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STAR TELEGRAM
Fort Worth, Texas
February 10, 2008

THE UNEXPLAINED ✓ 2165

A month later, town starts to settle down

The truth — and, for some in
Stephenville, a profit — is out there.

By MATT FRAZIER mfrazier@star-telegram.com
STEPHENVILLE — It has been one month since people reported seeing strange unidentified flying objects over Stephenville, causing a worldwide stir among curious journalists and UFO enthusiasts.

Since then, investigators have interviewed more than 100 witnesses and dug their way through grainy pictures and shaky video of supposed UFOs. Now they say they may finally have found one video

of a flying craft that they can't explain — but the photo's ownership is in question.

The military initially denied, then confirmed that it had fighter jets in the area during the sightings, leading to conspiracy theories and speculation — including that the jets were chasing UFOs from a restricted-flight zone.

A speaker captivated an audience of hundreds at Stephenville's Tarleton State University with UFO tales that seemed strikingly similar to the accounts given by witnesses of the recent sightings. One of

More on MONTH on 48



A tattoo shop identifies with the town's newfound fame.
S-T/MATT FRAZIER

Texas Press Clipping Bureau

Month: Frenzy might be over, but the fad isn't

CONTINUED FROM 1B

the university's astronomy professors is considering beginning his own investigation.

And the town of Stephenville, a farming community about 70 miles southwest of Fort Worth, was shocked by the descending media hordes before deciding that it was all great fun. Now many think it may be profitable as well.

"It seems like the feeding frenzy is over," said Kathie Whiteman, manager of a bookstore at the edge of Tarleton State University. "Now the fad has begun."

Investigators

About 50 people say they saw impossibly bright lights in the skies above the Stephenville area Jan. 8. Not long after, they gathered in nearby Dublin to

talk about what they saw with interviewers from the Mutual UFO Network.

Despite about 400 pushing and shoving onlookers, seven MUFON investigators gathered information from respectable sources, said Kenneth Cherry of Keller, director of the organization's Texas chapter.

Cherry said investigators are still talking to witnesses who did not want to be a part of that public event, often visiting them at home. He expects that more than 200 people will eventually be interviewed. So far, the network has interviewed about 75 percent of them, he said.

But it hasn't been easy, Cherry said.

"Some reporters are absolutely demanding information or are following us around when we interview witnesses," Cherry said. "And these are people who want to avoid publicity."

Besides collating data, the organization has filed a number of Freedom of Information requests with the military, checked with the Federal Aviation Administration and looked at meteorological patterns.

The network hopes to eventually determine exactly where and when the objects were spotted, along with their flight paths.

"There is a compelling piece of video," he said. "But there is a dispute over ownership. Everything else has been eliminated."

The organization hopes to announce its findings in its magazine's April edition.

Military conspiracies

Dozens of people in the area reported seeing UFOs — and fighter jets — around dusk on that date.

Maj. Karl Lewis, a spokesman for the 301st Fighter Wing at Naval Air Station Fort Worth, initially said that no F-16s or other aircraft from the base were in the area the night of Jan. 8.

Lewis said the object may have been an illusion caused by two commercial airplanes. Lights from the aircraft would seem unusually bright and appear orange because of the setting sun, he said.

But later, the military changed its tune, saying that 10 F-16s from the 457th Fighter Squadron were training between 6 and 8 p.m. Jan. 8 in the Brownwood military operating area, which includes Stephenville and Erath County.

The Mutual UFO Network

says the admission adds credibility to their witnesses, who reported seeing military jets chasing the flying objects. That's leading conspiracy Web sites to the conclusion that UFOs invaded restricted military airspace.

Tarleton State

Overheard in a TSU parking lot before guest speaker Robert Hastings' UFO lecture:

"Did you find your keys?"

"No."

"I bet the aliens took them."

"Are you going to the alien speaker thing?"

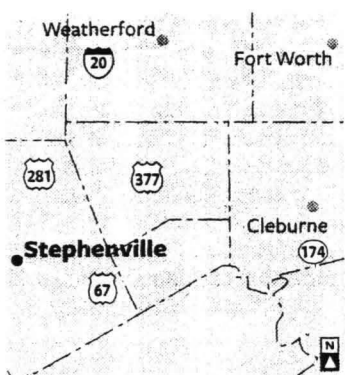
"Oh yeah, it's going to be awesome!"

Since 1981, Hastings has spoken at more than 500 colleges and universities nationwide, including Stanford University and the University of Texas at Austin. Last month, he spoke to an audience of hundreds in the student center on the topic "UFOs: The Secret Story." After presenting documents and a slide show, he said the Stephenville UFO fit into a pattern of sightings, including:

■ Bright lights flying in ways no modern airplane could duplicate.

■ Military jets trying, and failing, to keep up with the objects.

■ A nearby nuclear weapons or energy production facility.



STAR-TELEGRAM/DEWUAN X. DAVIS

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NEXT PAGE >>

"A number of the documents refer to UFOs repeatedly violating highly sensitive airspace over nuclear weapons sites, including the Los Alamos National Laboratory, where nuclear weapons are designed," he told the crowd.

Tarleton's Michael Hibbs, an associate professor of math and physics, and Ron DiIulio, director of astronomy lab programs at the University of North Texas in Denton, said a few weeks ago that they would gather data and interview witnesses in connection with the sightings.

They have not started yet, Hibbs said, and they aren't 100 percent sure they ever will.

"We wanted to try to explain this with science and logic, but we haven't gone out there and done the work," Hibbs said. "We were really concerned with all the hype. We want to wait until that dies down."

Stephenville

Reporters swarmed the town of Stephenville soon after the UFO sightings were made public. At first residents seemed shocked; then they started having fun.

The town square in Stephenville is still dominated by a large white and red courthouse and a cow statue showing that area dairy farmers sell \$223 million annually.



STAR TELEGRAM
Fort Worth, Texas
February 10, 2008

Shops in Stephenville are hoping for a different sort of visitor — the sort with cash. STAR-TELEGRAM/MATT FRAZIER

But alien heads, spaceships and UFO parking signs have crept into the area.

In one corner of the town square, a travel shop displays a poster featuring a UFO and offers trips that are "out of this world." Next to it is a tattoo shop featuring extraterrestrial tattoos. In another corner, a bookstore offers UFO parking on the roof.

"Of course the people who have actually seen it are not satisfied and want more answers," said Treva Thompson of the Stephenville Chamber of Commerce. "But it has died

down. Some businesses are still using it as a marketing opportunity, but I feel like this is something that's going to pass over eventually."

According to Stephenville High School teacher Kimberlea Adams, the science club pre-sold 1,200 UFO shirts at \$10 each. The club expects to award a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving senior for at least the next four years.

"We turned over the sales to Coyote [Designs] and they are going to donate the proceeds back to us," Adams said. "So far they have sold about 250

more shirts. We haven't quite decided what to do with the extra money."

The College Store near Tarleton recently ordered glow-in-the-dark UFO shirts, manager Whiteman said.

"I wish I had jumped onto this earlier," she said. "I'm hoping the fad will last at least through May."

This report includes material from the Stephenville Empire-Tribune, The Associated Press and the Star-Telegram archives.

MATT FRAZIER, 817-390-7957

More strange lights reported in the sky

BY DENISE MORRIS
HOOD COUNTY NEWS

While UFO mania here is no longer in the national news, reports are still coming in from Hood County residents.

A Tolar man last week called police when he saw two "suspicious lights in the sky" near the Mike Brown Dealership off Highway 377 East.

"They were really bright," he told dispatch. "Then they dimmed, but just hovered there. Then they took off together." He said they were oval shaped.

Through the month of January neighboring Stephenville and Dublin were the center of international news on UFO sightings, and businesses capitalized on the excitement.

Once the U.S. Air Force explained that its own aircraft had been doing exercises in

this area, people shrugged their shoulders with a consensus attitude that "we knew it all along." Others, who really want an extraterrestrial phenomenon, are crying "cover-up" of what they

believe were really alien ships.

No one would go on record with either comment. But still

'I pulled up in my driveway about 8 p.m. and actually saw a craft.'

Donna Hart
Comanche Cove

other UFO reports have been made.

"I pulled up in my driveway about 8 p.m. and actually saw a craft," said Donna Hart of Comanche Cove. "It was extremely large, like 10 times the size of an airplane, and moved slowly. The nose of the craft had a point like the top of the Empire State building."

This report contained many details, and the woman's 12-year-old son saw it too, she said.

"Its wings curved around to the back, and it had all these lights under the belly," Hart said. "It was only about 500 feet off the ground."

Her friends, she said, didn't believe her — but for one, who told her he saw the same thing in Bluff Dale.

Steven Rodriguez, who happened to be visiting Granbury during the UFO uproar, saw something himself.

"It was real big and moved in one direction, and then made a sudden turn to the left, like an airplane couldn't do," he said.

This was between Granbury and Lipan, in an area where he said such sightings are not uncommon.

The first UFO report in the area was in Granbury on New Year's Eve. The golden lights were determined to be Chinese lanterns after residents stepped forward with their explanations.

Please contact the Hood County News with reports of unidentified objects in the sky, whether you see them, or you are the one sending them up.

denise@hcnews.com | 817-573-7066 ext. 251

HOOD COUNTY NEWS
Granbury, Texas
February 9, 2008

Hood County News
GRANBURY, TX
Circ. 2xW. 11109

February 9 2008

Texas Press Clipping Bureau

FEB 18, 2008

HISTORY

MYSTERY AIRSHIP

A Did some strange craft fly over Ottawa in 1897?

CHARLES STANLEY

mbureau@mywebtimes.com
815-795-2023

It was 10:15 p.m. Saturday, April 10, 1897, when John J. Withrow saw something unusual in the sky on its way over the La Salle County Courthouse.

Withrow, it was reported in the weekly Ottawa Republican-Times in its edition of the following Thursday, was just closing up his secondhand goods shop at 217 W. Main St. in Ottawa. He may have been preparing to cross the street to his lodgings at 232 W. Main St. when his eyes fixed on the object in the night sky.

Whatever it was, it carried a light that seemed about as strong as one of the city electric lights and very bright. The specter fit the description of the mysterious airship that had been reported moving across the country in recent weeks.

As it passed over the courthouse and got in range of the building's roof-mounted flagpole, Withrow stepped toward La Salle Street to get a better look.

But by then it had vanished. "He saw but one light, and it was altogether too low for a meteor, for it did not seem to be higher than the clouds," according to the newspaper account.

The story ran under the headline "AIRSHIP — OR WHAT? Several People Who Report a Phenomenon Saturday Night."

"Chicago and Evanston and Joliet need not imagine that they are the only cities in the state of Illinois that possess people with good enough eyes to see the mysterious 'airship' that had been seen in Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota and California, for they are not. It has been seen in Ottawa," the

story began.

Withrow was not alone in his sighting.

Earlier, between 9 and 10 p.m., the Republican-Times reported, the airship was seen overhead and moving slowly to the west.

Witnesses included William Trablin Sr., 59, a native of Germany who came to Ottawa in 1855 and operated a tailor's shop at 214 W. Madison St. There also was Charles N. Miller, a laborer from Ottawa. Both of their descriptions agreed.

"It was seemingly high up, carried two lights, one green and the other white, and the lights seemed to be about 25 feet apart. Both of them watched it move slowly westward and disappear," said the newspaper story.

Walter Hood, the night telegraph operator at the Rock Island railroad depot in the 100 east block of Marquette Street, "saw an airship or a meteor, he did not know which, Saturday evening. The light was strong and showed red, like a very powerful locomotive head light. It lasted for a couple of minutes and moved rapidly to the southwest, finally disappearing in that direction.

Hood called his folks out from the home they shared at 121 E. Marquette St. and they saw it as plainly as he did."

There has never been a definitive determination of what caused the hundreds of airship sightings that began in California in 1896 and slowly moved eastward in 1897.

Dirigibles did exist, but none with the ability for long sustained flights.

The Republican-Times offered its own speculation.



Photo provided

The airship Albatross in Jules Verne's 1886 novel "Robur, the Conqueror" was cited as an example of the type of craft that may have been spotted by several witnesses flying over Ottawa in 1897. The Albatross had a series of vertical propellers allowing it to operate like a helicopter. Horizontal propellers provide lateral movement. The novel was the basis for the 1961 movie "Master of the World," starring Vincent Price in the title role and Charles Bronson.



Photo provided

This is how the Rock Island station in the 100 east block of Marquette Street looked when Walter Hood, the night telegraph operator "saw an airship or a meteor, he did not know which" on the night of Saturday, April 10, 1897.

See AIRSHIP page B6

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NEXT PAGE >>

FEB 18, 2008

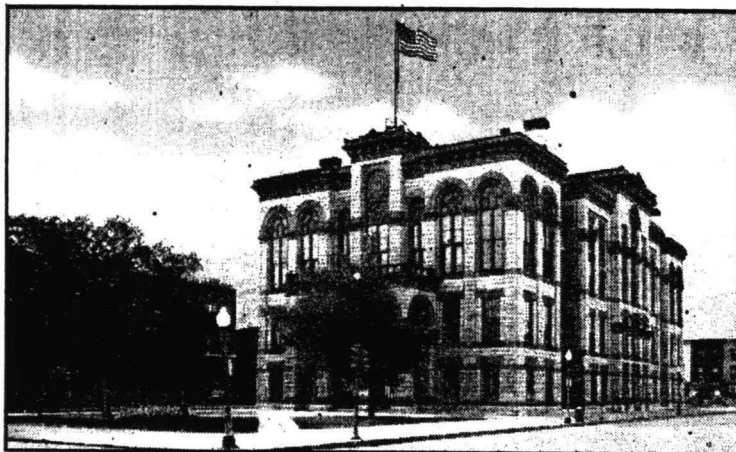


Photo provided

The roof-mounted flagpole on the La Salle County Courthouse was used as a reference point by an Ottawa man who reported seeing an airship with a bright light flying overhead in 1897.

AIRSHIP

Continued from Page B1

"It is possible that someone may have succeeded in manufacturing some such outfit as described in Jules Verne's (1886 novel) 'Robur, the Conqueror,' in which book an electrical airship plays the most important part, and is at present having a lot of fun with the people of this country, sailing around in the air and setting everybody to talking," the newspaper continued.

By April, people in Illinois indeed were both talking and reading about the airship.

During the week of April 9 to April 16 there were 110 reports of sightings in Illinois and Indiana — often in different locations on the same night.

"Joliet reports seeing the ship Friday night, a dozen men seeing it, yet there are those who are skeptical and do not believe in it at all," the story in the Republican-Times said. "It has been seen in Illinois for several nights."

George "Jupiter" Hough, director of the Dearborn Observatory at Northwestern University in Evanston, "solved the mystery, however, by proving scientifically the identity of the star, and explaining that it is a fast

traveler and gives out colored light," the newspaper reported.

Hough said what people were seeing was Betelgeuse, a star located 427 light-years away: the second brightest star in the constellation Orion, and the ninth brightest star in the night sky.

The planet Venus was another named suspect. During the winter of 1896-1897 it was visible in the evening sky and at its maximum brightness on March 23 — just at the height of the airship sightings. Since many airship reports were during cloudy conditions, it was suggested the bright planet was mistaken for an airship.

Over the years, the airship has been a popular topic of speculation on countless explanations.

Possibilities have included writing the sightings off as a hoax or "mass hysteria."

In "The Great Airship Mystery: A UFO of the 1890s" published in 1981, author Daniel Cohen, a University of Illinois graduate with several books on ghosts and psychic phenomena to his credit, concluded the airship probably never existed.

But ex-Marine Michael Busby, in his 2004 book "Solving the 1879 Airship Mystery," claims a secret group of inventors built nine airships worthy of Jules Verne that operated from secret locations at night.

Their supposed intended purpose was as an early preparation for U.S. military attacks on Spanish forces in Cuba during the Spanish-American War of 1898.

LaCrosseTribune

LA CROSSE TRIBUNE
La Crosse, WI
March 17, 2008

Hometown history: UFO sighting never fully explained

Was it a bird? Was it a plane? No, wait, planes had not been invented yet. So what was it that La Crosse residents saw in the evening skies of April 10-11, 1897?

Most of the country, from California to Michigan, was asking the same question after a mysterious bright light, which reportedly could move in several different directions, became visible at various times in the western two-thirds of the country.

The most popular explanation of the time was that the mysterious light was an "airship" equipped with electric lights and some kind of searchlight. One person in La Crosse who observed the light through opera

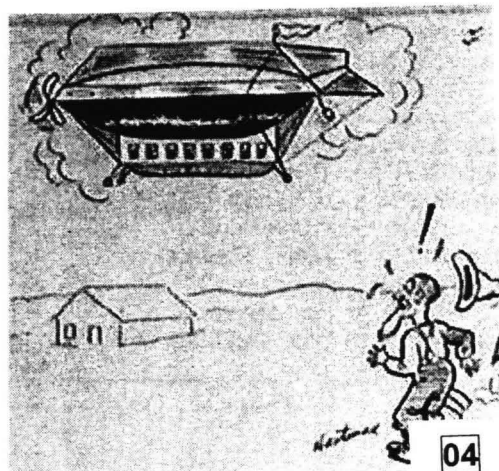
glasses reported seeing an oblong object suspended from the light. This had been reported in other parts of the country as well, with the yet-to-be-famous UFO parlance of "cigar-shaped" being the most-often-used description.

The sightings elicited much speculation and wonder, as well as a number of hoaxes and exaggerations, but no fear or panic. The event was even put to commercial use as a number of La Crosse drinking establishments began offering various concoctions known as The Airship.

It's interesting to note that the vast majority of people considered the mysterious light to be man-made in origin. In a letter to the La Crosse Daily Press, one person thought the object was from Mars, or some other planet, stating that the "occupants may be studying the life of our planet, as we would like to study the life and inhabitants of others, if we were wise enough or well enough versed in science to reach them." This person's theory was deemed to

be extremely odd by the newspaper, although 50 years later it would prove to be popular during the UFO craze of the 1940s and 1950s.

This "light" that was observed across most of the country was never fully explained. Reliable airship flights were only three to five years away, but the fact this light was observed at the same time in places hundreds of miles apart would seem to indicate the mysterious object was more celestial in nature.



Stephenville area's had a few brushes with unknown

STEPHENVILLE, Texas — "I have found it," boasted C. L. McIlhany to a newspaperman.

"Found what?" asked the reporter from Dallas, expecting a new bit of info to add to the heavenly hot topic of local conversationalists.

"Found the airship *The Dallas Morning News* has been talking about. It's no joke ..."

Mr. McIlhany, a prominent farmer, lived three miles down the Bosque River from this Erath County courthouse town. His words carried credible weight amid the dozens of giddy reports concerning mysterious things flying over the plains.

The farmer said, "I discovered the ship on the ground early this morning ..."

By now, a reader is perhaps recalling the published and televised accounts of odd objects that promaded across wide Erath skies last month — some of them faster than Bugattis and bigger than Wal-Marts. But that's getting way ahead of this story.

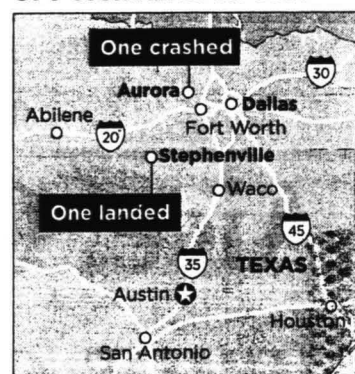
See, Mr. McIlhany made his "discovery" more than 110 years ago, on April 17, 1897.

Dallas lawyer-historian Jeffrey Dunn sent me the 1897 clipping with the Stephenville dateline, saying, "You're not going to believe this." It all suggested that extraterrestrials are fond of Erath County. What's more, an examination of newspapers dated April 1897 showed a whole slew of reports about aerial strangers roving in the Midwest and Southwest.

The farmer said the ship, crewed by a pilot and an engineer, airt in need of a minor repair. He got an eyeful and hurried off to recruit witnesses.

"The airship is very much as reported by *The News* ... It consists of a cigar-shaped body about 60 feet in length ... The motive power is an immense wheel at each end, in appearance much like a metallic windmill. It is driven by an immense electric engine, which derives its power from storage batteries."

UFO SIGHTINGS IN 1897



File graphic

The crewmen — earthlings, as it sadly turned out — gave their names as S.E. Tilman and A.E. Polbear. They explained that they were on a test cruise in compliance with a contract they held with certain New York capitalists.

"They are confident that they have achieved a great success and that within a short time navigation

of the air will be an assured fact," said the farmer.

Mr. Dunn and I had researched incredible reports of a spaceship's crash into a windmill in Wise County and the burial in the Aurora cemetery of the space alien killed in the smash-up. Historians have concluded that it was a hoax thought up by a contributor who was trying to revive Aurora's flagging fortunes. It didn't work.

The events in Stephenville and the Aurora crash were covered in the same April 19, 1897, edition of *The News*. There were dozens of

with unknown

other extraordinary aerial incidents and accidents reported in that period.

Bob Callanan is a former Air Force officer assigned to Operation Blue Book, code name for the UFO investigation project. (The Air Force no longer investigates

UFOs.)

Mr. Callanan spoke candidly, saying that he believes that UFOs are "possible."

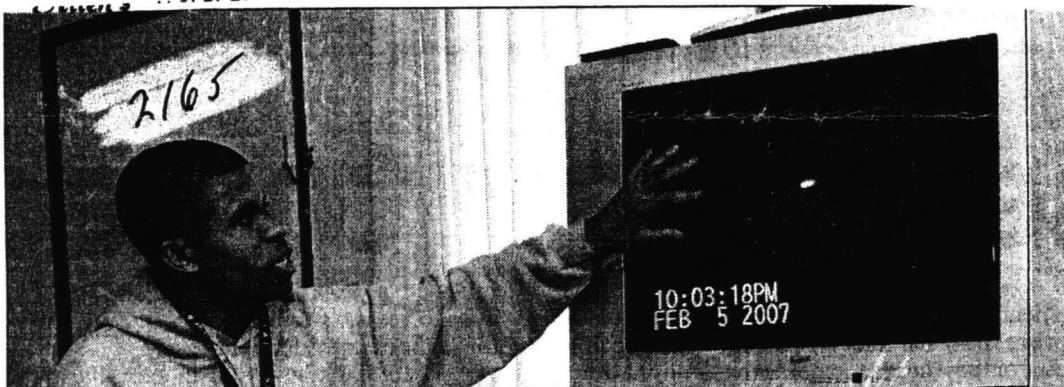
"We were able to explain approximately 90 percent of what we investigated," he said. "The rest, we reported out as 'unexplainable' or needing additional information before a final report could be issued."

TEXANA



KENT BIFFLE

GAZETTE-TIMES
Corvallis, Oregon
January 30, 2008



Brian Wright of Albany shows a video he shot of what he describes as a strange light in the sky over south Albany in February 2007.

Mysterious light puzzles Albany man

BY CATHY INGALLS
FOR THE GAZETTE-TIMES

Brian Wright of Albany saw a circular, bright light in the eastern sky about a year ago, and he's wondered about it ever since.

He said he called the military and cable news organizations right after he saw the object, but no one seemed to be interested, and he couldn't find anyone else who had seen it. Then with recent reports of UFOs spotted elsewhere in the country, he contacted the Democrat-Herald.

Wright, 30, a stay-at-home dad who attended both South and West Albany high schools, said he'd shot a video and wanted us to view it and run a photograph of the thing in the newspaper.

He said it happened about

10 p.m. Feb. 5, 2007, and he and a friend, Joal Traynor, were talking outside of Wright's townhouse on Queen Avenue near Hill Street.

"Out of the blue, something came up out of the eastern sky so he could record the event. The video is jerky, as Wright said he was trying to find the object through his lens and then had trouble focusing because it was moving so fast.

Just as quickly as it appeared in the sky, the object made a sharp turn toward the southeast and disappeared, he said.

"I know it wasn't a plane, a helicopter or a hot air balloon. That was obvious," he said. "It also wasn't a flare or a shooting star because it left no trail."

Wright said he called the Albany police but was told no one else had reported seeing anything unusual in the sky.

"My friends are skeptical even though they've seen the picture, but they can't explain what it is," he said.

Wright's father, Brian Wright Sr., is visiting from California and has a more open mind.

"I believe there are other things out there," he said.

Brian Wright would like to hear from anyone who has an idea about what he saw.

He can be reached at 926-5054.

Hunt continues for answers in UFO case

Retired Aberdeen police sergeant Jim Clarkson loves investigative work and normal people confronted with extraordinary events — handy attributes for pursuing his passion for UFOs.

Now living in Olympia, Clarkson, 56, is chief state investigator for the Mutual UFO Network, a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to following up on reports of unidentified flying object sightings nationwide.

Clarkson checks out 20 to 30 reports statewide each year. All but a few can be explained as a star, satellite or some other identifiable flying object.

"I liken it to panning for gold — a lot of sluicing through the gravel for the occasional nugget," he said.

For Clarkson, the mother lode of all UFO sightings in this state in the past 30 years happened in Grays Harbor County on Nov. 25, 1979, and



**JOHN DODGE
SOUNDINGS**

the days that followed.

Clarkson and I both were working in Aberdeen at the time. I was a reporter for The Daily World, and he was a rookie cop stuck on the graveyard shift.

While checking overnight reports to the sheriff's office that Monday morning, I noticed several calls from witnesses who said they saw a UFO with windows and lights, streaking silently and ablaze through the sky to the southwest before exploding in the remote Elk River area near Westport about 11 p.m. that Sunday.

"UFO wreckage in Elk Riv-

er?" So blared the headline over the newspaper story I wrote that Monday. In the story and four ensuing ones, the word from the military and county officials was of a search that uncovered no missing planes or wreckage — just a big fat mystery.

Clarkson missed the initial coverage, but picked up the investigation in 1986 and hasn't let go since. He's interviewed about a dozen witnesses and a few loggers who said they encountered military personnel in the Elk River area the next day, blocking access to the site. I received a similar call — I believe it was a hunter — who said he was turned back by soldiers, too.

For the longest time, Clarkson chalked it up as a military screw-up — maybe a U.S. or Soviet spy satellite or rocket or experimental aircraft.

But his sleuthing led to some unusual accounts of strange lights flitting around

over the alleged Elk River wreckage site the night after the crash.

I moved on to the next story and the next deadline, but remained intrigued by the Elk River UFO all these years. I had dinner with Clarkson the other night and interviewed him again over lunch this past week. In November, he will present the Elk River case at the annual UFO Crash Retrieval Conference in Las Vegas.

Anyone with information on that eventful night is encouraged to contact Clarkson at 360-701-1342 or olymufon@comcast.net.

"After 30 years, the public has a right to know what happened that night," Clarkson said.

I couldn't agree more.

John Dodge is a senior reporter and Sunday columnist for The Olympian. He can be reached 360-754-5444 or jdodge@theolympian.com.

Long Beach, WA
(Pacific Co.)
Chinook Observer
(Cir. W. 7,000)

FEB 27 2008

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

CHINOOK OBSERVER
Long Beach, Washington
February 27, 2008

Many sight flaming fireball

SEATTLE — People in at least four states and a Canadian province saw a bright fireball streaking across the Pacific Northwest sky in the early hours last Tuesday but, contrary to some reports, there was no collision with the ground, University of Washington scientists said.

Using readings from instruments in the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network, the scientists determined the object, called a meteoroid, disintegrated above the Blue Mountains about 25 miles north of Lagrange, Ore., at an altitude of about 19 miles.

Witnesses in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and British Columbia reported the fireball about 5:30 a.m. Tuesday. At least one person said the object had exploded on impact in eastern Washington and another person in southeastern Washington was said to have felt tremors from the blast.

Stephen Malone, a UW

research professor emeritus of Earth and space sciences and former director of the seismic network, worked with other researchers at the UW and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland to determine the source of the explosion.

They were able to triangulate the location using readings from seismometers that are part of the regional network, though the meteoroid appeared to come in at a sharp angle, preventing a calculation of a precise trajectory.

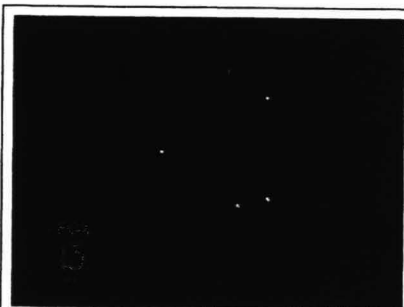
Malone noted that the readings are likely to be off somewhat because the seismometer station closest to the point where the meteoroid disintegrated has been out of commission since late January.

Following another widely observed meteoroid in June 2004, UW seismologists were able to pinpoint the explosion just north of the town of Snohomish at 27 miles altitude.

my FOX
TAMPA BAY

MyFOX (Online)
Tampa Bay, FL
March 14, 2008

UFO captured on tape in Pasco



The UFO featured three white lights and a blinking red light

WESLEY CHAPEL - An unidentified flying object caught the attention of some Pasco County residents early Friday.

Many described the object -- a rotating triangle of three white lights plus a flashing red light that stayed put -- as a UFO.

The Pasco County Sheriff's Office says some Wesley Chapel residents called 911 around 6:25 a.m. wondering what was up -- literally.

A deputy's report says it was a balloon, but doesn't get more specific than that.

TCPALM.COM (Online)
Fort Pierce, FL
February 27, 2008

By R.J. Harrington

'Space debris' on beach removed by homeowners on Hutchinson Island

Homeowners remove 'space debris' from beach by themselves



Tony Tallon, right, a part-time resident of Sand Pebble Condominiums in Stuart, talks to Martin County Sheriff's Deputy Jason Fleming about the object that washed ashore on Hutchinson Island Tuesday. (Photo by Deborah Silver)

HUTCHINSON ISLAND — No one knows exactly what the mysterious "space debris" on the beach near Pebble Beach Condos was — but residents removed the object that washed ashore earlier this month.

Tony Tallon, a retired Toronto police detective who lives nearby, said he and his neighbors banded together Monday and carted the strange debris — which some suspected came from a space ship — off the beach.

Tallon discovered the item — a cylinder about 8 or 9 feet long and 4 feet in diameter — on Feb. 12 while walking on the beach with his wife.

Hutchinson Island residents speculated the item could have been part of a NASA shuttle or rocket. But NASA officials told a county representative the debris likely didn't

come from their space operations — and no one could figure out who it belonged to and who should take it off the beach.

"We called the Martin County Sheriff's Office and some county environmental people and no one would take responsibility for its removal," Tallon said.

"One man said we should roll it back in the ocean, but we figured that would be hazardous for swimmers and surfers, so we cut it up, packed it into a tractor-drawn cart, and it's now in a nearby dumpster waiting for pickup. It was good old North American know-how," he said.

Tallon said one person told him he should paint a hammer and sickle, the symbol of the former Soviet Union, on the side of the object and then call the Russian embassy and tell them to pick up their "space ship."

Detective Joe Passanessi, Martin County Sheriff's deputy for environmental investigations, said he contacted a number of federal, state and local agencies but no one would assume responsibility for removing the debris.

"I spoke with Roger Phelps of NASA's Shuttle Project Control Office and he said, from a look at the photo I sent him, it didn't appear to be one of theirs," Passanessi said.

After a number of fruitless attempts to get the object removed, Passanessi called a liaison with the condo association and said the homeowners would have to get rid of it on their own, which they now have done.

"I was terribly frightened," Hickson told WLOX-TV News of that late October night in 1973.

Hickson, now 76 and living in Gautier, decided to go fishing on the Pascagoula River with his buddy, 19-year-old Calvin Parker. But something happened that night that would change their lives forever.

"It looked to me like air, or steam, or something escaping from a pipe," Hickson recalled.

A piercing sound made Hickson and Parker stop what they were doing, Hickson said, and that's when he spotted a large object hovering behind them.

"It was some kind of craft, it was probably 30 or 40 feet," he said. "There were three things, they weren't human beings. I know now they were robots."

The sight is burned into Hickson's memory.

"They appeared to me that they had something like elephant skin, it was very wrinkled. These things came to us and took a hold of me, and one took a hold of Calvin. We went into that beam of light and they carried me aboard that craft."

He said the aliens held them for about 30 minutes.

Hickson and Parker's alleged abduction played a crucial role in the creation of the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle. The center is a centralized place for people to call and report strange and mysterious things they see.

Parker is reportedly now living in Louisiana and has declined to discuss the incident.

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL
Memphis, TN
February 29, 2008

Miss. man recounts night aliens took him aboard

GAUTIER, Miss. — Charles Hickson didn't need the recent reports of a UFO sighting in Stephenville, Texas, to stir up memories of what he says was his encounter with alien visitors more than 35 years ago.

INTELLIGENCER
Doylestown, Pennsylvania
January 29, 2008

UFO at Mexican eatery?

BY JAMES MCGINNIS
THE INTELLIGENCER

Do extraterrestrials like enchiladas?

The alien appetite for spicy Mexican was called into question after reports of a UFO spotting Friday night over the former Don Pablos.

The restaurant on Old Lincoln Highway closed several weeks ago, though perhaps this sad news has yet to reach Mars.

Little green men quite possibly traveled light years hoping to redeem a holiday gift card.

There was one report filed with Falls police. Officers said the anonymous caller reported a strange hovering object shaped "like an octopus."

In his police report, Officer Jef-

frey Omlor said he responded to the scene and looked up, but only saw stars.

Another caller reported the incident to the Courier Times, sister paper of The Intelligencer. The man said it was a "huge object" floating over the restaurant and "shaped like a square."

On its Web site the Mutual UFO Network reports two sightings of unidentified craft over Pennsylvania. On Saturday, one reported "large rumbling spheres." Another said there was a fast moving light seemed to fly erratically.

These incidents might never be explained. Did E.T. have one too many margaritas?

James McGinnis can be reached at (215) 949-3248 or jmcginnis@phillyburbs.com.

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FROM ALLEN'S PCB

INTELLIGENCER

2/1/5

FREDERICK NEWSPOST
Frederick, Maryland
March 6, 2008

By Ron Cassie

What's it like ... to see a UFO?



Photo by Courtesy Photo

Keith Chester has published a print-on-demand, 320-page book, titled "Strange Company: Military Encounters with UFOs in WWII."

Frederick County native Keith Chester is among the 14 percent of Americans, along with former President Jimmy Carter, who told The Associated Press last year that they've seen an Unidentified Flying Object. Now, after four years of research at the military National Archives in College Park, Chester has published a print-on-demand, 320-page book on the subject titled, "Strange Company: Military Encounters with UFOs in WWII." Available through Anomalist Books, the work contains detailed accounts of unconventional sightings by American and British pilots culled from military and government documents, interviews and news stories.

Marion Lambert remembers the late summer day 42 years ago when her son, Keith, then 9 years old, ran frightened into their house, telling his mother he'd seen a huge, shiny ball in the sky over a nearby tree line.

"Oh, he was scared to death, petrified," Lambert recounted. "He'd seen it with some of his friends and said it was a large, red circle. They said it hung up above the trees and then it just -- went."

"It was about 5:30 or 6 p.m. and the sun had already gone down behind me, behind the mountain," said Keith Chester, who now lives in Harford County with his wife, Nancy, and is researching a second book. "It was completely bright, large, round and red. Immediately, the hair on the back of my neck stood up and I instantly felt fear."

Lambert said about six months before her son's sighting, she and her grandmother, Effie Spurrier, had witnessed something similar from their backyard at the base of the Catocin Mountains in Yellow Springs.

"There was a very bright light, very high in the sky, the whole mountain was lit up," she said, recalling the mid-1950s through the 1960s when they and neighbors would sit outside

in the evening, looking for possible extraterrestrial objects amongst the clouds and stars. "I never did find out what that was. It was hovering over the trees off Bethel Road toward Mountindale, but certainly wasn't a helicopter, I knew what they looked like."

Lambert recalled seeing news reports shortly after her son's sighting, with the government explaining that it had been weather balloons that several local citizens spotted in the Frederick area. She didn't buy it.

"Apparently, there were a bunch of people that saw what my son saw, but weather balloons weren't red," Lambert said.

The national -- and local -- mystery around UFOs and his own sighting sparked a lifelong interest for Chester. But he didn't give the subject a serious look until he heard secondhand that a former Army colonel secretary turned Frederick high school teacher, was telling students in the late 1980s about a earlier military cover-up around a recovered UFO.

By 1999, he began researching his book about the sighting of

unexplained aerial phenomena by American and British fighter and bomber squadrons during World War II. Sometimes called foo fighters (lead singer Dave Grohl of the rock band by the same name is a UFO aficionado), Chester started chronicling accounts from 1931 until the end of the war.

Shortly after in 1947, in what would later become the most famous of all UFO incidents, an episode shook up Roswell, N.M., though it didn't reach the public consciousness until decades later.

Eventually, Chester met a former WWII Army Air Force sergeant turned UFO author and researcher, named Len Stringfield. He told Chester of his sighting flying over the Pacific on the way to Tokyo, days after the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki. Chester said he later found a CIA document, called the Robertson/Durant Report, from 1953 that said while the "foo fighter" sightings were likely misidentified electrical weather phenomenon, such as what's known as St. Elmo's Fire, their exact cause wasn't explainable. This report encouraged Chester to dig deeper.

Over his four years of research, Chester said he made perhaps 150 trips to the National Archives, pulling thousands of boxes and documents. He said that what makes his work unique is it focuses on the WWII-era that has not been comprehensively chronicled previously. His book cites over 500 references to declassified documents, memorandum, notes, newspaper accounts and interviews.

"Strange Company" starts with the re-telling of a "100-foot flaming dirigible" in West Virginia from a

1931 New York Times story and a 1932 New Jersey police report of another odd aircraft. Among research from the war, he found a 1944 report from British pilots of a "airship-like," silver, cigar-shaped object. The crew said they could see lights and windows at the bottom of the massive object 2,000 to 3,000 feet away.

A Feb. 11, 1945, document, classified as secret, from the Air Staff Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, cited worried crew reports of "flight phenomena" from the 415th Night Fighter Squadron, stressing "that something should be done to get to the root of the matter."

A March 1945 military document headlined, "BALLS OF FIRE -- RED," said "Bomber Command crews have for some time been reporting similar phenomena." It suggested flak and German Me-262 rockets as "the most likely explanation," but went to say the whole affair remained something of a mystery.

The issue and reports from U.S. Army Air Force pilots attracted enough attention at the time that in 1945 both Time and Newsweek ran stories of foo fighter sightings, which briefly became a catch-all phrase before terms like "flying saucer" entered the lexicon and the later name, UFO, took hold.

"There was a great deal of disbelief by those who were not witnesses," said Chester, who has been profiled recently in such disparate publications as UFO magazine and The (Baltimore) Sun. He said crews were often ridiculed by intelligence investigators, some of whom accused the men of drinking on the job. This prevailing attitude, he said, "persuaded airmen to remain quiet."

Both Stringfield and Harold Auspurger, the commanding officer of the 415th Night Fighter Squadron, were interviewed extensively by Chester. They maintained that what unnerved them during the war wasn't German-made. Later, they came to believe it was something extraterrestrial. Those interviews, his own sighting and his research has convinced Chester.

"I tried to look at and represent everything I found at face-value," he said. "I certainly can't call all these veterans liars. They were elite, highly-trained observers, and assuming they're telling the truth, I don't think flares, rockets or the moon explain what they said they saw."

"It suggests something otherworldly," Chester concluded. "There is nothing before, (or) during (WWII) or today that's been invented and behaves in the way the things they described did. I personally would be more surprised to discover we are alone in the universe. It puts us in that realm. But there is no absolute proof, it's still speculation. I tried to lay out the facts for people."

UFO sighting 2/6

Someone called the Red Bluff Police Department Sunday night reporting an unidentified flying object that looked like a white Chinese lantern floating across the sky with fire falling to the ground. According to police logs, the person said the UFO was headed toward Corning. The Corning Police Department was notified, but officers were unable to locate the UFO.

Red Bluff, CA
(Tehama Co.)
News
(Cir. 6xW. 8,600)

COLUMBUS DISPATCH
Columbus, Ohio
January 26, 2008
[Credit: Jon Fry]

Fire in the sky: UFO? 2/6 Satellite? It's a flare!

Flames spiraling from the sky over Port Townsend Bay were seen by about 30 people who called 911 just before 3 p.m. Tuesday wondering what the bright pink fiery thing could be.

A UFO? A satellite breaking up and falling on Port Townsend?

Nope!

Just a flare being shot off by the Port of Port Townsend, which was engaged in a training program through the Washington Sea Grant Program, according to Port of Port Townsend moorage clerk Shannon Counsellor.

She said the U.S. Coast Guard

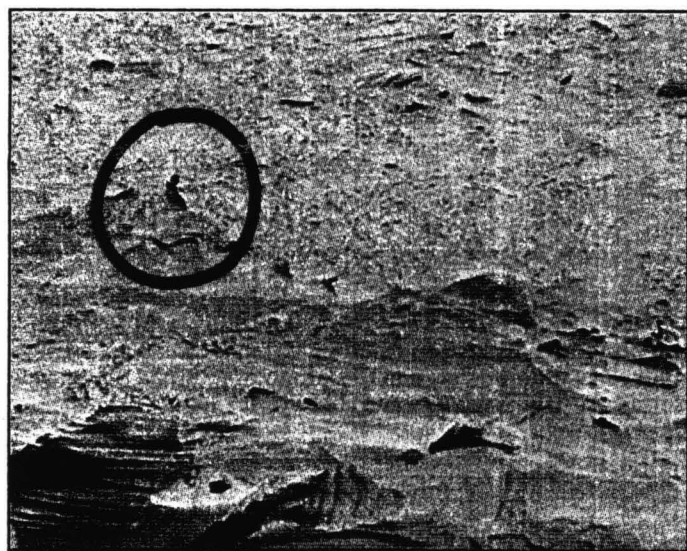
and fire department had been notified.

Although a Jefferson County sheriff's dispatcher said about 30 people had called as of 3 p.m. to report seeing something in the sky, news of the training session had not reached East Jefferson Fire Rescue Chief Chuck Boggs.

"We know nothing about it," Boggs said.

One eyewitness said it did not look like a standard flare.

"It looked far more substantial than a flare," said Jennifer Wilson, who saw the object from Port Townsend High School. "It looked like a big fiery thing."



See that thing sticking up in the upper left of the photo? Some people think it's Bigfoot taking a walk on the surface of Mars.

NASA

UFO? Life on Mars? Call out the debunkers!

Space phenomena can be explained, scientists insist

By Spencer Hunt
and Kevin Mayhood
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

UFOs over Texas? Bigfoot on Mars?

It's been quite a week in space news as the government has been trying to calm a growing Internet buzz over alien phenomena.

On Jan. 8, dozens of wit-

nesses in Stephenville, Texas, reported seeing a large, quiet, low-flying, fast-moving UFO. Then there is the photo taken by one of NASA's Mars rovers and released Jan. 3. Some observers see among the rocks a walking man. Or Bigfoot. Or the Danish statue of the Little Mermaid.

Both reports sparked worldwide interest and speculation.

Ken Cherry, Texas director of the Mutual UFO Network, said he's taken about 200

See **UFO** Page A5

UFO

FROM PAGE A1

reports from individuals who've reported seeing these objects and others.

The most recent sightings are "giving courage for other people to come forward," Cherry said. "People said they were concerned about ridicule in the past."

Adding fuel to the fire are Air Force Reserve officials who first denied having any airplanes over Stephenville on Jan. 8. This week they changed their story and now say F-16 fighter jets were flying over the area in a training exercise that night.

Ken Hicks, an Ohio Uni-

versity professor of astronomy and physics, said the usual suspects — bright Venus low on the horizon or a meteor — don't fit the description of the reported sighting.

"Venus doesn't move, and a meteor is one light with a long tail," Hicks said.

Still, he said its doubtful that anyone saw a spaceship from a distant galaxy.

"If they have the technology to come so far, they wouldn't do something as obvious as that," Hick said. "I'd bet my money on (it being) the military."

Then there is the Mars photo and the possibility of a man, girl, beast or mermaid living on the Red Plan-

et.

"I think it's pretty cool the way it looks, but ... these are rocks, obviously sculpted by wind erosion, similar to what you see in the American Southwest," said Douglas Green, an Ohio University geophysics professor who studies the Martian crust.

Green said this image reminds him of the hoopla over the humanlike face spotted in a Viking I photograph of Mars taken in 1976. Better images later showed the "face" is really a mound with crevices, holes and shadows.

Ralph P. Harvey, a planetary geologist at Case Western Reserve, said in this new

image, size is everything.

"That's a teeny little Bigfoot, probably 3 to 4 inches."

The image, he explained, is a greatly enlarged slice of a panoramic photograph made by the rover Spirit.

Harvey and other scientists said this is an example of pareidolia, when the mind sees patterns where there really are none.

"Others have taken close-up looks at other rocks in the panoramic and found Kermit the Frog, a polar bear, Jabba the Hut and what looks like a turtle that had been going 100 miles per hour and hit the brakes," Harvey said.

shunt@dispatch.com
kmayhood@dispatch.com

Question resurfaces after news reports: Are we alone in universe?

It was never my intent to offend UFO enthusiasts. Or heavy beer drinkers.

But after both inundated me with spirited e-mails and online comments from all over the country, it seems my playfully clustering the two into one sentence clearly didn't sit well with some fellow earthlings.

"Perhaps the writer of the article, Shanna Sissom, is the alien about which she writes. ... She spends the better part of her waking hours in the company of other aliens in their spaceship at 201 East Illinois Avenue," a jester posted on our Web site under the shield of anonymity.

Others weren't so "nice" responding to last week's column when I talked about the fun the Texas town of Stephenville was enjoying after a UFO had been reported by credible witnesses, and a telephone conversation I had with the



Shanna Sissom is city editor of the Reporter-Telegram. She can be reached at shanna@mrt.com

town's newspaper editor, a self-described skeptic, as traditionally most of us in mainstream media are.

But since that time a growing number of reliable witnesses to the unexplained have come forward.

Initially denying any aircraft being in the area during the first sightings on Jan. 8, the military two weeks later said there were ten F-

16s airborne there at the time.

That admission, many believe, brings more credibility to witnesses since some reported seeing fighter jets chasing the large, unknown object.

Indeed this story keeps getting better and better for those who believe and skeptics alike.

There has even been video broadcast after a boy told his grandfather he saw some "funny lightning." That man, 10 days after the first sighting, caught the unexplained on a camcorder, the Stephenville Empire-Tribune reported.

A national media feeding frenzy has long since converged upon the small dairy town and that's a phenomenon in itself. By all reports no one disputed or laughed at those who saw the unexplained. And most everyone — from high school students to nursing home patients —

have celebrated the town's new notoriety with foil hats and alien T-shirts.

But all fun aside, many people in Texas and all over the world remain curious as there are many unanswered questions.

The "Larry King Live" show recently has hosted guests talking about the unexplained. Despite hilarious graphics of flying saucers over cows seen between breaks, information presented on the shows were most thought-provoking as questions were posed.

Is the military protecting top-secret operations in the interest of national security?

Or covering up information it has known since 1947 Roswell?

Are we alone in this universe?

Those are indeed interesting and legitimate questions to ponder, both for those who drink beer and those who do not.

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Scientists claim contact with ET life is imminent

■ Researchers expect to pick up signal sometime between 2015, 2025

By Carrie Peyton Dahlberg
SACRAMENTO BEE

The search for extraterrestrial intelligence is gaining speed so quickly that we could soon detect radio signals from other sentient species, an astronomer who plays a key role in the hunt said.

"This isn't going to take centuries. It's going to happen within a generation" if intelligent life is as abundant as many scientists speculate, said Seth Shostak, a senior astronomer with the SETI Institute.

In a breezy talk punctuated with a few graphs and a lot of shots of Hollywood aliens, Shostak ran through the possibilities for a Carmichael, Calif., audience gathered to celebrate "Darwin Day."

An almost unimaginable number of stars are visible to our telescopes — think of a 1 with 22 zeros after it. Many of those stars, perhaps most, are orbited by planets, and "planets are kind of like kittens. You don't just have one or two," Shostak said.

In that panoply of planets, he said, it seems likely that some harbor intelligent life, although guesses about how many range from 10,000 to 1 million or more.

The SETI Institute has established a simple criterion for evaluating whatever intelligence may be out there.

"If you can build a radio transmitter, you're intelligent," Shostak said, suggesting — to some nervous laughter — that his listeners might consider the same guideline for sizing up one another.

Founded in 1984, scraping by on donations and using time on other people's telescopes, the SETI Institute sorts through the natural radio noise of the universe, seeking narrow-band sig-

nals produced only by transmitters.

It is getting a huge boost this year, as the first phase of radio dishes for the Allen Telescope Array undergoes final testing at the Hat Creek Radio Observatory near Lassen National Park.

Along with the vast improvement in listening capability, SETI also is benefiting from faster computer processing power, allowing the speed of its search to double roughly every 18 months.

At that rate, we ought to be able to analyze enough of the sky to pick up a signal sometime between 2015 and 2025 if intelligent life forms are plentiful, Shostak said.

Elsewhere, in response to criticism that SETI should consider other search techniques less focused on how humans communicate, he has suggested that if nothing is found by 2028, it could be time to try new strategies.

Shostak speculated that any intelligence we do locate will be too far away to hurt us and might be machine-based.

The search for life beyond our planet "has everything to do" with evolution, he said, fielding a question about one of the central themes of the Darwin Day celebration of science and scientific inquiry.

"I don't imagine that you're going to get thinking entities without Darwinian evolution," Shostak said.

He spoke in connection with the 11th annual celebration of Darwin Day, one of hundreds of events held around the country to honor both science in general and Charles Darwin, famed naturalist who assembled evidence of natural selection.

Contact Carrie Peyton Dahlberg at cpeytondahlberg@sacbee.com

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The truth is out: X-Files go public

In a bid to end speculation, the MoD is set to release top-secret papers on the thousands of UFO sightings it has investigated over the last 30 years

by Mark Townsend

Defence Correspondent

WITHOUT WARNING, the orange UFO swooped toward them. The crew of the RAF Vulcan bomber banked hard and radioed they were being chased across the Atlantic by a large mysterious object. The incident was classified as a UFO sighting and the details were immediately locked away.

Now, 30 years later, the extraordinary encounter is among thousands of previously secret cases contained in the government's 'X-Files' that officials are to release in their entirety.

The cases, many from a little-known defence intelligence branch tasked with investigating UFO claims, will be published by the Ministry of Defence to counter what officials say is 'the maze of rumour and frequently ill-informed speculation' surrounding Whitehall and its alleged involvement with Unidentified Flying Objects.

The public opening of the MoD archive will expose the once highly classified work of the intelligence branch DI55, whose mission was to investigate UFO reports and whose existence was denied by the government until recently. Reports into about 7,000 UFO sightings investigated by defence officials – every single claim lodged over the past 30 years – are included in the files, whose staged release will begin in spring.

The decision to release Whitehall's full back catalogue of UFO investigations was taken last month after the Directorate of Air Space Policy, the government

agency responsible for filtering sensitive reports, gave its permission to publish the biggest single release of documents in MoD history. Now the government fears a repeat of the unprecedented demand and the website crash experienced by the French national space agency in March when it released its own UFO files. Government IT experts are believed to have drawn up contingency plans to avoid a repeat scenario.

Among the first cases will be the official files into the famous Rendlesham incident, dubbed 'Britain's Roswell' after the US incident when a flying saucer is said to have crash-landed in the New Mexico desert 60 years ago. On a foggy night in 1980, several witnesses reported a UFO apparently landing in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk. Statements claimed the craft was covered in markings similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics and aliens emerged from it. Although a man later confessed to having staged the incident as a hoax, the files will clear up continuing speculation as to whether radiation was detected at the site.

Another case reported to the intelligence branch DI55 – Britain's version of the 'Men In Black' – chronicles a series of reports sent to RAF Scampton, Lincolnshire, by the crew of a Vulcan bomber on exercise over the Bay of Biscay early on 26 May 1977. According to documents seen by *The Observer*, five crewmen, includ-

ing the captain, co-pilot and navigators, watched 'an object' approach their aircraft at 43,000ft above the Atlantic. The mysterious craft then appeared to turn and follow their precise course from a distance of four miles.

Initially, the crew said the object resembled landing lights 'with a long pencil beam of light ahead' but as it turned towards them the lights suddenly went out leaving a diffuse orange glow with a bright fluorescent green spot in its bottom right-hand corner. Then, according to signals sent back to Scampton, the crew noted a mystery object 'leaving from the middle of the glow on a westerly track... climbing at very high speed at an angle of 45 degrees'.

The Vulcan's navigator recorded interference on his radar screen from the direction of the UFO which continued for 45 minutes as the plane headed back to Britain. The camera film from the aircraft's radar was examined by RAF intelligence. The UFO was captured as 'an elongated shadow'. An intelligence report sent to the MoD the same day says the crew 'were unable to offer a logical explanation for the sighting'.

Although hailed as the complete disclosure of the UK's UFO files, questions are likely to remain over whether all available information will be made public. Despite the Vulcan sighting being investigated by DI55, no details remain in the file indicating what was found or what became of the radar film.

The disclosures



A UFO image over Cranbrook, Kent.

UFO CLAIMS

1980 Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk. US servicemen claim to have seen an alien craft and its landing site.

1984 Minsk, USSR. Aeroflot pilots say they are pursued by a glowing shape.

1989 Bonnybridge, Scotland. Fire crew report objects rushing towards them before veering away at the last moment.

1990 Brussels, Belgium. Two F-16 fighter pilots recount being engaged in 75-minute mid-air chase with a UFO.

are more likely, claim some experts, to lend credence to the theory that such UFO incidents were, rather than alien visitations, military activities such as missile launches, testing of prototype aircraft and other activities during the Cold War.

David Clarke, a lecturer in journalism at Sheffield Hallam University and author of *Flying Saucers: A Social History of UFOlogy*, said: 'Something was definitely going on, but really these files

show that the government did not know either. This release will be a source of disappointment or vindication for some, and embarrassment for others.'

UFO researcher Joe McGonagle said: 'There will always be a hard core who believe these files were prepared for release and that there is a secret department within the military who has a separate stash of files that have not been disclosed.'

UFOs remain one of the most popular subjects for Freedom of Information requests and the release is certain to generate a massive response from the public when the files are placed in the National Archives. Clarke, who has lodged hundreds of FoI requests, recently discovered that the government was considering destroying the 24 files created by DI55 because they were contaminated by asbestos. Not only were the UFO records polluted, but a total of 63,000 files estimated at six to 12 million pages – most of them classified as secret – were facing the same fate.

Having admitted the existence of the problem to Clarke, the MoD instigated a £3m project to scan the files before they were destroyed. Scanning of the 24 contaminated UFO files owned by DI55 was completed last year, although it is understood that names of officials in the reports will be removed.

Although the government remains reticent to discuss its intelligence work on UFOs, it is known that DI55 has been hot on the trail of flying saucers since the Sixties. Experts admit that they work closely with the security services MI5 and MI6 and GCHQ to collect and assess evidence of potential threats to Britain.

The decision by the UK to open its files could lead to the US government following suit. A group of former pilots and government officials recently urged the Pentagon to reopen investigations into claims of UFO sightings.



Will MoD files solve spaceman mystery?

Carlisle man hopes documents will explain photograph

BY DAVE GUDGEON

A PENSIONER is hoping that unseen files being released this year may solve one of the great Cumbrian mysteries - the spaceman on the Solway.

Jim Templeton's photograph, which showed the mystery "spaceman" behind his daughter, was taken on Burgh Marsh in 1964 and has been seen around the world.

No-one has yet come up with an explanation for it but the Ministry of Defence is just about to reveal details of files which chronicle UFO (unidentified flying object) activity over Britain.

And Jim, who is 87 and lives in Coledale Meadows, Carlisle, believes they may contain some answers to a mystery that has puzzled him for half his life.

He said: "It would be absolutely amazing if there was something in the files about the Solway spaceman. It is incredible but I still receive letters about it now.

"I have no explanation for the image but what I can say is that it is not a fake. The film was sent away for processing and came back like that.

STRANGE

What is even more strange is that shortly afterwards the launch of the Blue Streak rocket at a base in Australia was delayed because two similar spacemen were spotted on monitors there.

"Apparently they searched the area at the time but could find nothing. They said the delay in the launch was down to a technical hitch and it went ahead later. The interesting thing, of course, is that the Blue Streak was developed at Spadeadam to the east of Brampton. I was told about this by someone who worked there at the time."

Every year around 100 people contact the Ministry of Defence to report sightings of unidentified flying objects, and they are the subject of scores of Freedom of Information Act requests.

The files, which are more than 25 years old and many of them handwritten, are being processed into an electronic format and will be released this year.

An MOD spokesman explained they regularly releases files through Freedom of Information and that it is policy to release old files.

They said that, contrary to reports, the MOD does not investigate UFOs and no UFO branch exists. They only investigate perceived military threats to UK security.



Lost in space: Jim Templeton's famous spaceman picture of his daughter taken on Burgh Marsh in 1964



Snap: Jim Templeton, of Coledale Meadows, Carlisle



That was then: Jim Templeton, pictured in 1964. His famous photo of that year has been seen around the world and no one has been able to explain it

BBC News (Online)
March 4, 2008

MoD releases secret files on UFOs

Confidential Ministry of Defence
files on Unidentified Flying
Objects are set to be made public



Bonnybridge has become famous as a hotbed of UFO activity

Hundreds of documented sightings of UFOs across the UK will be released by the MoD to the National Archive in the coming weeks.

Detailed accounts of sightings in the Bonnybridge area are expected to be among the files.

The Stirlingshire town became famous in the 1990s after dozens of locals reported objects in the sky.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said the secret files date back more than 10 years.

He said: "The files contain information about UFO sightings by members of the public and include photographs that people have taken or drawings they have done.

"There is no scientific data included in the files just the public reports which may also include a comment from nearby RAF bases saying whether there was flight activity when the sightings took place."

Earlier files released by the MoD have concluded that UFO sightings could be attributed to natural phenomena in the atmosphere.

'Ongoing issue'

Bonnybridge councillor Billy Buchanan, who said he had seen UFOs on many occasions, said the release of the files was good news.

He said: "The more information that comes out about the sightings the more it gives credibility to all those, including myself, who have been ridiculed by speaking out.

"On a number of occasions I have seen something that cannot be rationally defined.

"It's an ongoing issue for Bonnybridge with many of the area's elderly people getting concerned when they cannot explain something they've seen in the sky."

Bedfordshire Luton Herald & Post
Luton, Bedfordshire, England
March 13, 2008

By Dave Burke

Plenty more UFO sightings to report in Luton area

Newsdesk inundated with
responses

In the varied world of local newspapers, we find that there are few things that get people talking quite as much as possible "UFO" sightings.

Since last week's article about mystery lights in the skies over Luton and Houghton Regis, this newsdesk has been inundated with readers sharing their own experiences.

From witnesses, sceptics and self-professed UFO fanatics, here is a selection of the responses....

Eaton Bray lights:

Nemide Ibrahim got in touch over the weekend saying she spotted something unusual in the air as she drove out of Eaton Bray on Saturday.

She was with her partner heading in the direction of Mead Open Farm when two lights appeared in the sky shortly after 7pm.

Nemide recalled: "As we were driving out of Eaton Bray we noticed some very strange bright red lights hovering very low in the sky.

"There were distinctively two red lights together. One was a constant red light, while the other directly next to it flashed continuously red."

Nemide said that at first she thought it could have been an aeroplane or a helicopter, and she added: "We cannot be 100 per cent sure of what it actually was, but it definitely did not have any distinctive markings, sounds, shape or any recognisable features that you would expect to see on any known aircraft.

"There was no shape of a plane or helicopter to be made out, just the two red lights together."

She said the mysterious lights vanished from sight before reappearing and heading in the direction of Edlesborough and Eaton Bray.

Craning necks in Leagrave:

But reader Laura Field helpfully pointed out that many people craning their necks to spot a spacecraft in the Leagrave area could actually just be spotting a crane.

After seeing last week's front page she said: "There's been a lot of talk

about UFOs in the Leagrave area as well over the past few weeks, however I'm pretty sure what the cause of it all is.

"There is a massive tower crane on the old Elm Trees site in Grange Avenue, it's a bright red light and can be seen for miles around.

"You can't see any part of the crane when it's dark, so it could easily be mistaken for something else.

"My other half was out walking our dog late one night last week and it freaked him out until he realised what it was the next morning."

But Dave Fullbrook, who featured on last week's front page article, said yesterday that the lights he spotted above the Luton & Dunstable Hospital had nothing to do with the crane.

He said: "I saw that (the crane), but I saw this other red thing further up, it was further up in the air than the crane. There were two red things up in the air that night."

And he added that although he has kept an eye out over the past week, he hasn't seen anything since.

"I haven't seen ET flying across just yet," he joked.

Red light in Houghton:

Also contacting the newsdesk was Lorraine Saunders, who spotted a red light in the sky above Houghton Regis.

But she is confident that there was a more rational information.

She told us: "It passed directly in front of me as I approached the Co-Op in Houghton and appeared to hang in the air, but it acted as a flare would act and after a short while fell downward and then was gone.

"I don't know where it came from, but it most definitely was not alien."

Aliens set to be unveiled in five years?

Thanks to the wonders of the internet, emails have also been arriving from all over the world.

One carried a report claiming that the United Nations has set up a secret UFO working group, and that extraterrestrials are set to show up in 2013.

It concluded: "Overall, it appears that a countdown is underway to official disclosure around 2013, and the nation states and the UN are being briefed.

"The acclimation process will accelerate over the next five years as UFO sightings increase around the globe, forcing governments to make public policy statements on UFOs and extraterrestrial life.

"Is this the start, the truth is finally stepping onto the world stage? Time will tell."



goldcoast.com.au (Online)
The Gold Coast Bulletin
Queensland, Australia
March 7, 2008

By Andrew MacDonald

Experts baffled by orange UFO

WHAT glows orange, scours the skyline and leaves a black plume of smoke?

Annette Van Zetten is not exactly sure what she saw shooting across the Tweed skyline on Wednesday evening, but it certainly grabbed her attention as well as the police and rescue authorities.

The Kingscliff woman was home entertaining friends about 5.30pm when she saw a bright orange object, seemingly not far from her Pacific Street home.

Fearing a plane was in trouble, Mrs Van Zetten's friend, Greg Swaney, called police, who immediately began searching the area with the aid of a crew from the RACQ CareFlight helicopter.

Mrs Van Zetten said she was sitting on her back deck when she spotted the unidentified flying object.

"It just sort of looked like an orange glow," she said. "The shape of it was like a flying saucer."

"It didn't look like a plane. It was definitely going down and then we saw black smoke so that's when we thought perhaps a plane was on fire."

Ms Van Zetten said it was hard to judge exactly how large or how far away the object was.

"We don't know how big it was. We thought maybe it was about 10km (away), maybe around Cabarita. It was hard to tell."

As airfields and airports in the region began accounting for their aircraft on Wednesday night, police received reports of further sightings of the orange glow.

With no reports of missing aircraft, the helicopter search was called off after about half an hour.

Police from Kingscliff, Tweed Heads, Murwillumbah and Byron Bay continued looking for any sign of the object before the search was called off.

Sergeant Rob Taylor of Tweed Heads police said it was likely an object had streaked across the sky on Wednesday. "There is some credibility given that a few people have reported seeing something," he

said. He said police were fairly confident the object was not a plane but that it may have been a meteor.

"We've got no craters or anything like that," he said.

Byron Bay police conducted an early morning search of bushland near the beach yesterday morning, with no results.

Sydney Observatory astronomy educator Mel Hulbert said although there was no record of major meteor activity on Wednesday night, the light in the sky over Kingscliff was likely to have been caused by a type of meteor known as a bolide.

NORTHAMPTON Chronicle & ECHO

NORTHAMPTON CHRONICLE & ECHO
Northampton, England
February 11, 2008

Housewife: I saw UFO out of bedroom window

Bright lights which interrupted a quiet night in have convinced a Northampton housewife that they could have been a UFO.

Yvonne Underwood, 51, contacted the Chronicle & Echo after bright lights flashed outside her Turnberry Lane bedroom in Collingtree Park, Northampton on the evening of Sunday, February 3.

She said: "My husband and I had gone to bed to watch Calendar Girls and then at about 9.30pm I saw these bright lights outside my window which looks directly on to the golf course."

"I jumped to the window to look out but they had gone. The strangest thing was there was no noise at all, so it couldn't have been a plane or a helicopter."

She said: "I thought I should let somebody know. I've never seen anything like that before, absolutely not. We regularly get police helicopters overhead but this was nothing like that."

"I was really frightened. When I went to the balcony my hands were shaking."

Mrs Underwood was so shocked by her experience that she even asked a policeman if he knew anything about it in Tesco the following day.

She added: "I just saw this policeman and thought I should ask if there had been any other sightings. I think he just thought I was a nutter or something."

Recently released Ministry of Defence Documents have revealed 27 UFO sightings in the county during the last decade, but an MOD spokeswoman said there had been no other reports of sightings in recent months.

LOCAL LONDON

LOCAL LONDON (Online)
March 3, 2008

WOODFORD GREEN: UFO spotter claims cover-up

A man who spotted a UFO in the skies above Woodford Green believes there is a conspiracy to cover up "something strange" about Woodford.

The Ministry of Defence has appealed for calm after sightings over Woodford Green last weekend.

Two residents have contacted the Guardian saying they saw a strange object flying through the sky above the Winston Churchill statue.

Construction worker Darrell Greenway, 19, told the Guardian he believes it could indicate that an alien invasion is about to happen.

A government spokeswoman said residents should not be alarmed by the sighting, but Mr Greenway is convinced that what he saw was a hostile alien craft.

He said: "I was walking down the road with my friend by the Cricketers Pub on the High Road, it was a really sunny day."

"Someone shouted oh my God what's that? I looked up and there was this white-grey dish-like thing up in the sky."

"It wasn't a plane because it didn't have any fuel coming from it."

"It was going really fast, and it was quite low, about the height of Canary Wharf."

He added: "I think it was aliens. I know people who have also seen strange things in sky - there's something secretly going on with Woodford."

But the MoD dismissed the claims.

Spokeswoman Susan Coulthard said: "It's certainly common that people see something they don't understand."

She added: "we are scanning the skies all the time for security reasons, so the chances of a member of the public seeing something that we don't know about are remote."

"Unless there is evidence of a potential threat, there is no attempt to identify the nature of each sighting reported."

Ms Coulthard said the ministry had not received any reports of sightings in Redbridge.

However Mr Greenway disagrees.

"They are trying to cover it up" he said.

La Estrella

LA ESTRELLA
Valparaíso, Chile
February 9, 2008

By JUAN CARLOS ASTUYA

UFO SIGHTING OVER A POPULOUS VALPARAISO HILL CAUSED AN IMPACT

The images were videotaped by one of the main witnesses to the event



Many locals were witnesses to the impressive sighting in broad daylight of a UFO which was very bright and performed amazing movements for some 5 minutes.

The event was videotaped by a neighbor, and the images were given to the AION group whose experts, aside from confirming that it was not a hoax, initiated the investigations to establish the origin of the strange and unusual [event].

This case will even be presented at the Ufology meeting to be held next week in Viña del Mar, especially because of the sharpness of the images.

It was established that the event happened over the Playa Ancha hill, almost at noon. An intense and very bright light was seen. After remaining in that spot for a few minutes, it made strange up and down motions. After about 5 minutes, it was lost in the sky.

The incident was taped with his videocamera by J.O.F., who is a communications professional. In part of his report the main witness said that at first he thought it could be the light of a car traveling in part of the hill. But the movement called his attention. AION member Marcelo Moya said that "this audiovisual tape is for me one of the most interesting that happened in this area and it adds to the long list of sightings that occurred lately."

He added that "this is a very interesting case because it is very similar to an event that happened in Brazil on January 2, 1998, when a small light flew over the houses, a case that has not been explained to this date".

[UFONS translation provided by Jane Thomas Guma]

2 La Estrella

A FONDO

sábado 9 de febrero de 2008

Sorprendente episodio despertó gran interés en expertos ufólogos

Impactante avistamiento de un ovni sobre populoso cerro de Valparaíso

Imágenes fueron grabadas con una videocámara por uno de los principales testigos del hecho

JUAN CARLOS ASTUYA

Numerosos porteños, a plena luz del día, fueron testigos del impactante avistamiento de un objeto volador no identificado (ovni) el que, durante unos 5 minutos, brilló con una potente luz e hizo sorprendente movimientos.

El hecho fue captado por un vecino con su cámara video grabadora, cuyas imágenes fueron entregadas a la agrupación AION, cuyos especialistas, junto con confirmar que no se trataba de un truco, iniciaron las investigaciones para establecer el origen del extraño e inusual.

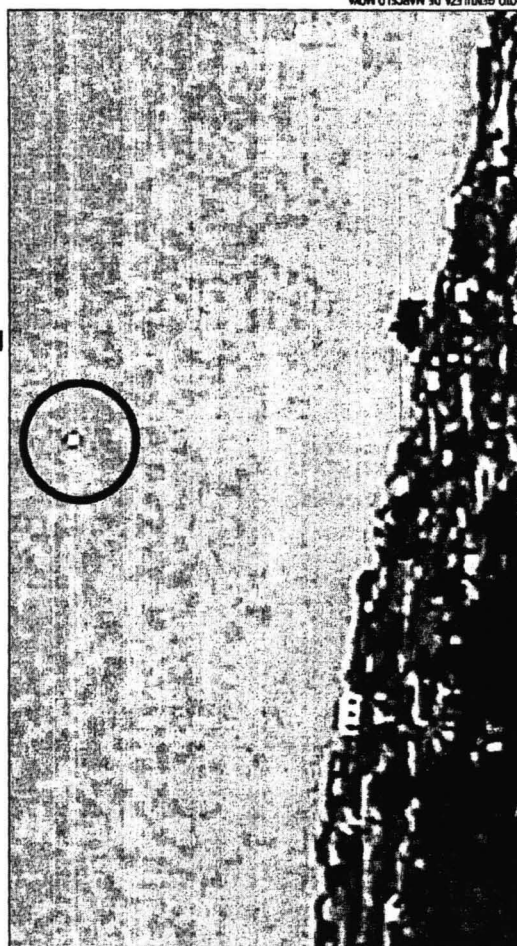
Incluso, este caso, especialmente por la nitidez de sus imágenes, será presentado en el encuentro de ufología que se

efectuará la próxima semana en Viña del Mar.

Según se estableció, el episodio ocurrió sobre el cerro Playa Ancha, casi justo al mediodía. En el cielo fue avistada una poderosa luz, muy brillante. Luego de permanecer por algunos minutos en su posición, hizo extraños movimientos de ascenso y descenso. Al cabo de unos 5 minutos, se perdió en el firmamento.

El suceso fue grabado con su cámara por J.O.F., un profesional del área de las comunicaciones. El principal testigo en parte de su testimonio, informó que, en un comienzo, pensó que podrían ser las luces de un automóvil que recorría parte del cerro. Pero le llamó la atención el movimiento.

El miembro de AION, Marcelo Moya, destacó que "este



Muchos vecinos de Playa Ancha fueron testigos del impactante avistamiento del extraño fenómeno ocurrido a plena luz del día.

la larga lista de avistamientos que han ocurrido en estas últimas fechas".

Añadió que el mismo "este

1998, en donde una luz pequeña voló sobre las casas, caso que hasta el día de hoy sigue sin explicación alguna".

CANNOCK & RUGELEY MERCURY
(SERIES)

Circulation ('000): 44

Readership ('000): 73

Display Rate (£/sqcm): £1.68

17 JAN 2008

CANNOCK & RUGELEY MERCURY
Tamworth, Staffordshire, England
January 17, 2008

UFO shock for mum and son out driving

IS THE truth out there? An Etching Hill mother and son are searching for answers - after spotting a UFO whilst out driving.

Linda Chrisostomou and her 11-year-old son say they saw a fast moving 'long thin rectangle' in the skies on January 9.

"I was driving and we were coming down Tixal Road, on the outskirts of Stafford," she told the *Mercury* this week.

"It was definitely not an aeroplane. It was bigger than what an aeroplane is." She added: "It was covered in lights and was moving very fast, and just disappeared into the distance.

"I was shocked; absolutely gobsmacked. I could not believe it.

"It was so fast I did not have chance to stop the car to get out and look."

Her son Andreas added: "It was an unlikely event and I had no idea what was going to happen.

"I would like people to look out for this mysterious flying thing so we could find out the question everyone wants to know - do aliens exist?"

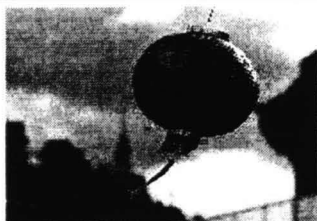
■ Did you see the mysterious UFO? If so contact us at mercury.editorial@cintamworth.co.uk

WORKSOP GUARDIAN
Worksop, Notts, England
January 4, 2008

By Jen Foster

'UFOs' thought to be Chinese lanterns

Guardian bombarded with explanations of unexplained



Chinese lanterns like this are thought to be at the centre of Worksop's New Year's Eve 'UFO' sightings

THE Guardian has been bombarded with emails and telephone calls offering to explain the New Year's Eve 'alien invasion'.

Strange lights seen hovering over Worksop on New Year's Eve are now thought to be an array of Chinese Lanterns released to celebrate 2008.

And we want to know if you know which unsuspecting revellers have unwittingly caused such a stir in the town.

As the champagne corks popped to welcome in the new year the unexplained lights are reported to have been hovering over Worksop skies at about 12.15am.

Jan and John Harvey, of Carlton Road, were getting ready for bed when they looked out the window

and saw something they couldn't explain.

"At first my husband thought I was seeing things. I said it wasn't fireworks or a police helicopter. They were these strange lights drifting along like a helium balloon. They were in a line like pearls lined up in a necklace," said Jan.

"There were eight or nine red and white lights. They weren't making any noise and they just disappeared without coming over the houses."

Not convinced that these lights were from alien spaceships, the couple are thinking hard about a more logical explanation:

"We think it was probably something like hot air balloons or hang-gliders. Though our friends all reply with the same answer - 'You obviously had had far too much to drink'. We had not even started then."

Another couple in Gateford told the Guardian about a similar sighting at the same time on the same night.

COUNTRYSIDE LA VIE [Magazine]
Leicestershire/Rutland, England
December 2008

COUNTRYSIDE LA VIE
(LEICESTERSHIRE/RUTLAND)

Circulation ('000): 10

Readership ('000): 70

Display Rate (£/sqcm): £2.06



An Artificial Cloud The perfect cloak for a UFO?

Since the earliest of times we have looked up to the sky wondering if someone from above is watching us. There has always been strange and unexplained phenomena, which have led ancient man to believe that the heaven was the dwelling place of the Gods. Even today, with all our technological advancements, there are still some unexplained events that are happening above our heads. In 1874, on July 28, near a town called Mill Run in Pennsylvania something strange occurred which today is still a mystery. Hundreds of people watched two clouds, one approaching from the southwest and one from the northeast collide. This is very strange behaviour and does not follow the law of physics. Clouds are pushed along by the wind and, therefore, follow one direction. However, in this case the two clouds were heading straight for each other. The huge clouds were black and tinged with a reddish hue. It was reported by the scared people that it seemed that the clouds were engaged in battle. Intense flashes of light were cast at each other, and when they finally collided, the people were convinced it was the end of the world. The ground shook and the heavens exploded with unbelievable and terrifying lights. The heaviest downpour of rain then followed. Around 150 people and a countless number of livestock died. Bridges, roads and houses were also destroyed and the nearby valley flooded in minutes. What happened that day in Pennsylvania? Were the clouds actually space ships fighting each other? In 1975, another interesting story about an abnormal cloud occurred in New York. A science teacher called Tom D'Ercoloe was going to his car. There, low in the sky hovering above his house was a small dark cloud. "The cloud seemed to move and slightly enlarge as I watched it. This basket-ball cloud floated back and forth across the peak of the roof changing in shape from a small globular mass to a larger avoid and finally becoming an abstract, multicurved, vapourous 'something'. It finally measured about 6 feet in height and one and a half feet in width", said the science teacher. Puzzled, he continued

to watch the cloud when something really strange happened. The cloud suddenly appeared to inhale, form pursed lips and directed a stream of water at him, soaking both him and the car. The water stopped and the cloud disappeared some minutes later. Cigar shaped clouds are often associated with UFO sightings. In 1954 an interesting event took place when France experienced a UFO wave. Witnesses, including police officers and an army engineer saw an unbelievable object over the town of Vernon. It was described as a huge vertical cigar about 300 feet long. One witness explained, "Suddenly from the bottom of the cigar came an object like an horizontal disc which dropped at first in free fall, then slowed, then swayed and dived horizontally across the river toward me, becoming very luminous". Thereafter, the object vanished in the southwest. Now comes the interesting part. According to the witnesses, similar looking discs dropped out of the cigar over the next forty-five minutes. Could this cigar shaped object be a mothership cloaked in cloud. Another cigar shaped sighting happened in Cressy, Tasmania on October 4 in 1960 during a rainstorm. Apparently the object emerged from a cloud. One of the witnesses was Reverend Lionel Browning, who estimated the object to be 300 feet off the ground and approximately 4 miles away. From out of the cloud five or six disc shaped objects about 30 feet in diameter emerged. They were flying like "flat stones skipping along the water" behind the cigar object. "After several seconds, the ship accompanied by the saucers, reversed the way it came. It was gone from sight in 30 seconds... It appears the ship sailed on for some seconds unaware that it had shed its protection. Possible when this was discovered, the saucers were called to the mothership. The object then moved back into cover of the rain storm", said Reverend Browning. There are many examples of how clouds behave mysteriously and in spectacular ways. If UFOs are cloaked, an artificial cloud would be the perfect shield.

"I'm not normally one to believe in these things but I am one hundred per cent definite about what I saw that night," she said.

They first noticed something strange in the air when their two cats started behaving strangely.

"The cats were hiding behind the sofa and seemed really spooked. At

midnight when I saw some lights going off outside I thought they were just fireworks."

"I saw about eight lights going over the rugby club. It was like they were all trying to get in a line. They started as a kind of red light and changed to an amber glow. They began moving quite slowly and speeded up. After about 15 minutes they vanished."



THE NATIONAL LEDGER

The National Ledger
Apache Junction AZ
March 16, 2008

By Lynda Johnson

Video Shows Creepy Gnome: Bigfoot Like Sighting Terrifies Town

It's not exactly Bigfoot, but it is a blurry sighting and video many believe that it might just be an urban legend. Still, according to reports from the area, creepy little gnome has taken to the streets of a small Argentine town has locals terrified and more than a bit freaked out. Is it a hoax and if it not what exactly is the little creature? The Sun UK report it as a midget which wears a pointy hat and has a distinctive sideways walk and it was caught on video last week by a terrified group of youngsters.



Video Shows Creepy Gnome: Bigfoot Like Sighting Terrifies Town (Sun UK)

Teenager Jose Alvarez — who filmed the gnome — yesterday told national newspaper El Tribuno that they caught the creature while larking about in their hometown of General Guemes, in the province of Salta, Argentina.

Says Alvarez, who caught the odd creature with its distinctive sideways

walk on video, said it was around 1:00 a.m. in the morning when they suddenly heard a noise like someone throwing stones. The crowd was a bit stunned and fortunately it was caught on tape.

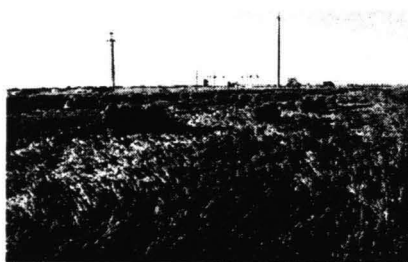
"We looked to one side and saw that the grass was moving. To begin with, we thought it was a dog, but when we saw this gnome-like figure begin to emerge we were really afraid." Added Alvarez, "This is no joke. We are still afraid to go out - just like everyone else in the neighborhood now. "One of my friends was so scared after seeing that thing that we had to take him to the hospital."

azcentral.com

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC (Online)
Phoenix, AZ
March 19, 2008

By Edythe Jensen

UFO buff explores Chandler 'crop circles'



Crop circle formation in a field on the southeastern corner of Gilbert and Ocotillo Roads March 25, 2007.

A year after he stumbled on what he said were mysterious "crop circles" in a south Chandler field, resident Michael Polani said he's still trying to call attention to them.

Eleven people showed up at the Basha Library Tuesday night to hear what Polani had to say about the damaged sorghum stalks and odd patterns he photographed at Gilbert and Ocotillo roads last March 25.

"We're seen by our family and friends as 'a little bit different,' " he told the audience, many who nodded their heads affirmatively. "But I've seen enough to say, yeah, we need to listen to this."

Polani said he regrets not being able to photograph the Chandler phenomenon from the air; the crop was harvested hours after he spotted it.

He was able to walk into the field and capture patterns of downed stalks pointing in different directions among clusters of stiff, erect plants. And he

picked up a few of the damaged stalks which appeared to be burned and bent in different places.

"Someone simply stomping on it couldn't do this," he said.

Known as geometric shapes that mysteriously appear in farm fields, crop circles have been a topic of interest by those who tie them to paranormal forces and unidentified flying objects. Polani, who moved to Chandler from San Francisco five years ago, said he has participated in California UFO expositions.

He described most crop circles as having intricate geometric, language or musical significance and speculated that whoever or whatever is creating them is trying to send a message to humans on earth to take care of the environment. Worldwide, the majority occur in Great Britain and most are near sacred ancient sites. The Chandler field's "sacred site" is an irrigation canal once used by prehistoric Hohokam people, Polani said.

If the Chandler patterns appear a little crude, he had an explanation. The forces that created them, "are hoping to make it to the UK (United Kingdom) one day, but until then, they're practicing in Chandler," Polani said.

Ed Hermes, spokesman for the Arizona Department of Agriculture, said no Arizona farmers have ever reported mysterious crop circles in their fields, including the one in Chandler.

A likely explanation for what Polani saw is a common occurrence in heavily fertilized grain crops, Hermes said. When they're exposed to wind, the top-heavy engorged stalks bend and fall. The standing stalks simply hadn't reached the same growth stage, Hermes said.

Property records show the Chandler field is owned by a California partnership. Polani said he unsuccessfully tried to contact the farmer.

Charleston Daily Mail

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL
Charleston, WV
March 17, 2008

Location revealed for Sasquatch search

Next month's hunt for Sasquatch in West Virginia will center around the Greenbrier River region.

The Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization Founder and Director Mathew Moneymaker recently released new details about the April 10-13 hunt.

Earlier, the group had declined to release the location of the expedition, fearing that curiosity seekers would compromise the results.

Retired Army Sgt. Stephen Willis, a native of Webster County, will lead the expedition. It will include at least 18 BFRO members.

More than 50 West Virginia sightings are documented on the group's Web site. The organization estimates there are up to 6,000 such creatures living in the U.S. and Canada.

But skeptics cite the lack of physical evidence.

HAWKE'S BAY TODAY
Hastings, New Zealand
January 5, 2008

By Doug Laing

Birdman says moa surviving in the Bay

AS MANY as a dozen moa could be fossicking in remote bush in northernmost Hawke's Bay, according to Australian "hidden animal" hunters.

Next month they plan to resume the search - confident it's only a matter of time before a colony is found.

The hopes are held by New South Wales cryptozoologist Rex Gilroy, who says hard-track evidence he and wife Heather found in the Urewera Ranges in November is a sign of the existence of the presumed-extinct *anomalopteryx didiformis*, otherwise known as the little scrub moa.

The evidence of a track comes six years after the couple found about 35 ground prints they believe to have come from a colony of up to 12 of the moa.

Speaking from the couple's Australasian Cryptozoological Research Centre in Katoomba, Mr Gilroy told Hawke's Bay Today the evidence is enough to make them return at the end of February to search for the one piece of evidence

he's wanted for as much as 50 years to prove moa are still alive.

The latest find includes a track and what appeared to have been a recently-used nest in big, dead kauri. Moa had possibly nested there, and moa may have come out at night to move across a small isolated gully and onto a ridge in the area. Mr Gilroy has plaster casts of the tracks. "The location is in pretty remote

country, we need to have more time to investigate, and if I can get something on film, that would be tremendous."

He's not yet identifying the site, and, conceding only that the couple have entered the Ureweras from the Hawke's Bay side, says he doesn't want a lot of noise in the hunt for the species, which stood up to 1.3m.

Previous revelations of hidden-animal kind had sparked invasions of media with cameras, bright lights and helicopters, and gleeful claims that it was all for nothing after a month of racket, which was hardly likely to encourage the big birds to make their long-awaited debut in public.

"I've devoted my whole life to the research of these creatures," said 64-year-old Mr Gilroy.

"And the only way to find them is to go into the environment, just one, two or three people, and wait quietly."

"You've got to be silent in the bush if you're going to see anything," he said.

"New Zealand is my favourite place, there is some pretty inaccessible terrain."

He said it was possible that animal life could survive in such circumstances for "hundreds of years" without being seen by human beings.

Wairoa Land Search and Rescue and Urewera veteran Dave Withers says, however, that with large teams of volunteers covering huge areas of the forest park in searches and training each year he would have heard if some sign of the assumed-extinct birds had been found. "I've never heard of them," he said.

"With the amount of ground our guys cover, 40 to 60 people, they spread out and cover the ground - surely if they were about in this area I would have heard."

Anomalopteryx didiformis was a flightless bird species known colloquially as the Lesser or Bush Moa. It weighed 30kg and inhabited much of the North Island and small sections of the South Island.

The most complete remains, a partially articulated skeleton with substantial mummified tissue discovered in the South Island in 1980, are now in the Southland Museum.

Cryptozoology is the study of or search for animals which fall outside of contemporary zoological catalogues.

The focus is on finding living examples of animals taxonomically identified through fossil records, but which are believed to be extinct, and animals that fall outside of taxonomic records due to a lack of evidence, apart from myths, legends, or unconfirmed sightings.

DENVER POST
Denver, Colorado
January 13, 2008
Page 6E

Credit: Peggy Noonan

Hey, Bigfoot: Meet me for breakfast

By Chuck Bolsinger

A few years before the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington, I worked on a nearby timber-cruising crew. We stayed in a barn-like lodge and ate at a nearby diner.

During breakfast one morning, Harry R. Truman, who owned Harmony Falls Lodge on Spirit Lake, came in. He was wearing an ancient raincoat and the same wrinkled cap he wore years later when he told a cameraman, a helicopter pilot and the world that he'd never leave his mountain. Days later, it blew.

Nodding to the diner's proprietor, he poured himself some coffee and came to our booth. "You fellas must be the timber cruisers," he said. He'd obviously had his morning whiskey. "There's something you boys should know. A Big Hairy Guy hangs out in these woods. Someday you'll be taping a tree, and a shadow'll fall on you. He'll know you're fixin' to log his forest, and he'll be mad."

He sipped his coffee. "I can show you scratch marks 10 feet high where he tried to get in my barn. I know when he's around by the smell. Whew! But my cats warn me before he gets that close. They go crazy! Edna, my wife, won't go out at night at all. The Big Hairy Guy's passed up many chances to get me, 'cause he knows I'm on his side. You boys, though ... " He shook his head.

We figured that Truman was saying he didn't like our being there (I couldn't blame him), while ostensibly warning us about Sasquatch, as some Native Americans call the legendary creature. We considered ourselves duly advised on both counts. But in weeks of beating the brush, we saw no sign of the Big Hairy Guy, though in that mysterious forest of shadowy glens and hulking, mossy trees, believing in such a creature wouldn't have been much of a stretch.

It could be the way we timber beasts were living: Our so-called ski-lodge was nothing but a cavernous wooden frame building with cots lined up, army-barracks style. To heat water for a shower, we had to build a roaring fire in a woodstove and wait. The weather was cool and rainy the entire time, and after the first day we decided a shower was optional. Maybe that's why we never encountered Bigfoot.

For more than a century, Bigfoot sightings have been reported all over the Northwest. In 1890, railroad workers in British Columbia supposedly captured a rock-throwing, apelike creature they called Jacko. It escaped before anyone photographed him.

Several sightings have been hoaxes, such as those engineered by Ray L. Wallace, who 'fessed up before he died three years ago. Though his faked footprints and films were amateurish, many believed they were authentic representations of something furry and big. While Wallace's motive in fooling people was unclear, several bio-hoaxes have been perpetrated for political reasons. A bio-hoax by environmentalists involved planting endangered plants in a forest scheduled for logging.

One rumor had it that a Bigfoot was shot and secretly buried so "enviros" wouldn't find out and demand Bigfoot refuges. It's interesting to speculate on what might happen after a confirmed Bigfoot discovery. Personally, I'd like to celebrate by taking the discoverer to breakfast at the diner where I met Harry R. Truman. But, of course, the eatery is buried under millions of tons of volcanic debris. As is, apparently, Harry, and perhaps — who knows? — his Big Hairy Guy.

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by Kris Wise, Daily Mail staff

Is Bigfoot in the Mountain State?

People who believe in Bigfoot will be trudging through the West Virginia woods in a couple of months hoping for a close encounter with the legendary creature.



Bigfoot researcher Stephen Willis found these tracks in rural Texas, just north of Dallas, during an expedition in January 2007. He said the footprints, which he thinks are from a large Sasquatch and its smaller offspring, were quarter-inch-deep impressions in the dirt while he, at 270-pounds, left no tracks.

The Mountain State has been picked by the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization, considered the nation's authority on the search for Sasquatch, as the site of an April expedition.

Based on the number of recent reports by people who claim they've seen the hairy apelike animal in person, Bigfoot experts and devoted believers think there's a good shot they'll find some evidence of its existence in the state.

Among those who'll be scouting backwoods hollers and mountain trails are a couple of folks with longtime West Virginia ties.

Stephen Willis is a retired military officer who grew up in West Virginia and now runs a successful business across the state line in Virginia manufacturing parts for industrial equipment and mining machines.

Pam Lovins works in healthcare administration in Huntington.

They're both well respected in their fields, have a lot of friends and seem to be bright, logical people.

But they acknowledge their hobby - searching for Bigfoot - can be difficult for some people to swallow.

"There's not a lot of funding out there for Bigfoot research, so we do have to have our day jobs," says Lovins, who's in her 40s and lives in Kenova.

Willis, 56, and Lovins are official investigators for the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization.

Founded in 1995 by California attorney Matthew Moneymaker, the group has dozens of volunteer investigators, who by day are scientists, journalists and business owners. In their spare time, they meet with people claiming to have had a Bigfoot encounter and decide the validity of those eyewitness reports.

In the past couple of years, Willis and Lovins have investigated dozens of reported sightings in the Mountain State.

In April, they'll join other Bigfoot researchers for the four-day expedition through the West Virginia wilderness. They'll be looking for footprints and any physical evidence to prove their theory that Bigfoot abounds in places all across the country. And as always, they'll be holding their breath and hoping for a close encounter with the creature.

It will be the second time in the past few years such an expedition has taken place in the West Virginia woods.

In 2006, the organization led a mission over two consecutive weekends in Pocahontas and Greenbrier counties.

Willis, who's been on 14 such expeditions from California to Texas, will head up the search for the first time.

"We choose areas with a history of sightings," he said, careful not to divulge the exact locations of the April trek.

"We can't tell people exactly where we're going before we do this because we don't want people coming in with guns blazing," Willis said. "There are a lot of people who'd like to kill one."

"But we are just out to collect evidence, and if we have a sighting, that's great."

Willis, 56, is a native of Webster County. He lived in West Virginia until a couple of years ago, when he retired from the U.S. Army and opened up his industrial business near Wytheville, Va. He's getting ready to sell that, and plans to retire with his wife and travel full time, mostly to volunteer with the Bigfoot group.

He said he there's no doubt in his mind that Sasquatch exists.

Growing up, he was accustomed to his grandfathers talking about the weird noises and howls they heard in their rural community, and of running into things in the wild they could not explain.

"They would talk about unknown creatures in the woods that would make these holy whooping kinds of sounds," said Willis, a graduate of Cowen High School in Webster County. "A lot of it was from the early 1900s, when my grandfather was a little kid. They attributed some of the noises to mountain lions, but it always sounded to me like something else."

He distinctly remembers when his interest in Bigfoot piqued. It was 1960 - he was nine - and a report surfaced in a Clarksburg newspaper that a bread truck driver had a Sasquatch encounter. The man said a Bigfoot ran in front of his truck on a rural road on the Webster and Braxton County line.

"It scared him so bad he quit his job on the spot because he was too scared to drive the route," Willis said.

But it's Willis' own experience that makes him a believer.

"Like a lot of people, I've heard a lot of stuff," he said. "As a kid growing up, all the noises associated with Sasquatch I had heard, but you never know what they are."

"When I got involved with the (research organization) and started listening to the sounds and we started talking about this, I had heard them all. And (researchers) said, 'Well, that's because you had a Sasquatch living around you.'"

The closest Willis said he's ever gotten to actually seeing one of the animals was during an expedition last year in California. He was using a thermal imaging system to monitor a patch of wilderness at night, and he says he clearly saw one of the creatures lit up in infrared.

He also has photographs of footprints he found in Texas that he says are unmistakably the tracks of a large Sasquatch and its smaller offspring.

Willis says his wife, Kathryn, saw two adult male Bigfoots walking on a trail during the 2005 West Virginia expedition.

She was on one side of the Greenbrier River and saw them walking up a bank on the opposite side, not far from Watoga State Park.

Lovins, too, said her belief is grounded on evidence she has uncovered and the second-hand stories she's heard from people who've been up close and personal with Bigfoot.

"I've never seen them, but I've seen enough evidence of them, and I do believe I've heard them," she said. "When you are out in the woods or on the side of a mountain and you hear this, there's no mistaking it. It's not a bear or an owl or a coyote unless they weight 400 pounds. You know immediately when you hear it what it is and what it isn't."

Lovins said she'd been interested in Sasquatch lore since she was a child.

"I think it was the old 70s 'In Search Of...' shows," Lovins said. "When they would show the old Patterson film, I just got interested."

Bigfoot aficionados offer up that film, allegedly showing a Bigfoot walking in Bluff Creek, Calif., in Oct. 1967, as the best visible account of a Sasquatch.

Others say it's one of the best hoaxes perpetrated in American history.

But you don't need to travel to the Pacific Northwest to meet people who say they've got a Bigfoot living in their backyard.

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Reported sightings detailed on the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization Web site, www.bfro.net, include 13 Class A sightings in West Virginia in just the past two years.

The organization designates sightings as Class A if a creature is clearly visible to a witness. Class B sightings have more potential for misidentification because they're based mostly on audible evidence, according to the Web site.

- August 12, 2007, just northeast of Linside in Monroe County: A 12-year-old girl reports seeing a Sasquatch as she was walking up her family's quarter-mile driveway to get the newspaper. It was a sweltering day, and she bent over to pull her hair up in a ponytail. When she looked up she saw a large, hump-backed creature with short hair that was clumped together. It was not far from her in a patch of trees, but ran off into the woods when she noticed it. Other family members reported hearing strange poundings in the woods around their home at the time, and of other wildlife suddenly becoming very scarce.

- July 29, 2006, near a surface mine outside of Ridgeview in Boone County: A biology crew had been commissioned to search an active mine site for evidence that rare Indiana bats were roosting there. Crew members, who were working at night, reported hearing strange whooping and howling sounds. On the third night of the operation, three crew members were inspecting a site at about 2:30 a.m. when they were startled by a noise. One member shone a flashlight at a nearby road, and the trio saw what they believe was a 7-foot-tall, two-legged creature "completely covered in short, coarse-looking black hair," except for its face, which was brown. The creature looked at the witnesses before scrambling up a nearby embankment. After finding several large footprints, the crew was sufficiently scared enough to break down their camp and leave the site.

- July 8, 2007, on U.S. 33 between Harmon and Seneca Rocks in Pendleton County: A Virginia couple was taking the long way home after visiting friends in West Virginia. The male driver threw on his brakes, as did the car behind them, and reported seeing what he at first described as a man wearing "a tree costume." He said the creature was covered in gray-greenish hair and was about six feet tall. Investigators said this was the third similar sighting in this area of Pendleton County during the summer of 2007.

- Aug. 10, 2006, on U.S. 52 right outside of Kenova in Wayne County: A woman and her grown son were driving to work at about 4:30 in the morning. Just two miles from their home, they rounded a corner and slowed down because they thought a man was crossing the road in front of them. The witnesses said they

immediately identified the creature as a Bigfoot. They said it had black hair and walked upright, but hunched over and with what appeared to be a limp.

Lovins spoke to this mother and son and investigated the incident, deeming it quite credible.

"The people who have seen these things - it really affects them profoundly," Lovins said. "When they talk to you, they shake. For many of them, it's really upsetting.

"Some of them are embarrassed, and a lot of them think no one is going to believe them."

Lovins said she has investigated at least two dozen reported sightings in West Virginia in the past couple of years, most of the time meeting personally with witnesses and going to the scene of the alleged Bigfoot encounter.

"We have very specific criteria for investigating reports," she said. "The main thing is to check the credibility of the witness and to see geographically if it's likely. Sometimes it is just a mistaken identification. That happens sometimes in rural areas."

Often though, the sightings don't happen in the midst of a secluded thicket or a remote mountainside.

"A lot of them, it's really not out in the middle of nowhere, and that's why people run across them," Lovins said. "The sightings will occur right along roadways. One will cross a road right in front of a car, and that's when it happens."

Lovins said in most cases, people will report a Bigfoot sighting while trying to talk themselves out of what they've seen. In essence, even the believers are skeptical, she said.

"One man in Jackson County, he just kept telling me, 'I'm a religious person. I just don't believe in this stuff, but I'm telling you, I saw it.' I try to explain that it shouldn't have any affect on their religion and these sorts of things, that it's not something that's out of this world. It's an animal. It's just a separate species, and there's no hocus pocus to it."

**What, exactly, is a bigfoot?*

In various parts of the world, he is Yeti, Yeren, Quatchi, Yowie or the Abominable Snowman.

Bigfoot, among those who believe in his existence, is most commonly thought of as a solitary apelike creature that stalks the most rural, wooded areas of the country.

Many of those who research the legendary animal say they believe it is descended from Gigantopithecus, an early relative of the orangutan that lived millions of years ago in parts of Asia.

Some say the creature, who might have been hunted by early humans, walked across the Bering Land Bridge to North America and has managed for thousands of years to maintain its incredibly secluded lifestyle.

Officials with the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization estimate there are anywhere from 2,000 to 6,000 of the creatures living in the United States and Canada. They say there have been more than 3,500 credible sightings and documented footprints found.

Witnesses who say they've had an encounter with Sasquatch commonly describe him - or her - as being anywhere from 6 to 10 feet tall, covered with long, coarse hair and walking upright, though often hunched over and with a lopsided gait.

Reported sightings of Bigfoot-like creatures around the world go back thousands of years. The first documented cases in the United State date from the mid-1800s.

But the Bigfoot phenomenon really took hold here beginning in 1958, when a couple of workers claimed to have found giant 16-inch tracks on an old logging trail near Eureka, Calif. After one of them died years later, his family members revealed it had been a hoax.

It was less than a decade later, in 1967, when Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin, a couple of Bigfoot junkies, set out to make a documentary about the creature. They maintain they stumbled upon one of the animals walking near the water at Bluff Creek, Calif. They produced 53 seconds of film footage that many people still consider the best visual proof that Bigfoot exists.

While many skeptics cast it aside as a hoax, no physical evidence has been uncovered showing that Patterson, who has died, or Gimlin, faked the video.

But skeptics also point to the lack of physical evidence that Sasquatch does exist - no body has ever been found.

Those who do believe are quick to say that it's rare for the carcasses of other large beasts, such as bears, to be discovered in the wild.

Bigfoot researchers cite as evidence the discoveries of large unexplained footprints and "stick structures" - tall and complex pilings of tree branches and limbs that researchers believe are the work of Sasquatch.

