hoopla over cattle mutilations - which were a big subject back in the 1980s - has died down in the last decade or so. The problem is that while the newsworthiness of the subject has died down, cattle mutilations have not.

There are still hundreds, if not thousands, reported worldwide each year. Allen, a local expert in subjects like UFOs

and alien abductions, has been spending his own time and money investigating the phenomena or the past 15 years. He was in the area in October when he heard of a rancher near Kanjilon - a small community of about 200 peoples south of the Colorado border some 280 miles northeast of Gallup - who came across his prized four-year-old bull dead and mutilated in a field near his home. Not only mutilated but cut in a strange way. Its genitals and anus were cut away and its blood was totally drained. Even odder was that there was no blood where the bull was found. There were also no footprints or prints of any kind

going to or from the bull. Allen went to the site to look at the bull first-hand, and he talked to the family, who were still in shock and worried about what it all meant. "The wife sat down with me and was competed terrified," Allen said.

They began remembering other strange things, like the fact that they heard a "strange helicopter" flying overhead the night before. No helicopters were reported to be in the area that night, Allen said.

These kinds of questions are a normal part of Allen's life. He has spent most of his adult life exploring the possibility that visitors from outer space

are among us and have been watching and conducting scientific experiments on animals and humans for decades. "Yes, some people think I am nuts," Allen said.

But he views himself as one of the few who are willing to accept the possibility that extraterrestrials are the cause of

some strange things that happen in New Mexico. This includes reports of strange lights in the sky moving in a way that no plane or helicopter can, reports of people who say they are unable to account for large periods of time and feel they have been abducted, and stories of animals that have been mutilated for no reason.

Some would say cattle mutilations are nothing more than pranks by kids who have nothing better to do, but Allen said the mutilations - tens of thousands over the years in almost all parts of the world - would indicate that there is something a lot more sinister than a few juveniles behind all of this. After all, he asked, what happened to the blood, and why are all of the cuts so precise?

The only logical explanation, and the one that makes the most sense to Allen, is in his mind, the simplest: the animals are mutilated by aliens who are trying to find out about life on this planet and are doing so by examining reproductive organs. "People just can't grasp this unless they have actually seen the mutilated animal themselves," he said.

Studies over the years (see sidebar on one done by the FBI in New Mexico some years ago) — have not been able to

come up with another explanation.

"I think the cuts are done by lasers," Allen said, adding that the animals are brought up to the alien vessel during the experiments, which is why there is no blood.

The ship then drops off the animals, which is why there are no footprints anywhere around the animal. These animals are sometimes left alone for several days before they are found by their owners. "But no predator will eat off the animal, and coyotes will eat anything," Allen said.

Allen often is asked to give lectures on the subject. He said he also makes himself available to people who are want to learn more about these subjects or want to join in his research.

He feels that history will some day prove that he was right. Until then, he plans to keep on doing what he has been doing for more than 15 years - trying to unravel the mystery of cattle mutilations and alien abductions.

"You can either pretend that these things didn't happen or you can look at it with an open mind," he said.

(Bill Donovan can be reached at his e-mail address - indiantrade-r2001@yahoo.com - or by phone at (505) 870-2135.

The truth is out there

By Bill Donovan
Staff Writer

GALLUP — The FBI has long denied that it has any department within its ranks like that portrayed in the television series "The X-Files" but there was a time back in the late 1970s when the FBI took a hands-on approach to the possibility that UFOs may be involved in a series of cattle mutilations that had been occurring in New Mexico.

The investigation by the FBI into cattle mutilations was started by a request from then New Mexico Sen. Harrison Schmitt, the former astronaut, who said his office was contacted by ranchers in Dulce after they discovered 15 cattle mutilated in their area.

There had also been reports of cattle mutilations in the Crownpoint area in the early 70s and in Apache County, Ariz. in the 1960s.

According to documents released by the FBI several years ago, field offices in the West began getting letters from members of Congress in the mid-1970s, asking for an investigation because of reports that hundreds of cattle mutilations had been occurring annually on ranches in the West.

On August 29, 1975, Floyd K. Haskell, the senator from

Colorado, had asked the field office in that state to investigate the strange goings-on.

"The ranchers and rural residents of Colorado are concerned and frightened by these incidents," he wrote. "The bizarre mutilations are frightening in themselves: in virtually all the cases, the left ear, the left eye, rectum and sex organs of each animal has been cut away and the blood drained from the carcass but with no traces of blood left on the ground and no footprints."

A perfect case for Scully and Mulder. Unfortunately, the FBI had no X-Files department, so they began an internal investigation trying to determine a logical explanation for the mutilations.

FBI officials pointed out continuously that there was nothing in Congressional law that allowed the agency to investigate the ranchers' concerns. However, the FBI did have jurisdiction to investigate cattle mutilations that occur on Indian reservations and as such "would take into account mutilations occurring elsewhere which showed a similar MO."

The primary focus then was on the mutilations of 15 animals which reportedly occurred on Indian lands within New Mexico in 1977 and 1978.



Courtesy Photo
Robert Allen looks at the mutilated carcass of a bull on his small ranch in Northern New Mexico. Allen says there is a possibility that visitors from outer space are conducting experiments on animals.



AMY ALONZO/UNION DEMOCRAT

ON THE TRAIL of Bigfoot are Bob and Kathy Strain of Jamestown (above), seen here with a wooden replica of the creature and 14-inch castings of footprints left in the Willow Creek area after a famous 1967 sighting in Humboldt County. "Hairy man" was what the Yokuts called the creature painted in this 1,000-year-old pictograph (right), on the Tule River Indian Reservation near Porterville.

KATHY STRAIN/COURTESY PHOTO



Archaeologist digs for proof of Sasquatch

BY DAY SHE'S the Stanislaus National Forest's archaeologist. With a master's degree in anthropology, she makes sure prehistoric Native American sites in the woods are protected. She's also the forest's liaison with the Me-Wuk tribe.

But it's what Kathy Strain does in her spare time that separates her from Forest Service colleagues.

She's a Bigfoot-er. A student of Sasquatch. A yearner for Yeti. A true believer.

"A strong case can be made that Bigfoot exists," said Strain, whose Jamestown-area home includes a room full of books, videos, cast footprints, notes and reports on the creature. "I've seen things I have no other explanation for."

Not only that, but she says Tuolumne County and the forest she works on are among the huge creature's favorite haunts. She has catalogued scores of eyewitness accounts, has discovered a Sasquatch "nest" near Twain Harte and swears she was once close enough to the creature that dirt was still falling from the sides of deep, 14-inch footprints it left behind.

AND GET THIS: Strain is not crazy.

In fact, her scientific credentials and employment by a huge, dead-serious and not terribly imaginative federal agency boost her stock as a guest speaker at Bigfoot conferences.

But when she walks into the forest's Greenley Road headquarters, Strain leaves Sasquatch at the door.

She doesn't demand that wide swaths of timberland be set aside as Bigfoot habitat. Nor does she hector forest wildlife biologists with evidence or accounts she has collected.

"Kathy has been an excellent archaeologist and employee," confirmed her boss, Forest Supervisor Tom Quinn. "And, at least in my four and a half years here,

I have had no reports of Yeti conversations in the workplace."

For the record, Quinn added, the forest has "no position" on Bigfoot.

Which, less restrained Bigfooters might say, is like Australia having no position on kangaroos.



CHRIS BATEMAN

NEXT TO THE deep woods near the Oregon border, Strain says, the Stanislaus Forest area is the nation's hottest Bigfoot spot. In the past six years she has documented more than 200 sightings and witness accounts.

A few have come from co-workers looking to unburden themselves — after quitting time, of course — of long-held Bigfoot tales. Take the wildlife biologist who never forgot his 1993 trip to Bloomer Lake, above Pinecrest.

"An animal-creature mythological being," is how this field worker described the gaping, hairy 6-foot creature he glimpsed. Even after it had disappeared, leaving a dismembered deer behind, he felt "that sixth sense of a presence" nearby.

"Pretty cool and funky," was his distinctly unscientific summation.

But this is only a cube in a Bigfoot iceberg, Strain said.

Local sightings range from below Knights Ferry (a "hairy giant" seen by horsemen in the late 1890s) to the Emigrant Wilderness, apparently popular summer range for Sasquatch. And, according to Me-Wuk lore collected by Strain, a hulking creature called "Yayali" has roamed these mountains for hundreds of years.

WANT TO see one?

"Td try the Pinecrest-Strawberry area," Strain suggested, adding that it has been an epicenter for sightings over the years.

But it's not like she's seen any there.

In more than 20 years of looking, in fact, Strain hasn't seen Bigfoot anywhere. She's like an ornithologist who has never seen a bird or an entomologist still looking for her first bug.

"Anyone who sees one is incredibly lucky," she admitted, describing an elusive animal with a remarkable ability to blend in with its surroundings.

That said, the Pinecrest area — at least in contrast with other places — fairly teems with Sasquatch. At least it did in January of 1963, when The Union Democrat carried this headline:

"Report: 10 Ft. Shrieking Monster."

"There was definitely some creature in the woods," said Tuolumne County Sheriff's Deputy Bill Huntley, who had responded with partner Elbert Miller to reports of "a 10-foot tall man — the most awful thing I have ever seen" at a gravel pit near the high-country subdivision of Peter Pam.

The two officers went to the pit, heard eerie shrieking, saw trees shaking violently, and at one point radioed that "It's heading right toward the car. Here it comes."

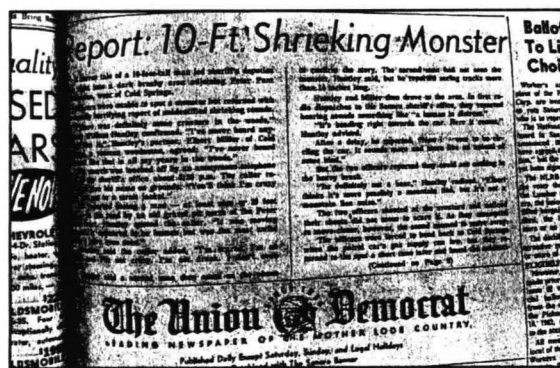
ALAS, IT NEVER came. A few days later, it was dismissed as a bear.

And the guy who reported the monster? "You'll think I'm crazy," he told deputies, refusing to identify himself "You'll put me in a straitjacket."

Which begs a question: Why is Strain, a 38-year-old establishment scientist whose life is otherwise devoid of fringe trappings, willing to take a chance on that Bigfoot straitjacket?

Blame "The Legend of Boggy Creek," a low-budget 1973 documentary on a hairy creature roaming the Arkansas backwoods.

"I was about 7 years old," said Strain, who grew up in the



AMY ALONZO/UNION DEMOCRAT

ACCOUNTS of a shrieking 10-foot monster stalked by sheriff's deputies greeted readers of the Jan. 28, 1963, Union Democrat.

Porterville area. "I was fascinated."

By high school, completely hooked, she asked a stunned guidance counselor what college major might qualify her for a career in Bigfoot research. "Anthropology" was the answer.

Two Cal State Bakersfield degrees later, Strain found that paying jobs in Sasquatch science were as scarce as the creature itself and went to work for the Forest Service.

IN THE 16 YEARS since, she's invested thousands of off-work hours in Bigfoot. She has

collected hundreds of stories from tribal elders and has researched 1,000-year-old pictographs of what the Yokuts Indians called "Hairy Man."

Strain is now in demand as a guest speaker, is writing a Bigfoot book, chairs the Alliance of Independent Bigfoot Researchers and in March will appear on a TV show called "Science Meets Legend." Her license plate reads GOTYETI, a sculpted Bigfoot stands at her front door and a good number of her weekends are spent in the woods, waiting with her husband and teenage sons for the elusive Sasquatch.

"Td say my chances are good," she said. "After all, Bob saw one."

Sure enough, retired Folsom firefighter Bob Strain says he saw a 10-foot, 800-pound upright creature while hunting in Idaho's Salmon Wilderness in 1975. "I was watching him through my rifle scope from 400 yards," said Strain, who met Kathy at a 2003 Bigfoot conference. "But, no, I didn't pull the trigger."

Had he done so, Bob might have changed history: A continuing mystery is why, if Bigfoot really does exist, a carcass has never been found.

"THAT WILL HAPPEN," assured Kathy. "Sooner or later one will be hit by a car or truck, or someone will discover a body."

Now, however, she wants to see a live Sasquatch. And if one comes her way, she'll be ready: Camping with the Strains includes not only tents, barbecue grills and s'mores, but thousands of dollars' worth of night-vision, audio, video and photographic equipment.

So don't look for any repeat of those hazy, grainy 1960s creature-feature shots from Bob and Kathy. If they film Bigfoot, you'll see traces of breakfast in his teeth.

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BIGFOOT BATTLE BREWS IN RP



Robert Shorey's license plate names his quest.

SORTING OUT CLAIMS

Former CEO's suit against locally based tracking firm latest twist in odd pursuit

By DEREK J. MOORE
THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

A big hairy battle over Bigfoot is breaking out in the most unlikely of habitats: the suburban, mostly forest-free city of Rohnert Park.

And as usual for matters related to the elusive creature, it's hard to know who or what to believe.

This much is true: The worldwide headquarters of the Great American Bigfoot Research Organization is in a nondescript office park on Professional Center Drive, in a suite that doubles as an accounting business.

A lawsuit filed against the or-

ganization by its former CEO, a man who bills himself as a world-renowned Bigfoot tracker, has raised the company's profile, along with related allegations of thievery, verbal assault, corporate raiding and Web piracy.

It's a strange tale, but the story of Bigfoot has always been an odd one.

The woolly creature supposedly stands 8 feet tall, weighs 800 pounds and roams the American wilds, eluding legions of trackers who claim it to be evolution's missing link or an alien visitor. More than 2,550 sightings have been reported in North America.



Robert Shorey, Carol "Ruby" Rubin and the company Hummer at the the Great American Bigfoot Research Organization in Rohnert Park.



C. Thomas Biscardi

Former CEO of Bigfoot research organization has sued the group for \$185,000 and the return of movies, plaster casts of footprints and other documentation.

Photos by MARK ARONOFF / The Press Democrat

The term "Bigfoot" first appeared in a 1958 article in a California newspaper. The story told of construction company owner Ray L. Wallace donning 16-inch wooden feet to create tracks in mud, one of many hoaxes associated with the beast. Other names given to the creature include Sasquatch, Yeti and big hairy ape.

One Bigfoot investigator claims the creature has avoided capture because it is psychic and knows when it's being hunted.

"I tell people it's best to go buck naked with some corn and some fish, and you might have some luck. But if you're carrying a weapon or have any harmful intention in mind, they know," Erik Beckjord of Berkeley said by cell phone on his way home this week from a reported sighting near Mendocino.

Beckjord, who has a Bigfoot museum online, said he tried to broker a deal to end the feud between the Rohnert Park organization and its former star tracker to no avail.

Welcome in Rohnert Park

The idea that Bigfoot has a local connection caught Rohnert Park Mayor Tim Smith by surprise. He said he'd welcome the hairy humanoid to the city so long as he or she were well-behaved.

"I could arrange for a photo op," he said.

Some don't consider Bigfoot a joking matter.

That includes C. Thomas Biscardi, who's been in the Bigfoot business 33 years and is suing the research organization for \$185,000, plus interest, and the return of homemade movies, plaster casts of footprints and other Bigfoot-related documentation.

Biscardi claims he had a \$250,000 contract to lead Bigfoot expeditions for the Rohnert Park organization and for the use of his library, which has mysteriously disappeared.

"I just want my goods back," said the Redwood City man, who was reached by cell phone Friday in Minnesota, where he was investigating reports of a Bigfoot-like family of creatures living in an abandoned munitions dump.

The Bigfoot research organization is a Nevada corporation with offices in Rohnert Park

THE QUEST FOR BIGFOOT

Where is it? More than 2,550 sightings have been reported in North America

Vital statistics: Bigfoot reportedly stands 8 feet tall and weighs 800 pounds

Other names: Sasquatch, Yeti and big hairy ape

First news reports: In 1958, a newspaper described a man's donning 16-inch wooden feet to create muddy tracks attributed to Bigfoot

Close to home: The worldwide headquarters of the Great American Bigfoot Research Organization is in a Rohnert Park office park

and Novato, according to Robert Shorey and Carol "Ruby" Rubin, who co-founded the company in February 2005.

Biscardi said he was introduced to the pair through a mutual friend and that Shorey told him at their initial meeting in Rohnert Park that he knew people in Hollywood who were interested in making a movie about the tracker.

Biscardi said he eventually left the company because he was not getting paid.

"Their promises were totally invalid," he said.

Looking to make a profit

At the Rohnert Park office this week, Shorey and Rubin disputed Biscardi's version of events and said he was the one who skipped out on them while they were struggling to build the business, which, despite its scientific-sounding name, also sought to make money.

"You can't seem to turn on a radio or a television, or pick up a magazine without seeing something about Bigfoot," Rubin said. "We thought as businesspeople, there's an untapped market here."

Rubin, who wore large Versace glasses studded with small rhinestones, is a registered CPA who lives in Rohnert Park.

Shorey, a Petaluma resident, touts himself as "an expert survivalist and outdoorsman for over 3 decades in the field of tracking" on the Bigfoot organi-

zation's Web site — www.greatamericanbigfoot.com.

He also said he's a mechanic, a venture capitalist and an inventor who has a patent for a device that prevents people from falling off roofs.

Shorey said he and Rubin are devoted to finding Bigfoot and offered as proof a 2005 Corvette parked outside in the sun-baked parking lot. The car, which has a 605-horsepower racing engine under the hood, has vanity plates that read, "FNDGBFT."

"I'm the one with the plates. I'm the one out there looking for Bigfoot," he said.

Shorey said he did, in fact, see a Bigfoot-like creature on Clover Mountain in Burney, east of Redding, but unfortunately the photos he took didn't turn out.

"For some reason it's very hard to get Bigfoot on film," he said.

Money didn't materialize

He and Rubin said they hoped to turn a profit with the company by getting people to pay for Web broadcasts of Bigfoot expeditions led by Biscardi. T-shirts, hats and other items also are for sale on the Web site.

The pair said they paid Biscardi \$65,000 with a promise for an additional \$60,000, plus \$125,000 for expeditions if profits came in. But Shorey said the company to date has only made between \$500 and \$600, mostly from the sale of merchandise.

He said the souped-up Corvette, a \$45,000 Humvee, a trailer, two all-terrain vehicles and two infrared cameras were paid for through Rubyco Enterprises Inc., which he and Rubin described as a venture capitalist firm.

Shorey said Rubin and other investors put up more than \$210,000 to initially fund the Bigfoot company. But as president of Rubyco, Shorey said he is not allowed to earn a paycheck under the terms of a bankruptcy he and his wife were granted in January.

Court records show the couple was \$365,889.96 in debt, the bulk of it on credit card purchases. Shorey said he had to use the cards to pay his wife's medical bills. The couple also owed money on a 2004 Cadillac

Escalade SUV.

Shorey's occupation is listed in court records as "disabled veteran," for which he receives \$980 in monthly disability payments from the government.

Both sides claim they've been financially harmed by the other. Shorey and Rubin also allege Biscardi tampered with their Web site, verbally threatened them and started a new company — www.searchingforbigfoot.com — using expertise he gained while working for the Rohnert Park firm.

Biscardi responded forcefully to the allegations: "It's total bull—."

Lost library

The missing library is at the heart of the dispute. Shorey and Rubin claim Biscardi gave the library to the company in exchange for stock. Dennis Kazubowski, Biscardi's San Jose attorney, said the certificates were never signed and are basically worthless.

Shorey and Rubin claim Biscardi stole the library from the Rohnert Park office and stashed the contents at Jacob's Bigfoot Deli at Happy Camp in Siskiyou County. As evidence they showed scars on an office wall where they said the box of stuff had been moved.

But Kazubowski said it would be "ludicrous" to file a lawsuit seeking the library's return if Biscardi already had it.

Amid all the discord, Biscardi sounded excited by the results of his latest expedition.

"We just saw a creature moving through the brush," he said. "The last three days, it's been off the hook. We've been in Texas and Oklahoma. We casted some huge prints. It's just unbelievable."

"We are very close," he said.

News researcher Teresa Meikle contributed to this report. You can reach Staff Writer Derek J. Moore at 521-5336 or dmoore@pressdemocrat.com.

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Their odds? An anthropologist and Sasquatch researcher once estimated that about 2,000 live in the Washington, Oregon and California woods. Prorate that and it's, what, a dozen, maybe 20 on the Stanislaus Forest?

"I'm not going there," said Strain. "Populations change too much to be tied to a number."

But in May of 2001, at least one Bigfoot was in the Twain Harte area: Strain and another researcher were driving on a road in the area when they noticed a just-snapped, still-moving 3-inch-thick tree.

She and her friend followed fresh, crumbling 14-inch prints to a "nest" of bent trees and snapped limbs. Inside, she said, was a 7-foot "body imprint" in the leaves and moss.

"IT APPEARS a lone Sasquatch was occupying the area," concluded Strain's four-page, all-business report on the nest, apparently abandoned after the May foray.

Then there was her August 2004 expedition on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. "We were walking along a road with night-vision goggles," she remembers. "We heard noises from both sides and, as we got closer, an 8-foot-tall, upright creature came from behind a tree to look at us. We just froze."

A Bigfoot sighting? Not for this scientist.

"By the time we moved closer, it was gone," Strain said. "Unless I see the whites of its eyes, I'm not going to count it."

And if she ever does look into the whites of those mysterious eyes — and gets it all in high-def?

Well, then maybe we can talk about setting aside some habitat.

(Seen any strange eyes in the dark lately? Or any other evidence of Bigfoot? Call the Alliance of Independent Bigfoot Researchers at (866) 415-2427. And right after that, contact Chris Bateman at cbateman@uniondemocrat.com or 588-4528).