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UFO REPORT

Stephenville-area sightings still unexplained after investigation

Mutual UFO Network investigators say a video was of a zoomed-in star.

By **BRYON OKADA**
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VALLEY RANCH — Despite many eyewitnesses who can be regarded as credible, investigators from the Mutual UFO Network's state chapter were unable to conclusively confirm that what people in the Stephenville area saw in January was a bona-fide UFO.

In addition, what is considered to be the most provocative piece of evidence about the event — a 12-minute video by David Caron that seems to show a moving object writing "glyphs" against the night sky — is a zoomed-in video of a star.

"We're probably going to get a lot of flak for that," said the network's Texas chapter director, Ken Cherry.

The group heard what may well be their investigators' final report on the matter Sunday afternoon at the Valley Ranch Public Library and Cherry says he expects that when the full report gets out to the public, the prevailing sentiment may very well be frustration.

"It will not satisfy the believers or the debunkers," Cherry told the group.

The report's contents were delivered by Cherry and the UFO Network's chief Texas investigator, Steve Hudgeons, in PowerPoint fashion. It is expected to be published in the group's upcoming journal.

The findings include:

■ Most of the significant sightings were in the Dublin area, not in Stephenville. Of the 19 reports from the January 8 event, 55 percent were in the Dublin area.

What do you think?

To post a comment on this report, go to www.star-telegram.com

■ Credible witnesses included a pilot, constable, city officials, business owners, clergy and teachers "and a full conglomerate of others," Hudgeons said.

■ About 95 percent of the reports described bright lights: red, blue, orange, white and yellow.

■ The object investigators concentrated on was described as being 1 mile long and a half-mile wide.

■ The sightings came during a period of increased UFO sightings in Texas. From 1969 through September 2007, there were 496 Texas cases. In the last six months alone, there have been 240 reports in Texas. The increase began in December, before the Stephenville sightings.

■ Other explanations for what people saw were: a military target sleeve, sensitivity of cameras, lights from other sources, sun dogs, lens flares and bad film.

What did the UFOs look like?

Descriptions vary. Some said the object was up to a mile long and hundreds of yards high. Others described seeing two to eight lights that flew in formation, changed color and shined with intensity greater than a welding flame.

What is the network?

The Mutual UFO Network is a nationwide organization that studies unidentified flying objects. Its Texas chapter took statements from about 50 witnesses Jan. 19 and interviewed at least 70 more, gathering descriptions, sketches, pictures and videos. A full report is scheduled in this month's issue of the network's publication. For more information, go to www.mufon.com.

What's all this about a UFO invasion?

Dozens of people around Dublin and Stephenville — about 70 miles southwest of Fort Worth — say they saw flying objects on or around Jan. 8 that they could not identify and that did not move like conventional aircraft. Some of the witnesses said the objects were being accompanied or followed by military aircraft. News of the sighting captured interest across the world.

Are these people crackpots?

This sighting gained national and international attention because of the number and quality of witnesses, including a county constable and a pilot. Many are also familiar with aircraft because the military has a flight practice zone that ends just south of the sighting area.

Why didn't they take pictures?

Taking pictures of UFOs is not easy, some of the witnesses say. A few pictures and videos have surfaced. While some can be explained, some can't, including a video captured on a camera attached to the county constable's car.

Was there a military conspiracy?

Maj. Karl Lewis, a spokesman for the 301st Fighter Wing at Naval Air Station Fort Worth, initially said they had nothing flying in the area. Two weeks later, Lewis said that there had been "an internal error in communication" and that 10 F-16s from the 457th Fighter Squadron were training between 6 and 8 p.m. Jan. 8. Witnesses say the admission adds credibility to their stories.

Seacoastonline.com

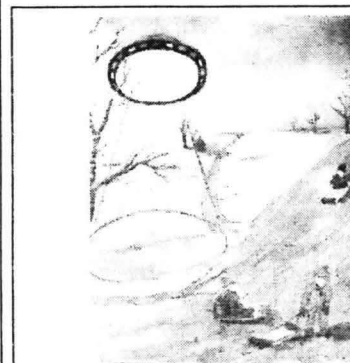
The Source
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Seacoastonline.com
Portsmouth, NH - York, ME
May 12, 2008

By **Dean Merchant**

Close encounters of the second kind in Stratham

Eight local children in two separate incidents reported UFO encounters in the 1970s



Shown is a portion of an illustration by artist Carol Adams of Dover, that shows her interpretation of the close encounter of the second kind that Tim Perry and his friends experienced at Bunker Hill.

(Illustration by Carol Adams)

The New Hampshire Seacoast has long been famous in UFO lore, both for the "incident at Exeter" and as the area of residence for the two most renowned "alien abductees," Betty and Barney Hill.

Few people, though, may be aware of the incidents in Stratham, close encounters of a second kind that occurred in the 1970s during the last great UFO wave in America.

Eight Stratham children came face to face with the frightening unknown when they were confronted by mysterious aerial crafts that left behind physical trace evidence and etched indelible marks upon their memories.

The boys and Inspector Oswald

On a wintry eve in 1971, three Stratham lads fired up their racing snow machines and departed from one of the youth's Stratham Heights Road homes.

Cutting across the Goodrich Farm fields, the boys turned onto a woods trail leading to Bunker Hill Avenue.

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NEXT PAGE >>

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May 12, 2008

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They tooled carefree down the trail, one on a Polaris 2-cycle Star Racer, and as they reached the vicinity of the old Sanderson Gravel Pit, looming just above and nearly touching a high power electrical line was the catalyst to heart-pounding, primal fear — a UFO.

Fleeing the apparition, the youthful trio turned and at full throttle retreated to the safety of the Heights Road home.

One of the boys' moms, who requested anonymity, recalls, "The boys were white as sheets ... scared to death ... frightened out of their wits ... terrorized!" She adds that "these were boys who did not frighten easily."

Arriving soon at their door was John Oswald, a NICAP (National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena) UFO investigator of local renown. Both parents remember the interview with Oswald as being eerie.

"He seemed to know what we would say before we spoke, as if he already knew what was in our minds," they said.

The boys were so uncomfortable they fled the house and interviewer as soon as possible. Dad recalls Investigator Oswald telling them about sensors that his people had set up in New Hampshire, all of which, he said, were triggered off at the precise time of the boys' encounter.

Peter Geremia of Rye, director of the New Hampshire chapter of MUFON (Mutual UFO Network), as well as a lecturer and UFO investigator, recalls Oswald as a dedicated researcher.

He explains that the sensors Oswald referred to were mechanical measurement devices, simple in nature and very accurate. Data collected through such research as the MADAR (Multiple Anomaly Detection and Automated Recording) project, "suggested a connection between magnetic/electromagnetic anomalies and genuine UFO events."

John Oswald and David Webb conducted experiments in New Hampshire between November 1970 and September 1972. Oswald's "magnet variometers" were placed at 13 detector sites. The triggering of the sensors provided physical or trace evidence that collaborated with the boys' visual sighting.

The sledding incident

A few years after the incident, and just up the road, another group of Stratham youngsters experienced their own close encounter of a second kind.

The present Holmgren Road area off Bunker Hill Avenue was back then a favorite sledding spot known by locals as "the old hollow."

Late on a snowy afternoon Tim Perry, a rough and tumble 10 year old, his sister and three chums were enjoying some fast sledding on the icy hill, when a bright, glaring aerial craft with white, green and red lights alternately flashing, descended onto the field across the road where Bob Wiggin Sr. planted his potatoes.

"It was late afternoon — just getting dark," says Perry. "We saw a big light all of a sudden. It came out of nowhere, almost noiseless."

Hearts racing and "out of our minds," the little band grabbed their sleds and ran for home. "It scared the bejeezus out of us," says Perry.

Perry recalls the UFO was roundish or slightly footballish, a shape he had never seen in an aircraft.

It was not enormous. "It stayed on the ground for maybe 10 seconds, went up slow, then phoom, it was gone," he says. It ascended at a 45-degree angle and went from 0 to 10,000 feet in 10 seconds — "that quick." The next day a UFO investigator interviewed the young Perrys and viewed the field. Tim recalls that he and his sister were interviewed separately.

"I was in the family kitchen," he says. "I remember his dark blue pants and light blue shirt, and being apprehensive as a boy would be if answering questions to a policeman."

Perry says the craft had melted a circular formation in the snowy field, about 50 feet in diameter and marked with weird patterns. He remembers three or four cars at the site and pictures and soil samples being taken. The next day it snowed and the physical tracings were buried beneath a white blanket.

Today, as an engineer, husband and dad Perry can analytically ponder his childhood experience, but his mental parameters remain open to unknown explanations to what he saw decades ago.

More Stratham sightings

Stratham resident Kathleen Marden — niece of Betty Hill, co-author of "Captured! The Betty and Barney Hill UFO Experience: The True Story of the World's First Documented Alien Abduction," a trained UFO investigator and for years the director of investigator training with MUFON — says she has heard similar stories about people living in rural farm areas. The UFO sightings and such physical trace evidence as burned or withered grass and soil changes.

Marden knows of another UFO sighting in Stratham but says the information is confidential.

Stratham appears in the MUFON Internet log on Dec. 27, 1998. "A person reports seeing a rectangular shape in the sky that had a bluish light in the center, and a pearl colored light at each end. The witness thought it was an airplane but when it listed to the right, it went left, and when it listed to the left, it went right. It moved behind a church and some trees and that was the last he saw of it." — NURFORC — National UFO Reporting Center.

Doug Scamman of Stratham's Bittersweet Farm recalls talk of a UFO sighting just off River Road where his family was living in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In those days, he says, he and his wife were "working 80 hour weeks and too tired to look for UFOs." But Scamman acknowledges keeping an eye open to the skies. "I have looked for them a few times," he says. "I believe in such things."

He says the River Road sighting was in the field behind the first brown house on the right side of the road.

Why here? Why to these people?

Peter Geremia tells of UFO waves, and of flaps where an area will experience a plethora of sightings and then never again at the same spot. Queried as to why UFOs may be interested in the

Seacoast, Geremia says some researchers believe UFOs seem interested or concerned when a new nuclear power plant is to be built, or in areas affected by weapons and war.

Stratham was in close proximity to the proposed Seabrook Nuclear Power plant and to what was then a strategic air command base in Portsmouth, where nuclear materials were located, during the time frame of the UFO sightings.

He says during the 1970s, when Egypt and Israel were at war, there were reports of commercial Israeli airplanes arriving at Pease with all the passenger seats removed, leading to speculation that they were carrying munitions.

Some people are reluctant to share their own experiences about UFOs, fearing ridicule or the pestering that forever dogged the Hills after the media got wind of their story and made it public.

Recently, Professor Stephen Hawking, speaking at a college in Washington State to commemorate the 50-year history of NASA, acknowledged the likelihood of other life forms in the universe, but questioned why intelligent life forms would only make themselves known to "cranks and weirdos."

Others, like former president Jimmy Carter, have been forthright in discussing their UFO experiences.



This photograph depicts a cloud formation over the summit of Mt. Washington in the Winter of 1870-1871 - along with an added surprise! One can see a cigar shaped object. This could possibly be the earliest photograph of a UFO. The image is part of an antique stereoview. The description reads "SUMMIT Mt. Washington WINTER 1870-1871 Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1871, by CLOGH & KIMBALL, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington." (UFOArtwork.com)

The New York Times

LONDON JOURNAL

British U.F.O. Shocker! Government Officials Were Telling the Truth

By SARAH LYALL

LONDON — They were shaped like cigars, saucers, coffins and amorphous blinking blobs. They hovered in a menacing manner, traveled at impossible speeds and vanished into the netherworld, or, in one instance, a hedge in Cornwall.

A few carried humanoid life forms, or so it seemed. A few materialized courtesy of the observers' possibly having had a drink too many, as in the case of an unidentified flying light cluster witnessed loitering in the sky by the patrons of a pub in Kent.

Whatever they were, these phenomena reported to Britain's Ministry of Defense over the years and made public this month were almost certainly not actual alien aircraft piloted by actual alien beings.

"The government has been

*Meticulous records
contain no proof of
actual space aliens.*

telling us the truth," declared David Clarke, a senior lecturer in journalism at Sheffield Hallam University, who has a side interest in U.F.O.'s. "There are a lot of weird things in the sky, and some of them we can't explain, but there's not a shred of evidence for a single alien visitation."

Which is, frankly, a letdown, as is the government's prosaic explanation of why, for decades, it has meticulously documented reports of U.F.O. sightings. "We only check the sightings from the perspective of making sure that our military airspace has not been breached, and we pretty much never have airspace breaches," a Defense Ministry spokeswoman said.

The spokeswoman, who spoke on condition of anonymity — not because she works with Agent Mulder in some shadowy basement office, but because that is government policy — said the ministry had begun making the files public because it had been inundated with U.F.O.-related requests under Britain's Freedom of Information Act.

The files from 1978 to 2002 were released this month. Some older files have already been declassified and made public; the rest will be released over the next few years. Available on the Web from the National Archives at ufos.nationalarchives.gov.uk, they cover hundreds of sightings but are hardly the X-Files. Much of the material consists of one-page forms carrying details like how big the supposed aircraft was and what, if anything, it seemed to be doing.

A citizen who gives her profession as "meals on wheels operator" describes her shock and awe at the sight of a smallish "Vulcan-shaped object" hovering in the sky. Another witness says she was roused from bed by a brilliant light emanating from a U.F.O. "the size of a milk-bottle base."

"Some time on a Monday evening during the break in watching 'Quincy' — I checked my watch — I noticed an unusual happening in the sky," one correspondent wrote. And from Cornwall, a report arrived from a 28-year-old motorist who observed a bright yellow light "which bobbed and weaved" over the road, an image recalling Tinkerbell's mode of travel in "Peter Pan."

"The light changed to a purplish color, prior to its exit into a thick hedgerow," the report reads.

The files include random newspaper clippings of questionable journalistic rigor. A 1986 Daily

Mirror article reports that the light "from a glowing red object" suffused the cockpit of a Royal Air Force jet carrying Prince Charles, seriously unnerving the pilot. As an aside, the newspaper noted that "Prince Philip has been a keen U.F.O. follower for the past 36 years."

There are long letters asking big questions. "When is a flying saucer not a flying saucer?" muses one correspondent. "And is the mothership man-made or from a distant planet?"

In the old days, the United States systematically compiled reports of U.F.O. sightings, too. But its last program, known as Project Blue Book, was closed down in 1969 after government officials concluded that if something was out there, it was not anything they wanted to investigate.

Some U.F.O. enthusiasts said last week that they believed the British government had not released all of its files and was concealing the truth about a massive cover-up it had long perpetrated on the British people.

But Joe McGonagle, a self-described U.F.O. researcher here, said the documents showed that far from concealing anything, the government had failed to investigate the sightings properly in the first place.

"A lot of people imagined that there was this vast U.F.O. project with lots of people working on it, when in reality it was a civil servant spending 25 percent of his time on it, filing reports," he said.

It is not as if the authorities have always failed to take the issue seriously. In 1950, the government convened a secret committee, the Flying Saucer Working Party, to investigate sightings of U.F.O.'s. It concluded that U.F.O.'s were optical illusions, weather phenomena, airplanes seen from strange angles and the like, which has been the government's line ever since.

In 1979, the House of Lords debated the matter at the urging of

the Earl of Clancarty, who believed that man was descended from aliens who crawled from the earth's core via special tunnels or flew in spaceships 65,000 years ago.

He was not the only noble believer.

"I should like to tell your lords about some of the sightings I have seen," said the Earl of Halsbury, "beginning at the age of 6, when I saw an angel."

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NEXT PAGE >>

Lord Gainford said he had seen a U.F.O., which he described as "bright white ball with a touch of red followed by a white cone," at a New Year's Eve party in Scotland. Some children saw it, too, he added, and they "had been drinking soft drinks."

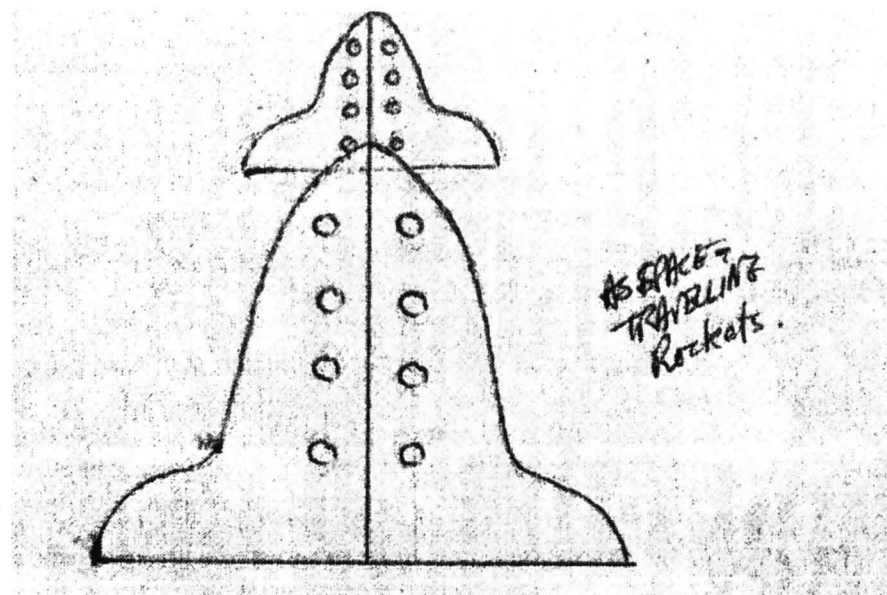
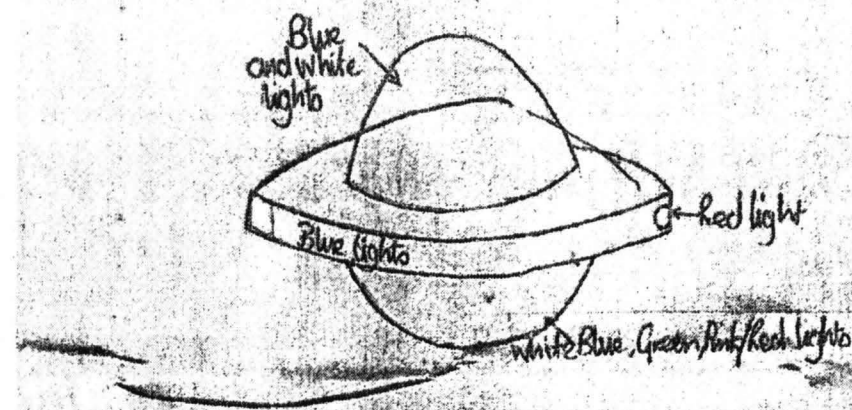
None of their accounts were as detailed as that of a 78-year-old ex-soldier in Aldershot. His story, which he told to a U.F.O. investigator, can be found in the newly released files.

Out fishing in 1983, the man had just poured himself a cup of tea, he recalled, when he was approached by two four-foot-tall beings wearing pale green overalls and large helmets. They led him into what turned out to be their ship — "I thought, Christ — what the hell's that?" he said — and, apparently considering whether to subject him to extraterrestrial experiments, suddenly announced: "You can go. You are too old and infirm for our purposes."

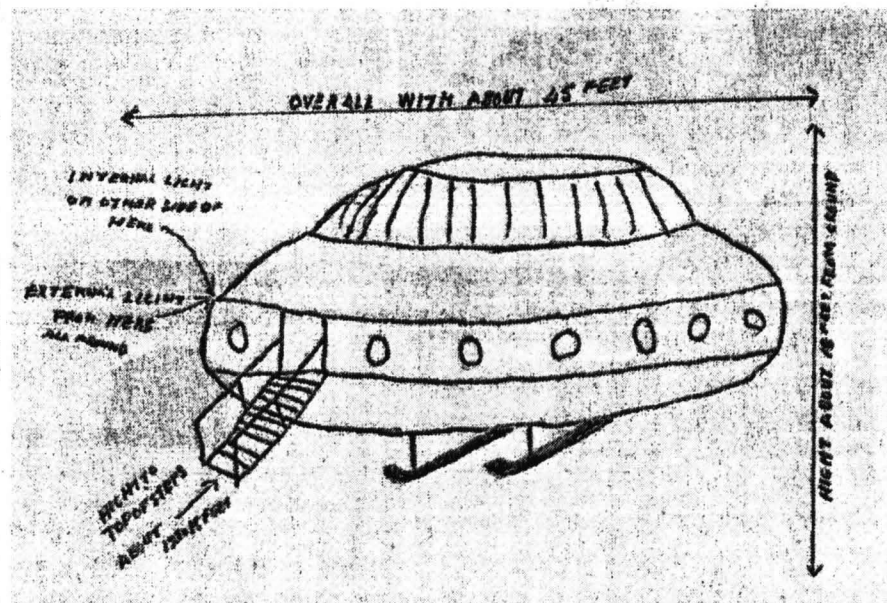
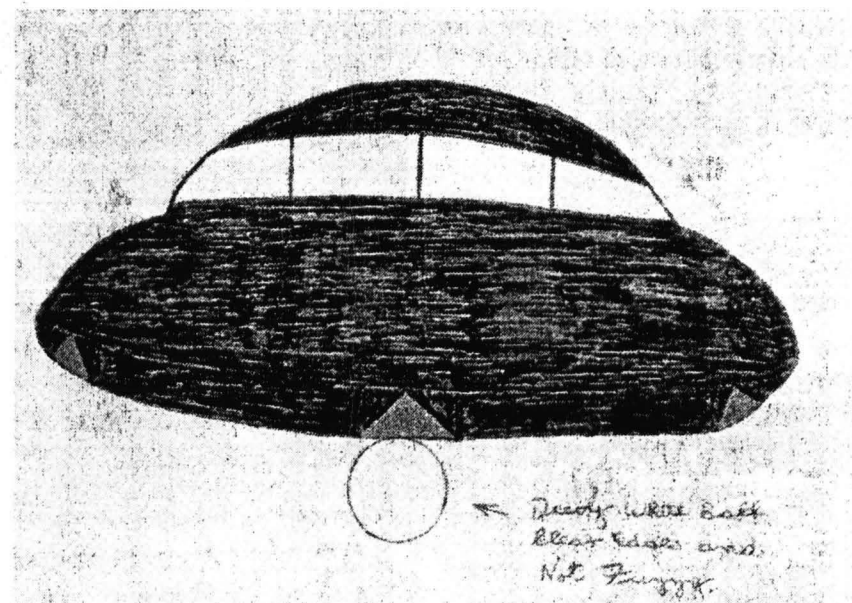
"Anxious to avoid causing offense," the report said, the man asked no questions, even obvious ones like, what planet do you come from? Instead, he returned to the riverbank, where he finished his tea (by then cold) and resumed fishing.

He was reluctant to tell his family, the report says: "I knew my wife would say 'No more fishing for you, old man.'"

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES



Drawings of U.F.O. sightings reported to Britain's Defense Ministry included a rocket-powered craft and one with colored lights.



The reports, released this month, also included sketches of a vehicle on skis and one whose edges were described as "not fuzzy."

Tim Reynolds selling his butcher business, but he'll stay on as employee

[Edited: some non-UFO material has been left out to save space]

By ED MERRIMAN
Baker City Herald

Reynolds:

Continued from Page 1

"As it got closer to me, it turned into a pink and green

orb," Reynolds said.

He got out his digital camera and started snapping pictures.

"It was 50 yards from me when I first saw the light, and it flew within 15 to 20 feet of

me before it flew away," Reynolds said.

"That gaseous ball flew up out of the trees and flew right across the ground at me," Reynolds said.

At one point as the object started to fly away, Reynolds said remembers snapping one shot, then immediately walking 15 feet to 20 feet to get a better view to take one last photo.

Strangely, after taking that last photo, he noticed the timer on the camera showed 20 minutes had elapsed between the two photos.

"I have no memory of what happened during that 20 minutes, but it would not have taken more than a few seconds to walk the 15 or 20 feet," Reynolds said.

In its gaseous form, Reynolds said, the object was 18 to 20 inches in diameter, but when it transformed into an orb and flew toward him, it appeared to be around 10 inches in diameter.

While he didn't catch any fish that day, Reynolds said he got lots of pictures of the orb, which he said had sort of a spiritual presence that helped him make a decision about selling his meat business.



Baker City Herald/Ed Merriman

Tim Reynolds is selling his meat shop, but he'll still work there.

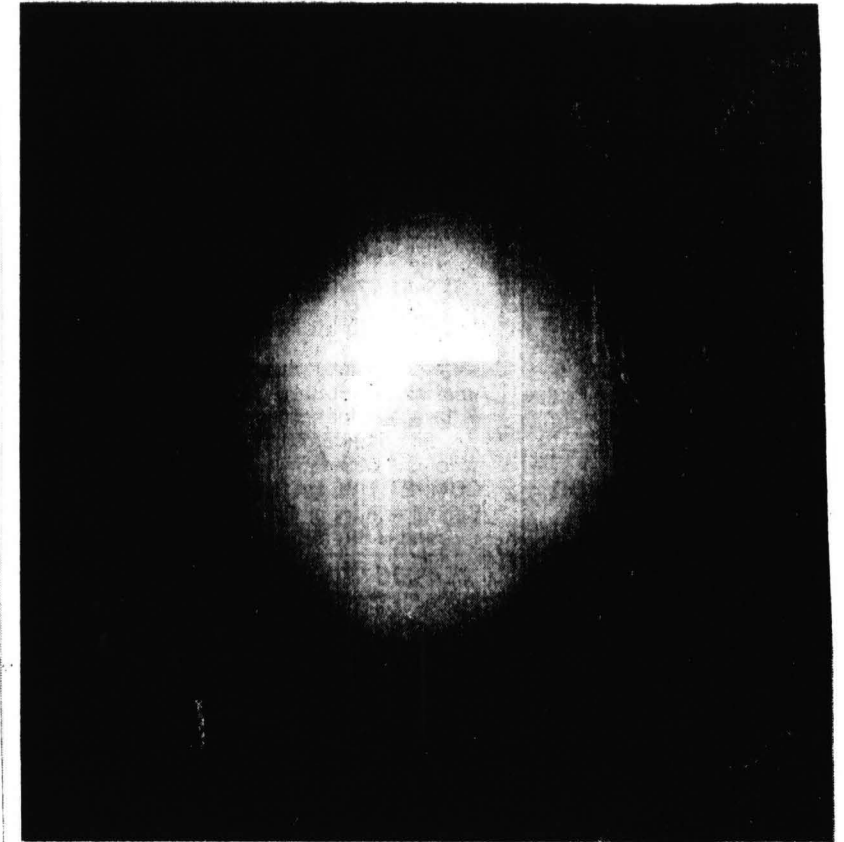


Photo by Tim Reynolds

Tim Reynolds saw what he describes as a "gaseous ball" during a sturgeon-fishing trip on the Columbia River.

"I had been looking into selling the business for quite a while, but everybody says since I seen this thing I had a life-changing experience," Reynolds said.

Trying to do it all had been taken a toll on his health, as well, he said, adding that he

felt like he'd aged 20 years in the past three years.

Ever since he made the decision to sell the business following his close encounter, Reynolds said he's been feeling less stressed, as though a burden has been lifted from him.

Tim Reynolds, owner of Reynolds Custom Cut and Cure in Baker City, is famous for his savory cures, bacon, sausage, jerky and pepperoni, as well as his skill at butchering beef and wild game.

He'll still be doing all of those things after May 1, when the sale of his business to Del and Doug Stout, owners of Elkhorn Lanes bowling alley, becomes official.

Despite feeling overwhelmed by the workload involved in managing the business, Reynolds said he had mixed feelings about the prospect of going back to being an employee when the Stouts contacted him more than a year ago about buying the business.

Last year his wife's medical bills topped \$89,000, and officials with the Social Security system threatened to drop his wife from disability and medical coverage because he owned a

business, Reynolds said.

He'd been going back and forth on whether to sell the business and accept the Stouts' offer to take it over and keep him on as an employee when he had a close encounter with a pink and green orb on March 25 while sturgeon fishing along the Columbia River. It was his first day off after working 27 straight days.

Reynolds said the orb first appeared as a gaseous greenish-blue object that appeared in a small grove of trees.

See Reynolds/Page 10

Man pushes creation of panel to prepare city for space aliens

By Daniel J. Chacón
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Jeff Peckman is back at it, and this time he is bringing little green men along for the ride.

The Denver man, who sponsored an offbeat ballot initiative that would have required the city to implement stress-reduction techniques, now wants to ask voters to create a commission dealing with space aliens.

"It is important because if you're driving down the highway and you saw a crash of a small spaceship and a car or a bus full of kids, you really wouldn't know what to do," Peckman said Thursday. "Do you wait for the hazardous materials experts to show up because of potential contaminants from another solar system? What do you do? People really don't know."

Peckman, 54, who is single and lives with his parents, has submitted to the city a draft of the proposed ordinance, which would require the creation of an Extraterrestrial Affairs Commission.

As required, the city is holding a "review and comment" meeting on the proposed ballot initiative with Peckman on Thursday.

"I don't know what we're going to ask him yet," said David Broadwell, an assistant city attorney.

Peckman hopes to collect enough signatures — he needs about 4,000 — to get the proposed initiative on the November ballot.

According to the proposal, the 18-member ET commission would "create a responsible, common-sense strategy for dealing with issues related to the presence of extraterrestrial beings on Earth," among other tasks.

Peckman said the proposed initiative is "a shortcut to disclosure of the knowledge of extraterrestrial beings on Earth and interacting with people on Earth." He said he has never seen an space alien, but that he has seen evidence proving that they exist.

"I certainly believe that they visit somewhat frequently," he said. "I don't know that they're walking around the streets of LoDo — others might disagree with that. But they do seem to

have made their presence known all over the world to a lot of people."

Councilman Charlie Brown was an outspoken critic of Peckman's 2003 "Safety through

Peace" initiative, which failed but garnered a healthy 32 percent in support. Brown called the 2003 initiative "looney-tooney" and Peckman's latest proposal "even loonier."

Credit: John Schuessler

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS
Denver, Colorado
May 2, 2008

Explore the unexplained in Yucca Valley

DESERT POST WEEKLY
Cathedral City, California
April 24, 2008

By Maggie Downs
Desert Post Weekly

The expansive desert of Landers is where stories bloom. It is here where aerospace engineer George Van Tassel moved his family under Giant Rock, a sacred place for Native Americans and once the largest free-standing boulder in the world.

It is here where Van Tassel said he was visited by aliens, boarded their spacecraft and was given the plans for the construction of a machine that would make people young again.

It is here where Van Tassel built that machine, a giant dome called The Integratron, and held a series of conventions to help pay for its completion.

It is here where people still gather to pay homage to the paranormal phenomena of the 1950s, '60s and '70s — and share their stories of otherworldly contact, too.

"As far as alien contact goes, Landers is every bit as important as Roswell (N.M.)," said Barbara Harris of Yucca Valley. "They just got all the attention."

Harris wants to change that. Three years ago she organized the first Retro UFO Spacecraft Convention as a way to draw attention to Landers history.

The quirky two-day event includes historical reenactments, laser light shows, campy movies, even a foil hat competition — possibly to inspire another visit from outer space.

Visitors can enjoy relaxing soundbaths inside the dome, tour the Giant Rock area and take part in question and answer sessions.

The more science-oriented can attend lectures from astronomers

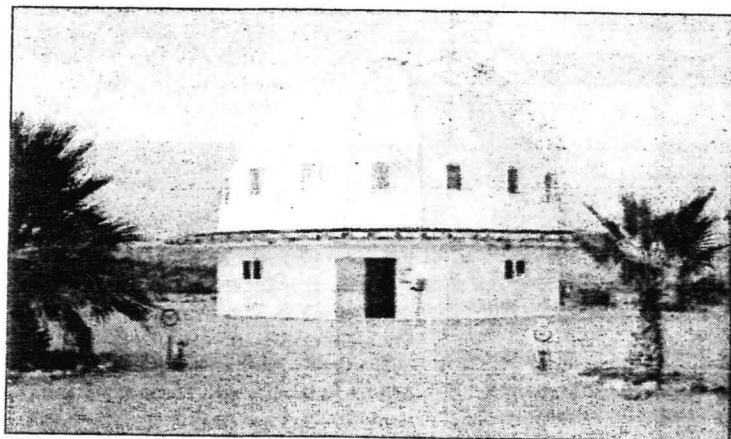
and hear from speakers who worked with and knew Van Tassel.

"There's so much to learn and so many people to learn from," Harris said. "This is a lighthearted event, but there are also people

with important things to share."

The festival is also a throwback to the days when Van Tassel would draw more than 10,000 people to the hi-desert for meditation, speakers and an opportunity to talk about their experiences.

"This is a big part of our history, and we don't want to lose it," she said.



Courtesy photo

The Integratron (above) will be the sight of this weekend's Retro UFO Conference.

UNEXPLAINED SIGHTINGS

UFO report: 'It will not satisfy the believers or the debunkers'

VALLEY RANCH — Dozens of witnesses saw something unusual above Erath County around Jan. 8. A retired weatherman caught a large shape on Doppler radar. A few caught bright lights on tape.

But after sifting through the evidence, Texas Mutual UFO Network investigators could not prove that what the witnesses saw was a UFO.

But they couldn't debunk the sighting, either.

In the top 10

Dateline NBC ranked the Erath sighting as No. 3 Sunday evening during its report on the Top 10 "Close Encounters Caught on Tape."

STAR TELEGRAM
Fort Worth, Texas
May 19, 2008

THE VILLAGE VOICE
New York, NY
May 19, 2008

by Tony Ortega

NBC's Dateline Airs Misleading UFO Footage

Here we go again.

UFOs are easy ratings, so I guess it isn't surprising that Dateline aired something last night called "10 Close Encounters Caught on Tape." To its credit, the NBC program at least made an attempt to provide prosaic explanations for each of the events it presented. In most cases, those explanations were actually pretty good, and the "UFO experts" came off as yahoos.

But when I realized that they were saving for last—the #1 event!—the lame Phoenix Lights, the 1997 event that I helped debunk years ago as a reporter in Arizona, I prepared myself for yet another time that so-called journalists wouldn't get even the most basic facts right.

And I wasn't disappointed.

Hey, NBC, try to pay attention: there were TWO separate events on the night of March 13, 1997 over the skies of Arizona. The mysterious "vee" that so many people across the state witnessed was seen over Prescott at about 8:15 p.m. and traveled south over Phoenix at about 8:30 and passed over Tucson at 8:45. That's 200 miles in thirty minutes which—check with your calculator if you'd like—means the vee was moving at about 400 miles per hour. Some early eyewitnesses perceived that the vee was high in the sky, others swore it was low and moving very slowly. (And I mention "early" purposely. As the months passed,

more and more elaborate—and ridiculous—claims were made by eyewitnesses who were clearly trying to one-up each other.) But as I've pointed out many times, the eyeball is a lousy instrument for judging the altitude of point sources of light in a night sky. Simple physics, however, suggests the vee was high in the sky and moving very fast.

As I first revealed in the *Phoenix New Times* in 1998 on the event's first anniversary, a young man with a Dobsonian telescope spotted the vee from his backyard, and saw that it was a formation of airplanes. When the young man, Mitch Stanley, tried to contact a city councilwoman making noise about the event, as well as a couple of UFO flim-flam men working the local scene, he was rebuffed. I was the first reporter to talk to him, and, as a telescope builder myself, I made a thorough examination of his instrument and his knowledge of it. (For the inexperienced: a Dobsonian telescope is much easier to move

than the crappy department store scope in your garage; it's child's play for an experienced observer, like Stanley, to get a good look at passing planes at altitude.) And he had a witness: he had told his mother, who was standing nearby, that the lights were planes. After my story, the *Arizona Republic* also wrote about Stanley, and also found him impressive. Didn't you check that out, Dateline?

Back to the night of March 13. News of the 8:30 pm sighting traveled fast, so a large number of people were outside with videocameras when the second and unrelated event, at about 10 pm, happened in the sky southwest of Phoenix. A string of lights appeared in the sky, and slowly sank until they disappeared behind the nearby Estrella Mountain range. This was later shown to be a string of flares dropped by the Maryland Air National Guard over the North Tac military range. Dr. Lynne Kitei can tell NBC that these lights were magical and "intelligent" and later showed up just outside her living room window all she wants, but the videotapes taken that night by many people show without a doubt that this was a

string of mundane lights that fell and disappeared behind the range, exactly as a string of flares dropped by the military planes would.

Now, the problem developed when the "flare" explanation emerged first, and took root hard, explaining away the 10 pm sighting. But for the many people who had seen the earlier vee pass directly over their heads, flares made no sense whatsoever. And news organizations never bother to differentiate between the two events or report on the Stanley identification—even the *Arizona Republic* (a truly pathetic example of a daily newspaper) stopped referring to its earlier solid reporting on the Lights and began promoting it as "unexplained."

To this day, programs like Dateline invariably question people who saw the earlier "vee" event, and quote them saying that flares couldn't possibly explain what they saw. They are right. They didn't see flares, they saw a formation of planes.

In last night's program, Dateline repeatedly showed people talking about their memories of the 8:30 vee while showing video of the 10 pm flares. Talk about misleading.

By the way, NBC: There was a single cameraman who caught the 8:30 vee and the later event. I saw his tape myself. It clearly showed the five lights of the 8:30 vee moving in relation to each other, exactly as you'd expect in a formation of airplanes. Couldn't get that tape for your program?

As for the people who swore they saw a black triangular shape joining the five lights of the vee, that's a classic contrast effect of the human eye. In another very telling case, a man who swore he saw a black shape joining the lights of the vee saw it pass directly in front of the moon. At that point, he saw not a black shape but wavy lines pass over

the undimmed moon. But rather than conclude that he'd seen the contrails of planes, the man, who had already been worked hard by the flim-flam artists, concluded instead that the pilot of the alien craft had turned his

spaceship transparent right at that moment so the man could see the moon through it. How thoughtful!

Perhaps it's a good thing that NBC has now declared this the number 1 UFO sighting of all time. It's one of the very few so well checked-out by reporters, and one of the few that has been so thoroughly debunked. But you won't hear that from the networks, who can't get enough of the ratings that come with "the unexplained."

WENATCHEE WORLD
Wenatchee, Washington
May 19, 2008

Strange, 2165 stranger, strangest in NCW

UFO buzzes Wenatchee:

Local public safety workers went into a tizzy Tuesday when someone reported seeing a large, low-flying plane possibly in distress.

East Wenatchee Assistant Police Chief Dan Reiersen said the unknown person who called RiverCom at 2:14 p.m. told dispatchers the plane was spewing black smoke and might be having mechanical problems.

Jim Harris, a custodian at Lincoln Elementary School in Wenatchee, didn't make that call but did contact The Wenatchee World to say he saw a big plane flying low and spitting out black smoke over the Sunnyslope area after making a strange noise at about 1:30 p.m.

Dispatchers ordered firefighters and police to Pangborn Memorial Airport but the aircraft emergency call was canceled a couple of minutes after going out. An assistant chief with the Wenatchee Fire Department said he heard the plane was a B-52 bomber. No telling for sure. There hasn't been a positive ID. The plane didn't land at or take off from Pangborn Memorial Airport, said airport manager Pat Moore, who added that she had information that the plane entered the valley from the southeast, flew a circle and went on its way.

» ALIENS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Ages. What made this week's statement significant, several experts say, is that the comments by Rev. Jose Funes, director of the Vatican Observatory, were printed in the Vatican's own newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. That gave his words a certain papal heft.

It has also made for some lively discussions between liberal and conservative theologians. Rev. Christopher Corbally, vice director of the Vatican Observatory, said he has been bombarded with e-mail from colleagues pondering whether God could have created more than one world and whether other beings could be granted redemption via a Christ-like savior.

Chaining God?

If God created human beings in his own image, how could there be others who don't look like us? Little green men, Corbally noted, certainly do not fit the popular image of God.

"It's a fun way to catch people's imagination," he said jubilantly. "How wonderful it would be to have other life beyond our own world, because it would show how God's creation just flows out without abandon.

"We are always trying to restrict God's creativity, putting theological difficulties in the way. But I don't think God bothers with theological difficulties."



'If you're sitting in a room that's totally dark and you can't see anything, and the door is cracked just a millimeter to let a little light in, that can be extremely useful.'

—Peter Davenport, head of the National UFO Reporting Center in Washington state

Some human beings, on the other hand, can be a bit literal when interpreting the teachings of their faiths. Proof of that can be found in the Puritanical pudding of the Salem witch trials in 1692, not to mention countless history books or even today's headlines. Many a faithful soul today would be aghast at talk of other forms of intelligent life.

"Any kind of literalist in Christianity would be barring these sorts of beliefs," said Thomas O'Brien, a professor of religious studies at DePaul University. "If you were to go to some fundamentalist Christian churches, you'd hear some pastors say belief in UFOs is tantamount to a non-belief in Jesus Christ."

Such pooh-poohing of cosmic possibilities runs quite counter to this week's comments in the Vatican Observatory. Funes said that to not believe life exists beyond our planet would be to "set limits on the creative liberty of God."

As Rev. Thomas O'Meara, a visiting theology professor at Boston College, puts it: "If you have a mature view of

God, God can do what God wants."

So the question becomes: Will this declaration from the Vatican be of any help to those who truly believe in visiting spacecraft and worlds beyond our own?

"Religion does play a big part in the UFO phenomenon," said Julie Shuster, director of the International UFO Museum and Research Center in Roswell, N.M., the shrine for alien enthusiasts. "A lot of people feel it's a very demonic thing. They'll come with a family member, but they won't set foot in the door because they don't believe in any of it, and don't think they should."

Not seeing, but believing

Still, a sudden bump in the 160,000 visitors the center gets each year isn't expected. And Shuster sounded a bit skeptical of why the Vatican — which, she understands, has "a wide array of books on UFOs" — picked this particular time to bring up aliens.

"Maybe they felt that, for whatever reason, the timing is right," Shuster posited.

So what's next? A canonical

embrace of ghosts, psychic powers, fairies and, perhaps, the Easter Bunny?

Turns out that's not necessary.

"There are no problems with ghosts and the paranormal because a lot of the personages that populate the cosmic world of Catholicism are precisely those kinds of figures," said O'Brien, the DePaul professor. "So there's nothing against that kind of belief."

In fact, O'Brien and other experts agree that the Catholic faith — and many others, for that matter — is based not on things a person can't believe in, but on the things a person must believe in.

So believe what you wish. As long as you buy into the basic tenets of your religion, the sky, or in this case the universe, is the limit.

rhuppke@tribune.com

Word that the Vatican had declared devout Catholics free to believe in aliens traveled at warp speed this week, around the globe and, quite possibly, to points unknown.

Earthbound theologians and astrophysicists debated it, online "Jedi Council" forums erupted in geeky chatter, and many who have long dared to believe that life exists beyond our terrestrial confines felt some small measure of vindication.

"If you're sitting in a room that's totally dark and you can't see anything, and the door is cracked just a millimeter to let a little light in, that

By Rex W. Huppke
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Enthusiasts say 'Amen' as Vatican allows alien belief

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



Log on to The Seeker to read more and post your own comments.
chicagotribune.com/seeker

can be extremely useful," said Peter Davenport, head of the National UFO Reporting Center in Washington state.

In other words, in the lonely world of alien believers, visitors are always welcome.

The Catholic Church has never been considered anti-alien. In fact, Catholic priests and scholars have written about the issue of extraterrestrial life since at least the Middle

PLEASE SEE ALIENS PAGE 23

CHICAGO TRIBUNE
Chicago, Illinois
May 16, 2008

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MAY 16, 2008

Fireworks answer to UFO mystery

Associated Press

21125
PIKESVILLE, Md. — Mysterious middle-of-the-night blasts and flashes of light had residents puzzled for months — and now a man has been

charged with fireworks-related violations.

Frederick Lee Mackler, 59, was denied bail Wednesday on charges of possession of fireworks without a permit, reckless endangerment and con-

trolled dangerous substance violations.

The arrest, announced Tuesday, came days after police in the Baltimore suburb set up cameras and recorded the flashes that lit up an area the size of a football field. After examining shadows created by the explosions and other clues, police concluded they came from Mackler's fourth-floor condominium.

Investigators later searched Mackler's home and found pyrotechnics, illegal narcotics and firearms, authorities said. Prosecutor Kristin Blumer

said Mackler used a starter's pistol to fire cartridges into the air. The cartridges are designed to scare away birds. He told police he had been mad at his neighbors. Blumer said she did not know why he was upset with his neighbors.

Neighbors said they had heard the noises repeatedly since September, always between midnight and dawn and accompanied by bright flashes. Neighbor Barbara Friedman said the first time she heard the blast she thought someone was shooting at her.

appealdemocrat.com

MARYSVILLE APPEAL — DEMOCRAT
Marysville, California
May 1, 2008

FRIDAY 5/9/08 ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

It's a close encounter at city review hearing

ET initiative takes a step forward

By Daniel J. Chacón
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Never-before-seen video of "space aliens" — footage that will be revealed to the public in a few weeks — convinced Jeff Peckman that extraterrestrials exist.

"These happen to be the little gray ones, about 4 feet tall," said Peckman, who added that an infrared camera was used. As a result, he is proposing the creation of an Extraterrestrial Affairs Commission in Denver, believed to be the first of its kind.

"You could see them blink as they looked in a window and panned a room," Peckman, 54, said.

"After seeing that, it was very clear that it's not rumor, it's not speculation, but these extraterrestrials do exist."

If Peckman has his way, Denver voters will have a chance to say whether they, too, believe that there is intelligent life beyond Earth and whether the city should prepare for close encounters of the alien kind.

Peckman is sponsoring an initiative that would require the city to create an ET Commission tasked with "dealing with issues related to the presence of extraterrestrial beings on Earth."

Peckman completed one of the

first steps of the initiative process Thursday by meeting with city officials for a "review and comment" hearing.

No one poked fun, but by the end of the hearing, David Broadwell, an assistant city attorney, asked Peckman if he was serious.

Peckman said he was "absolutely committed" and spent several minutes talking about UFOs landing in Los Angeles and hovering over the White House and how the federal government has tried to conceal their existence.

He also said the never-before-seen footage of space aliens that made him a believer would be made public in coming weeks.

Among the curious who attended the hearing were seven students from Dakota Ridge High School in Littleton, who made tin foil hats for the outing. "We saw it on *Signs*," said junior Sebastian Kadamany, 17, referring to the M. Night Shyamalan movie about aliens.

Brian Hopp, 23, also was in the audience and said he wants to help Peckman collect signatures to put the initiative on the ballot. Hopp said he believes in space aliens, but he hasn't seen any.

"Not yet. I've been waiting," said Hopp, who is from Steamboat Springs but lives in Denver.

Peckman said he wants to get the initiative on the fall ballot.

"If it doesn't get on the ballot in November, we're OK with that because it would give us a longer period to educate the public about the issues that are part of



Jeff Peckman

Age: 54

Birthplace: Paola, Kan.

Occupation: Owns an Internet business, which is marketing a new technology that reduces stress "because it reduces the chaos of electromagnetic fields," he said.

Education: A year at Maharishi University of Management in Iowa.

Number of times abducted: 0

Ever seen an alien? No. But "I believe they do exist," he said. "I've seen very hard evidence."

Favorite alien movie: *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai: Across the 8th Dimension* — "You gotta see that one," he said — and then *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Hobbies: Ballot initiatives, tennis, hiking, biking and "all the normal, down-to-earth stuff."

Family: Divorced. No children. Lives with his parents.

Daniel J. Chacón

this reality," he said.

Peckman said that his proposal has gained worldwide attention since it was first reported by the *Rocky Mountain News*.

"I just did a radio interview with a South Africa talk show, and the discussion is all the same," he said. "People call in. They say, 'Yes, I've had this experience. We know the government has been hiding this information.' It's time to bring it out."

DENVER POST
Denver, Colorado
May 9, 2008
Credit: P. Noonan

THE DENVER POST

Ballot plan wants E.T. to dial 303

By Christopher N. Osher *The Denver Post*

Jeff Peckman says that as long as Mayor John Hick-enlooper is touting ways to make Denver a world-class city, someone ought to shoot even higher.

"Why not make it a model for the galaxy or even the universe?" Peckman asked Thursday.

Peckman, who in 2003 bedeviled city officials with his offbeat "Safety Through Peace" ballot initiative — which would have required the city to implement stress-reduction techniques — now wants to ask voters to create the world's first Extraterrestrial Affairs Commission for dealing with visitors from outer space.

Peckman met with city officials Thursday for a required "review and comment" session on his proposed ballot initiative. If he succeeds in gathering nearly 4,000 signatures, the matter would go before voters.

Assistant City Attorney David Broadwell and Lauri Dannemiller, on space visit-executive staff director for the City Council, sat down to go over

Peckman's proposed language in a public meeting. They remained straight-faced throughout.

They asked why Peckman is proposing an 18-member commission as opposed to one with 27 members. And why he thought the board would spend \$75,000 a year. They also wanted to know whether he knew of any other jurisdiction with a similar arrangement. Finally, Broadwell said council members had inquired whether the proposal was truly serious.

The existence of extraterrestrials "has been very well known at the federal level," Peckman said. "A great deal of taxpayers' money already has been spent to conceal this as well as deal with the issue."

Peckman, 54, who stands a lanky 6 feet 4½ inches, said he's been contacted by media from other states and countries since news broke of his plan.

Curious workers in Denver's City and County Building came to watch Thursday's meeting, as did a gaggle of local reporters and broadcasters.



Jeff Peckman

NEWS TELEGRAM
Sulphur Springs, Texas
April 17, 2008

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

UFOs are nothing new in North Texas

**BARTEE
HAILE**
Tales From The
Colorful History
Of Texas



A breathless farmer burst into the Stephenville office of the "Dallas News" on Apr. 17, 1897, and excitedly announced, "I have found it!"

"Found what?" asked the local correspondent for the big-city paper.

"Found the airship the 'Dallas News' has been talking about!"

The mysterious airships, presumed to be plural because of the many sightings, were the talk not only of Texas but the western half of the country. First observed over Sacramento, California on Nov. 17, 1896, the phantom fleet had since moved steadily eastward reaching the Lone Star State in early April 1897.

The initial report came from Denison, where a man claimed to have spotted a "brilliantly illuminated" object while walking home at three o'clock in the morning on Apr. 5. His attention attracted by a strange "swishing" sound, he looked up to see one of the incredible intruders a quarter of a mile in the air.

Nine nights later, a "machine" with a bright light resembling that of a locomotive passed over Weatherford. Later that evening, the same or a similar craft visited Corsicana according to several prominent citizens. In the opinion of a doctor, "it was certainly not a meteor, for the reason that the light was intermittent appearing to come or go."

Neither these first-hand accounts nor the hundreds of others in Texas and elsewhere could be explained by man-made craft. The Wright brothers' breakthrough at Kitty Hawk was six years in the future, and balloons were still rare and restricted to daylight ascents.

The inhabitants of Farmersville got a much closer look on Apr. 15. "Fully two-thirds of the citizens were out looking at what they supposed to be a large planet or meteor" but "in a very few moments...the queer thing was almost hanging over the city."

The city marshal said the contraption came within two hundred feet of the ground, and he could plainly see three occupants - two men and a big dog. Another observer swore he heard a clearly visible trio singing the hymn "Nearer My God to Thee."

Also on Apr. 15, the Texas and Pacific operator at the Cresson depot on the southwestern outskirts of Fort Worth saw what he described as "the top of a passenger coach...long and pointed at both ends with (a) powerful searchlight in the front (and) several smaller

ones on the side." "This is dead straight," he said without a trace of doubt. "I am now convinced there is something in this airship business."

Most of Granbury had turned in for the night on Apr. 16, but the editor of the "Hood County Truth" continued to drill the volunteer rifle company. The citizen soldier was so shaken by the sudden appearance of an "air machine" that "he ordered the company to fire on the object, which it did."

ing to sneeze at but hardly the first of its kind. Judging from the newspaper accounts of 1896, unidentified flying objects are nothing new in North Texas.

impression of the accommodations was based not upon speculation but a guided tour of the interior on which he saw "bunks, cooking department (galley), gasoline stove" and other necessities of Gay Nineties life. These passers-by also hailed from the North - the North Pole. A spokesman provided a crash course on the history of their "splendid country" from the original settlement by the ten wandering tribes of Israel to the accidental arrival of several "lost" polar expeditions. The recent spate of UFO sightings in the Stephenville area, 200 in a two-month period, is nothing

through for their interest and hospitality, cranked up the flying cigar and floated away on a southwesterly heading toward Comanche. At almost the same exact hour, a Waxahachie judge was having a close encounter of his own. The jurist and a fishing companion happened upon "five peculiarly dressed men...stretched out full length on some furs" and puffing on their pipes. Parked close-by was an airship roughly half the length of the Stephenville vessel but considerably wider and with room enough for all the conveniences of home. The judge's

two newspapermen, three judges, the district attorney, the mayor and three physicians. Although the travelers refused to allow the delegation on-board the cigar-shaped contraption, apparently powered by a pair of metallic windmills, they spoke at length about their "experimental trip." Working under contract to "certain capitalists of New York," the cloud-hoppers rated their adventure "a great success" and predicted "that in a short time the navigation of the air will be an assured fact."

On the 17th, the aforementioned farmer provided the Stephenville representative of the "Dallas News" with details of the most amazing encounter to date. Early that morning, he had come upon an airship "on the ground." Two strangers, who introduced themselves as the pilot and the engineer, told the Texan they had been forced to land in order to make emergency repairs. The farmer hurried into town, rounded up 23 individuals and led them back to the site "to view the aerial monster." The members of the well-behaved mob included

Sulphur Springs
News-Telegram



Note: Most British Clippings are courtesy of TIMOTHY GOOD
Spanish Translations courtesy of JANE THOMAS GUMA

Maidenhead Express

MAIDENHEAD EXPRESS
Slough, Berkshire, England
MAY 2, 2008

FIREBALLS IN THE SKY

UFOs spotted flying in formation over Taplow

By **Antony Quarrell**
Maidenhead reporter

MYSTERIOUS 'fireballs' were spotted over an area where a UFO (unidentified flying object) was seen a quarter of a century ago.

Orange lights were seen over Taplow between 9.45pm and 10pm on Sunday night.

Victor and Linda Moran of The Buffins, off Hill Farm Road, saw the objects which they said came from the direction of Maidenhead.

Mr Moran recalled: "They were all orange and flying in some sort of formation."

Maria Butler, 24, also of The Buffins, described the UFOs as being tree-top height, she said: "It looked like little balloons with

lights in - there was a good 50 of them."

However, Mr Moran, 65, a Warrant Officer with 332 Air Cadets Squadron, High Wycombe, estimated their altitude as higher than a small aircraft but lower than an airliner.

The incident lasted around five minutes before the silent UFOs headed off toward Burnham. Mr Moran commented: "It was the strangest thing I have seen."

Thames Valley Police received reports of "fireballs in the sky" being seen at around 9.50pm. A police spokeswoman commented: "It was considered that no further action needed to be taken."

One explanation could be the release of 'Chinese lantern' style balloons, which can reach heights

of 2,000 feet, at wedding celebrations at nearby Taplow House Hotel that evening.

However, anomalies remain as unusual flight patterns from three UFOs behind the main formation were noted by the Morans.

Mrs Moran said: "The last three looked like they were trying to catch up."

Another resident reported a household lamp flickering, a phenomenon associated with UFO activity.

Resident Marian Clarke, 73, revealed that she and two neighbours had seen a UFO in the same area 25-30 years ago.

Mrs Clarke recalled seeing a "bright light" and said: "It was very odd - it was like a torpedo shape - I've never seen anything like that

before." She added: "It came from nowhere and it went to nowhere - it was all in a flash."

Quizzed about Sunday's incident, John Hammond, a spokesman for the Meteorological Office, said: "There's no weather phenomenon that would explain it at this stage."

The Ministry of the Defence (MOD) said there had been no reports of UK airspace being compromised.

In 1967 there was a spate of UFO sightings in Slough, recent months have seen UFOs reported over Slough, Windsor and Marlow.

● **Have you seen a UFO? Call the Express newsdesk on 01753 825111.**

Another insight into UFO mystery

REGARDING your Berwyn UFO stories, you have incorrectly reported that something impacted the Berwyn Mountains. The earth tremor was a normal if somewhat large seismic event with its epicentre some 5-7000 meters below Bala.

It was only due to the fact that the explosive sounding tremor and lamp beams observed by Llandrillo residents on Cader Bronwen made the police suspect a plane crash on that part of the range.

The nurse went on the Llangynog road and stumbled upon her object by chance. Unknown to her, was that other witnesses had already seen the craft land and later saw it depart. The authorities knew a UFO had landed (not crashed) somewhere on the range and that is

Letter of the week

why a three man search and rescue team from RAF Valley covered Cader Berwyn and Moel Sych the next day. Despite being requested by the police and dozens of witnesses seeing them, military records have vanished and the MoD now deny that any search team went to the Berwyn Mountains. I know exactly where on the range the UFO sat and it was no more than 1.25 miles from the nurse, that fact having caused me no end of trouble with officialdom.

Late into the night, a blacked out plane or planes flew up and down the range searching for it. A few days later a small unit of soldiers was observed quietly loading two boxes into a wagon on the B4391 near where the nurse saw her object.

That was a covert operation to remove visual evidence from the landing site.

The law says documents must be released, not necessarily the content!

The Government and its military have gone to the most extraordinary lengths to cover up the fact that there was indeed a UFO on Cader Berwyn and documents to be released will prove nothing one way or another.

SCOTT FELTON
Colwyn Bay

DENBIGHSHIRE FREE PRESS
Denbigh, Clwyd, North Wales
April 24, 2008

DENBIGHSHIRE
Free Press

INTERNATIONAL PRESS-CUTTING BUREAU
DENBIGHSHIRE FREE PRESS (SERIES)
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24 APR 2008

EASTERN DAY PRESS
Norwich, Norfolk, England
May 15, 2008

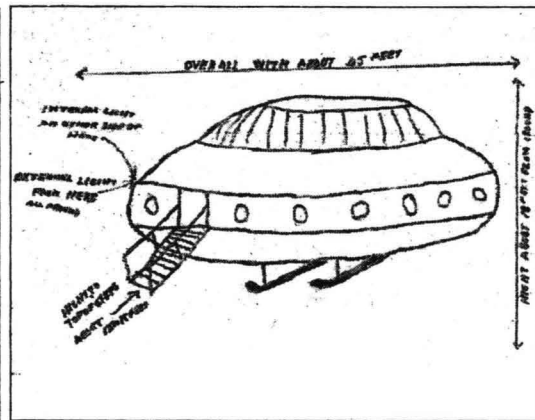
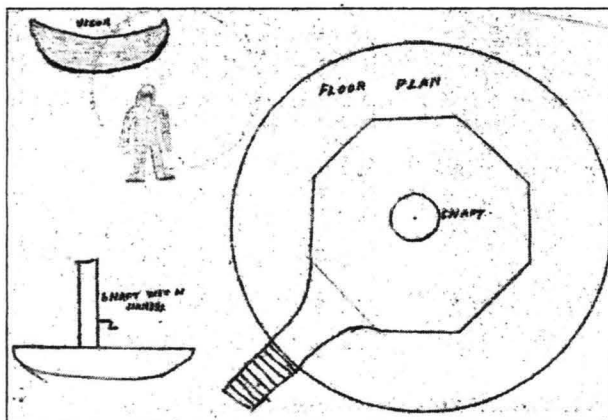


FLASHBACK:
Forester
Vincent
Thurkettle
with his dog
Jessie
pointing to
the spot
where
"the UFO
landed" in
Rendlesham
in December
1980.

BRITAIN/EAST ANGLIA

'Whitewash' claim as lid lifted on the UFO X-files

The Ministry of Defence has finally lifted the lid on UFOs, declassifying an impressive quantity of documents which had been previously locked away. **AURA SABADUS** investigates the files, which include references to a high-profile unexplained UFO encounter in Suffolk 28 years ago.



"X-FILES": Images from the National Archives of drawings of UFOs from a recorded sighting. Files detailing hundreds of sightings of unexplained objects in the skies above Britain have been opened to the public for the first time.

Britain's first batch of "X-files" is available for public consultation as the Ministry of Defence yesterday released eight of 160 voluminous records containing information related to UFO sightings.

But enthusiasts who hope to find out whether little green men do exist, just by leafing through the thousands of pages now open at the National Archives, should reconsider their options.

Following a deluge of Freedom of Information requests after the Act came in force in 2005, the MoD decided to hand the files to the NA, rather than go through the painfully laborious procedure of responding to individual FoI enquiries.

The eight files covering 1978/87 contain details of thousands of sightings of strange lights and objects in the sky all across the UK, including the unexplained Rendlesham Forest case, near an RAF base in south-east Suffolk more than 25 years ago.

The incident, often described as "Britain's Roswell," a reference to a so-called close encounter in the US in 1947, had preoccupied hundreds of UFO buffs who had been campaigning for the last 10 years for the full disclosure of existing documents.

In late December 1980, two security patrols at RAF Woodbridge reported an unidentified flying object. The

servicemen at the base, which was then used by the US Air Force, initially thought it was a downed aircraft. However, entering the forest to investigate, they saw a conical metallic object, suspended in a yellow mist with a pulsating blue and red circle of light above it.

Following the event, the MoD strenuously denied that the incident posed any threat to national security and stated that it was thus never investigated as a security matter. Later evidence indicated that there was a substantial MoD file on the subject and this led to claims of a cover-up. It was alleged that the airmen who investigated the forest were subsequently debriefed and ordered to sign documents that vowed silence.

However, Lt Col Charles Halt (USAF) who tape-recorded the investigation describing the sighting, claimed in an interview with US news channel CNN earlier this year that to this day he has not been debriefed over the incident.

He famously submitted a report on the incident on 13 January 1981 - two weeks after the sighting occurred.

The lack of information spawned a series of rumours and conspiracy theories, including the fact that small beings with domed heads left the craft and that the then base commander had made sign language communication with the aliens.

It was even claimed the incident was videoed by the USAF, but if so, the resulting tape has never been made public.

Sceptics rely on research which shows the supposed Rendlesham Forest UFOs were never tracked on radar, and deny claims that radiation readings collected by Lt Col Halt were a tangible proof that something had happened at the site.

They even went further to suggest that the so-called UFO sighting at Rendlesham was the Russian Cosmos 749 rocket which had re-entered over north-west Europe on 21 December 1980. A report in the Journal of the British Astronomical Association at the time said the craft broke up during re-entry, and the last fragment is thought to have burnt out somewhere east of Clacton in Essex. However, no fragments from the re-entry were ever detected on radar.

The documents, made available for consultation either at the NA or online, include an overwhelming amount of correspondence between eyewitnesses and Whitehall regarding UFO sightings across the UK.

Another 150 files will be opened over the next three years. They contain nothing new on what was already largely known by the wider audience, leading Dr David Clarke, an expert in UFO history, to claim that many will see the

declassification as a "whitewash."

In a detailed briefing available within the files, prepared by the MoD for Lord Strabolgi, then government chief whip, for a debate on UFOs in the House of Lords in 1979, the department says that "there is nothing to indicate that UFO-logy is anything but claptrap."

Regarding the Rendlesham Forest incident, the newly-released files include a damning verdict by a government official. It says: "We believe the fact that Colonel Halt [the RAF base commander] did not report these occurrences to the MoD for almost two weeks after the event, together with the low-key manner in which he handled the matter, are indicative of the degree of importance in defence terms that should be attached to the incident."

As the Government has now washed its hands of a much-disputed subject, there will always be an army of die-hards for whom the truth still remains "out there."

To UFO buffs, conspiracy theorists or amateur cameramen, including Lowestoft man David Spoor who has taken numerous shots of unidentified flying objects in Norfolk, the brilliant lights in the night sky will remain a permanent source of mystery and enchantment.

■ To check the files visit
<http://ufos.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

SOUTHAMPTON: UFO enthusiast welcomes Government 'X-Files'

We are not alone?

By Will Carson

will.carson@dailyecho.co.ukFor up-to-the-minute news and information - dailyecho.co.uk

A SOUTHAMPTON UFO enthusiast has welcomed the disclosure of secret Government papers revealing mysterious sightings in Hampshire.

The Ministry of Defence yesterday released never-seen-before documents detailing UFO sightings across the country.

According to the papers, dubbed the X-Files, UFOs were spotted in the skies of Hampshire more than 40 times in the last ten years.

Ernie Sears, one of the original members of the now defunct Southampton UFO Group, welcomed the disclosure of the files.

The 84-year-old, from Netley, who claims to have been abducted by aliens eight times, said: "We have been waiting for these files to be revealed for years."

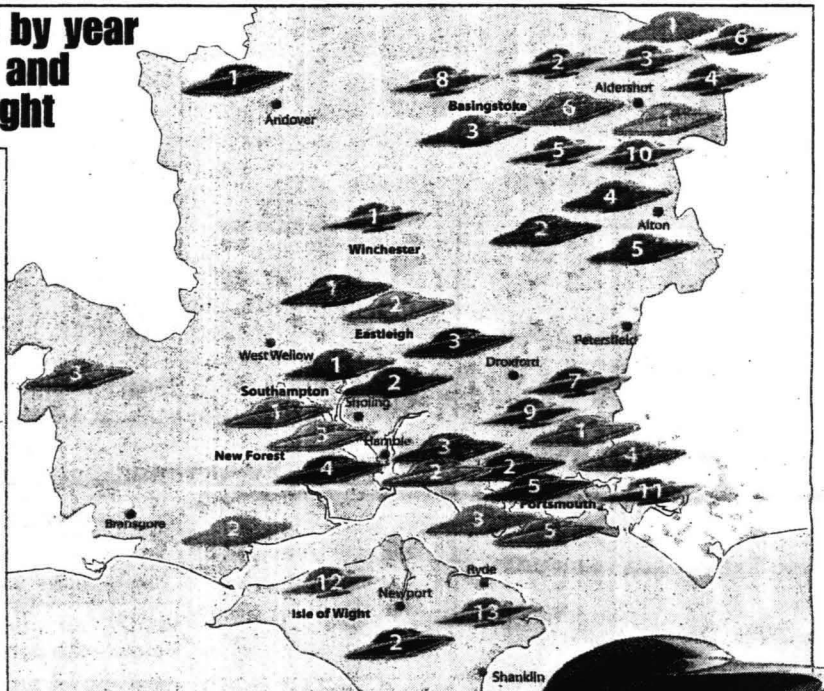
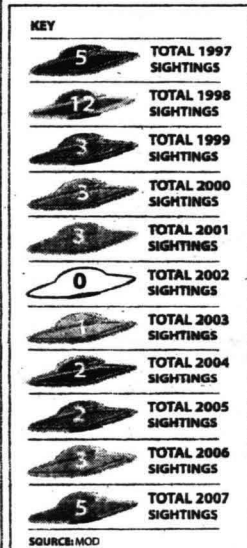
"Although they won't convince everyone to believe in UFOs they give us who do a bit of a spring-board to carry on our message."

"It's a bit of an advance, and it doesn't do us any harm."

"What's interesting though is that our reports of sightings over Southampton Water in 2001 and 2002 aren't listed among the reported sightings."

"However, as I've said all along, it's not up to us but up to the crews and craft to make their presence

UFO sightings by year in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight



felt when they want to."

Information on when and where the sighting took place, as well as what was seen, are included in the listings, which now appear on the National Archives website.

Sightings have been on the increase in the county since 2002, with one UFO spotted in 2003, three in 2006 and five last year.

However, the most popular year for spotting UFOs was 1998, with 14 sightings reported.

One caller reported "a stationary object, adjacent to the moon and twice as bright."

Another said they had seen "a single orange light as bright as Venus moving at aircraft speed which hovered then flickered like a flame."

An MoD spokesman said it kept records of UFO sightings to keep check on UK airspace - not to investigate the possibilities of extra-terrestrial life.

He said: "To date, independent experts have concluded that there are realistic explanations behind alleged UFO reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena."

"Reports are examined by the

Ministry of Defence solely to establish whether UK airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised military activity.

"The Ministry of Defence has no other interest or role regarding UFO matters and does not consider questions regarding the existence or otherwise of extra-terrestrial life-forms."

COMMENT ONLINE
dailyecho.co.uk

Daily Echo

SOUTHERN DAILY ECHO
Southampton, England
May 15, 2008

EVENING POST

NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST
Nottingham, England
May 13, 2008

Did UFO hover over Beeston?

PEOPLE in Beeston have reported seeing a possible UFO.

A bright and stationary triangular light was said to be seen over the town square coupled with a loud noise for about five minutes at around 11.30pm on Saturday.

One resident, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "At first we thought it looked like an helicopter, but maybe not."

Notts police took a call about a possible UFO sighting at 10pm on Saturday. The caller hung up before giving the exact location.

Have UFOs been flying over homes in Shirley?

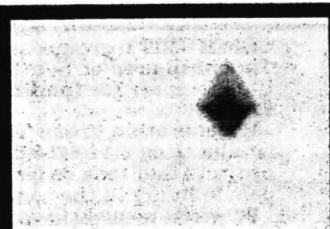
THE *Daily Echo* needs help in solving Hampshire's latest UFO mystery.

Just a day after it was revealed 42 UFOs have been spotted in the county in the past ten years, a new video has emerged of a strange object in our skies.

The footage was captured by company director Will Campbell on Monday, May 5, and shows a cube-shaped object floating high above houses in Shirley.

"I was at home when my housemates Mina and Simon spotted the object out the window. We could barely see it with the naked eye, so I got my video camera out to zoom in to get a clearer picture of the object," the 28-year-old said.

"It appeared to be a black, almost cube shaped. At first it was slowly rising, but then seemed to stabilise at an altitude and move away into the distance. We could see it for about 15 minutes, before it eventually got too far away."



Is it a UFO?

Could it be Hampshire's 43rd UFO sighting? Go to dailyecho.co.uk/video/ to watch the clip and give us your theory.

Daily Echo VIDEO NEWS

By Peter Law

peter.law@dailyecho.co.ukFor up-to-the-minute news and information - dailyecho.co.uk

Mr Campbell was confident the object wasn't a kite as there was "absolutely" no wind that day.

"Its large arc across the sky also means that it was not tethered to the ground in the way an advertising blimp would be. The shape of the object wasn't round like a weather balloon."

"I rather hope that one of the readers of the *Daily Echo* might be able to shed some light on what the object was."

Mr Campbell said he believed extra-terrestrial life was out there, but that he was very sceptical of most UFO claims.

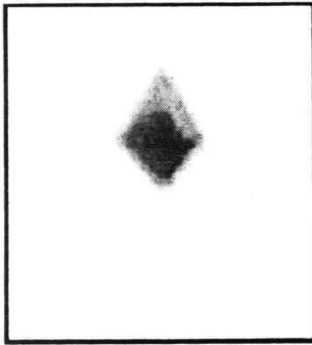
"I don't believe that there is a great deal of UFO activity and I think that the vast majority of sightings can be explained. There are however a few sightings which are very difficult to explain."

HAMPSHIRE CHRONICLE

HAMPSHIRE CHRONICLE
Winchester, Hampshire, England
May 15, 2008

By Peter Law

Mysterious object seen flying over Southampton



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namibian

Namibian (Online)
The Free Press Of Namibia
Windhoek, Namibia
May 21, 2008

By Denver Isaacs

'UFO' sightings at coast

A SHOOTING star? Ball of lightning? Visiting aliens from outer space? Whatever it was, a handful of residents from Usakos are convinced they saw an unidentified flying object (UFO) pass over their heads on Sunday night.

According to Hester Schmidt, who was sitting on her porch with her husband at the time, they saw what looked like a "round ball with a long tail", passing overhead in the direction of Swakopmund.

"We didn't hear anything, but it was extremely fast and it went really low.

I would say the ball was about 18 inches in diameter as we'd call it in the old times," she told The Namibian.

Schmidt and her husband's story was corroborated by at least two others - Thomas Ismael and Sabina Naruses.

"It made a huge light over the town.

My children, my wife, they all saw it.

Everyone is talking about it," Ismael said yesterday.

A quick glance into the history books reveals that this weekend's "UFO" sighting is not the first of its kind in Namibia.

Coastal newspaper The Namib Times reported similar sightings over Walvis Bay in its August 16 1976 edition.

This article is archived on the website www.ufoevidence.org.

In that case, several people reported seeing a "strange phenomenon" passing over "the wilderness in Walvis Bay".

"Some people referred to the phenomenon as a 'Space Monster' and said that with the rising of the sun, the 'monster' faded and later disappeared completely," the article read.

LONDONDERRY SENTINEL

Londonderry Sentinel,
Londonderry, Northern Ireland,
May 13, 2008

UFO expert claims Foyle a portal for E.T's



The 'flying saucer' photographed at Prehen last week

IRELAND'S leading Ufologist has claimed that Lough Foyle may well be a portal for alien spacecraft.

After a photograph appeared in the local press last week, apparently showing a flying saucer hovering over houses at Prehen, the President of the UFO Society of Ireland, Betty Meyler has told the Sentinel, she is not surprised by its appearance.

Speaking about the picture captured by a Galliagh man on his mobile phone, Betty Meyler dismissed all suggestions the image is faked.

"It's not computer generated. If it was the black dots on the car window would have been wiped out as well.

"My first reaction to this picture was wow! This is a very usual sort of

craft; they are usually this shape, cigar shaped or triangular."

She said the proximity of the supposed space craft to the River Foyle at Prehen is also a fairly normal occurrence.

"Craft are normally attracted to the energy created by megalithic sites or rivers and loughs.

"In Leitrim and Roscommon viewings at lakes are common.

"The pattern of evidence suggests water provides portals for craft to come in and go out of this planet.

"Therefore it is possible that the Foyle is also a portal."

In Limavady last February three round objects travelling in triangular formation were spotted by two witnesses on a clear, frosty evening, according to the website ufoinfo.com.

Betty Meyler has recently returned from one of the worlds leading UFO conventions in Las Vegas and stated that there was nothing as strong as the image captured at Prehen at the American event.

The sighting at Prehen is merely more confirmation that Ireland is a regular haunt for alien craft, she said.

"I'd be a liar if I said I knew exactly where this craft travelled from.

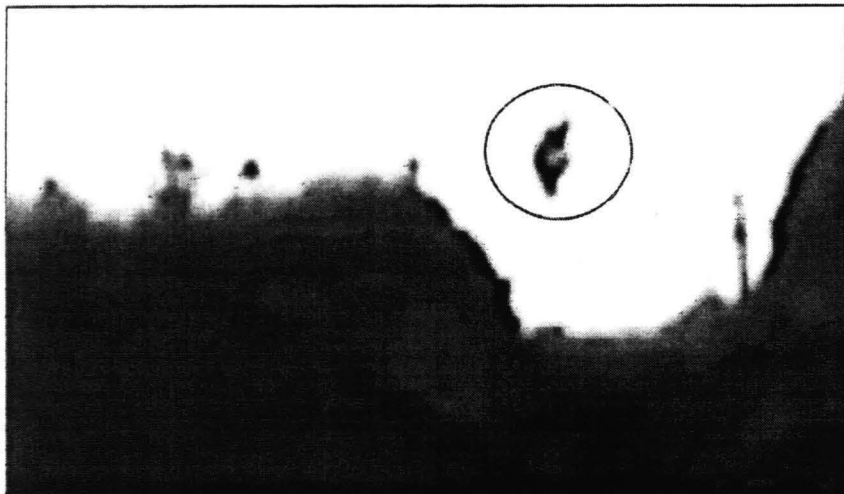
"But I have to say it is very low and very close to the houses," she said.

Betty's most famous rendezvous with alien life forms happened in the early hours of November 8, 1999 when she saw seven cigar shaped craft hurtling across the sky in her native Boyle, County Roscommon.

By VINCE SOODIN



Is UFO a flying human?



Mystery ... above Mexico.

SENSATIONAL sightings of a flying HUMAN above the skies of Mexico could be genuine, says a paranormal expert.

The mysterious woman-like figure was caught on camera as it hovered above mountains in Nuevo Leon city.

UFO watchers said the figure appeared to be wearing a cape leading to claims that it was a witch or wizard when it was first seen in 2006.

Now Mexico's leading Ufologist Anna Luisa Cid says the sightings were true after carrying out her own investigations.

She said: "I think that the possibility

is there. An imaginary object is not recorded on film, nor it produces over 40 witnesses.

Nuevo Leon UFO club managed to film the spooky flying character.

And policeman Leonardo Samaniego also claimed a floating person had dropped out of the sky and landed on his bonnet.

Ms Cid told the Ghosttheory.com website: "In conclusion, from my professional point of view, both cases are real. From officer Samaniego's experience to the UFO club's video. I do not believe the entity to be a witch, but I do know that it is something that we cannot explain."

TODMORDEN NEWS

Todmorden News
Todmorden, West Yorkshire,
England
May 1, 2008

UFO case in focus

FILM and television company Firefly is to feature a famous Todmorden UFO case in a new series it is making for Channel 5.

The London based company is making a series that is factually based and simply tells the UFO sighting stories from as many peoples perspectives as possible, said assistant producer Kerry Western.

She said the series would include a programme about Todmorden man Alan Godfrey's story from 1980, which is one of the best known cases in the world, and also other sightings at the time.

Earlier that year Alan, then a serving police officer, had been one of the first officers called to the discovery of a man's body on a heap of coal at the coalyard that was then next to Todmorden Railway Station.

Mr Zygmund Adamski's body was found in June 1980, his clothes dishevelled and burns on his head.

He had died of heart failure but how his body came to be there, with no attempt to hide it, has never been solved and the case never officially closed by the coroner's court.

In November that year Alan, who had been called to investigate a complaint that cows had got out of a farmer's field in the Ashenhurst area, was driving along the main Burnley Road when he stopped ahead of a bright light and object he sketched in his notebook.

Consciously Alan cannot remember what happened next but under hypnosis with a senior police officer

present described being taken aboard an alien spacecraft.

With reports of a strange movement of light made by police officers in other parts of Calderdale, among others, the case has become one of the best documented of its kind and was linked with the Adamski case by national press, which in 1981 led to a police clampdown on its staff talking about the matter.

Since then Alan has appeared on some of the world's biggest chat shows to talk about the incident, including the Johnny Carson Show, then the biggest show of its type in America and the world.

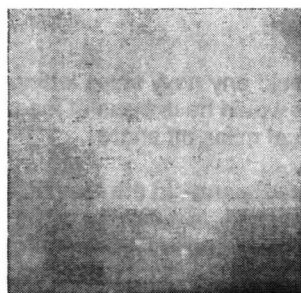
Kerry Western said: "In particular I am searching for anyone involved in the 1980 Alan Godfrey case in Todmorden and any other sightings in that area at the time.

ardrossanherald

ANDROSSAN AND SALTCOATS
HERALD
Androssan, England
May 6, 2008

By Kevin Paterson

UFO Latest



HERALD reporters have been in contact with the MET office, Prestwick Airport and other agencies in an attempt to discover the origins of these unusual lights.

Further exclusive pictures have been obtained from quick thinking eye witnesses, who used their high tech camera phones to capture the strange phenomenon.

GRANTHAM Journal

Grantham Journal
Grantham, Lincolnshire, England
April 28, 2008

By Bob Hart



Monday, 5pm - WEIRD lights in the sky over Grantham were caught on video by Journal reader Andy Aulton.

Andy was hosting a barbecue at his home on Saturday evening when he spotted the orange spheres in the sky.

He said: "All of a sudden this big bright ball appeared, moving from south to north on a steady trajectory at a constant speed.

"The eerie thing about it was there was no noise at all, and as our RAF friends fly over our house regularly we know the sound of jet engines."

Andy saw three of the objects pass overhead in around 15 minutes.

Kent Online (Kent Messenger Group Newspapers)
Aylesford, Kent, England
May 1, 2008

Was light shining through cloud a UFO?



Mock up: an impression of what it may have looked like.

A bright light that changed shape before moving off at speed. That is what a group of friends saw in the sky above Kent recently.

And it was odd enough for them to believe it was a UFO.

Henry Smith and his friends were in Westbrook, Thanet, on Sunday when they saw the light at 8.45pm. "We stood in the garden for a while trying to come up with logical explanations of what it might have been," he said.

"We concluded it wasn't a spotlight from the ground – which we initially thought it was – as it was shining through the cloud, not on to it. It wasn't a plane or a helicopter.

"It was stationary for a time, blending in with the cloud, and then would move off extremely fast."

The British and Aerial Mysteries Society has reported 17 UFO sighting in Britain this year. One, on March 23, came from three people in a car who reported six to eight dull orange lights strung out over a few miles between Orpington and Bromley before suddenly disappearing. The driver, a former pilot, said: "I really am aware of what an aircraft looks like in the dark, and these lights were no aircraft."

It didn't end there for Mr Smith. "What was also quite strange was that about four minutes after it disappeared, we heard two jets high up in the sky proceed towards the area where we first saw the object appear," he added.

"Half-an-hour later we heard a large – possibly a four-engined prop – aircraft which seemed to be circling the area a few times."

PLYMOUTH HERALD
Plymouth, England
March 18, 2008

PLYMOUTH HERALD

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Readership ('000): 96
Display Rate (£/sqcm): £2.57

UFOs witnessed over Devon

2374
UFOs are many things: Venus, planes, helicopters, kites, balloons, hub caps, frying pans and other kitchen implements used by hoaxers. Many sightings are just wishful thinking but scientific fact itself proves that it would be impossible for anything to travel across the universe and visit us. There is no cover-up because there's nothing to cover up. Anyone who thinks that we're being visited by little green men probably thinks that Star Trek is real! Nanu nanull.

Brian Potter, plymouth

Isn't it also true we have the biggest problem with boozers in this area? Could be they are mistaking flying pink

elephants for UFOs?

Mystic Mike, plymouth

It's good that the subject of UFOs is now entering mainstream media. However I do not think hot spots exist. This is a world event that is happening. Also note it is not sci-fi this is real. Spend 30 mins on the internet and you will see something is happening. I set up my web site ilf-ufo about 4 years ago to collect reports from around my home area of East Yorkshire. They have not stopped. I'm not sure how long the truth can be suppressed. And I do think the powers that be know this and can do very little about it.

Paul Sinclair, Bridlington

NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWS
Darwin, NT, Australia
May 1, 2008

By Ben Langford

Miners 'saw UFO'

FIVE mine workers are convinced they saw a UFO fly over them on a remote Territory island.

Mine maintenance worker Arnold Murray said a bright object whizzed over the Gemco mine site on Groote Eylandt as he and his colleagues started the night shift last Friday.

Mr Murray, 32, said the bright light was slightly higher than a plane coming to land – but it was silent. He and four workmates were at the mine site at 7.15pm when he saw an object flying towards them.

"I noticed a star in the sky and it was getting closer," he said.

"As it approached I realised it was at plane level.

"Four other lads walked out of the office and we watched it for a little while. It was vertical from us, there were no flashing lights or noise.

"The plant's pretty quiet at night. (It made) no noise whatsoever.

"All of a sudden it shot off and left a long orange trail behind it. That orange trail just faded out like a shooting star."

Mr Murray said they wanted to know what flew over their heads in the night.

"It wasn't a chopper, it wasn't a plane, we knew that much, and it definitely wasn't a shooting star."

"It blew us out of the water."

Defence spokeswoman Kelly Cooper

said the object was not a military plane.

"There were no military aircraft flying in that area at that time on that day," she said.

She said any navy ships letting off flares would have been at least 200 nautical miles off shore.

Groote Eylandt, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, is near one of the first and most famous UFO sightings in Australia – the "light wheel" reported on January 23, 1964.

Sailors on a vessel off the northeast point of the island reported seeing a circle of pulsing lights rotating clockwise, and they said their compass went "haywire".



LEADER-TELEGRAM

LEADER-TELEGRAM
Eau Claire, WI
May 22, 2008

A monster reward

To solve a mystery and increase visitors, tourism bureau asks for proof of 'Pepie'

For decades folks around Lake Pepin have told tales of a "monster" that inhabits this scenic, wide stretch of the Mississippi River.

Legend has it that the Dakota Indians who lived in the area refused to travel on Lake Pepin in birch-bark canoes because large creatures would puncture the thin skin of those crafts. They only would travel on the lake in more stout dugout canoes made of large, hollowed-out logs.

The story got legs, so to speak, when the Minnesota Historical Society's "Book of Days Almanac" published an item noting that on April 28, 1871, "a lake monster is seen swimming in Lake Pepin."

But through all the years nobody ever has snapped a photo that would prove the existence of the elusive creature, nicknamed "Pepie" by believers.

So in an effort to solve the mystery once and for all - and drum up a little extra tourism at the same time - the Lake City (Minn.) Tourism Bureau recently offered a \$50,000 reward to anyone who presents indisputable proof that Pepie is real.

All you have to do to claim the prize is submit photographs and/or samples of skin or fins that can be studied for a DNA analysis. Just to be sure nobody tries any funny business, any "evidence" will be submitted to the University of Minnesota biology department for verification.

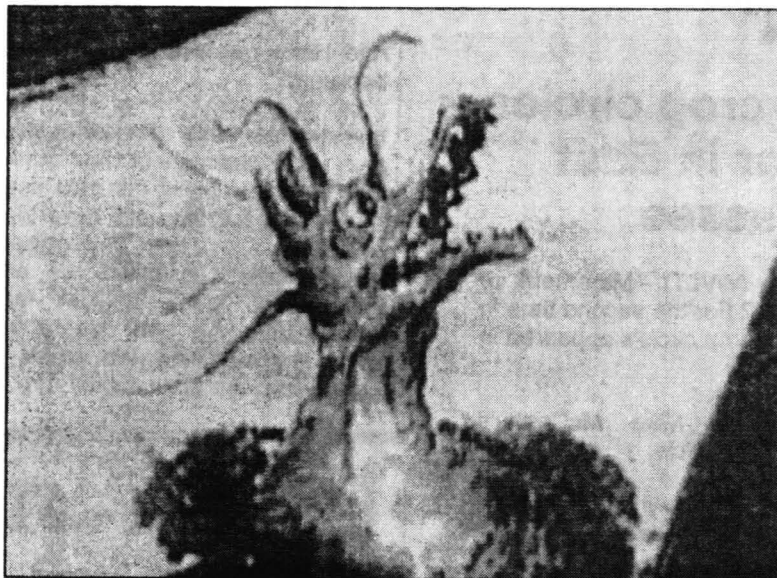
"There have been a lot of people over the years who said they saw something unexplainable on the lake, but up until now there hasn't been

any formal clearinghouse to collect that kind of information," said Larry Nielson, a spokesman and board member for the Lake City Tourism Bureau. "A lot of it is you're not sure what you saw, so how do you report something when you're not sure what it was?"

As the owner of the 125-passenger paddlewheeler "Pearl of the Lake," Nielson said he spends a lot of time on the water and has seen some strange things, including several unidentified floating objects that appear to suddenly submerge.

Puzzling wave

Perhaps his most unusual experience occurred on a calm night



about four years ago not far from the village of Pepin on the Wisconsin side of the river.

"The lake was as smooth as glass and I saw a single wave about a foot and a half high and 100 feet long, but there were no boats in the area and I couldn't figure out what was causing it," said Nielson, who believes the source was something more than one of the 200-pound sturgeon known to inhabit that part of the river. "It looked like something was making it, but what it was I don't know."

Nielson, who freely admits the reward was his idea, said he dreamed it up after watching documentaries about the legends surrounding monster sightings at Loch Ness in Scotland and Lake Champlain in New York and Vermont.

"We have a historical citation, and we aren't getting anywhere near the publicity that Nessie and Champ are. I thought we ought to do something about that," said Nielson, whose monstrous Web site points out that Loch Ness and Lake Pepin are almost identical in size. (The Scottish lake is 23 miles long and 1 1/2 miles wide, while the largest lake on the Mississippi River is 22 miles long and 2 miles wide.) Coincidence? I think not.

Eyewitness account

This is the point where I must admit I'm not totally objective when it comes to this whole monster thing. Yes, readers deserve to know this column is coming from someone who swears that as an 11-year-old boy he saw the Loch Ness monster.

The story goes like this: I was traveling around Great Britain with my parents when, much to my delight as an avid reader of myths and monster tales, they agreed to explore the area around the legendary home of Nessie. As we drove along the western edge of the lake near Urquhart Castle, I stared at the water, constantly scanning, and hoping, for anything out of the ordinary.

Suddenly, I spotted what appeared to be three dark humps protruding from the water and began frantically calling for my dad to pull over so I could take a photo. Thinking I must be imagining things, he kept driving. I watched the mysterious humps through the trees along the road for several seconds and continued to plead with my dad to stop the car. Eventually, he did, but not before the humps apparently submerged, leaving nothing behind but swirls on top of the water and, of course, an unforgettable childhood memory.

My dad won't ever forget that day either - not because of anything he or my mom saw in Loch Ness, but because I still tease him about how he cost me a chance at fame and fortune.

I'll never know what I saw on that 1972 summer afternoon - reflection, wave, log, overturned boat or Nessie herself? So far be it from me to ridicule the people who claim to have seen something unusual in Lake Pepin.

For his part, Nielson classified the beliefs of locals this way: "Some people say they absolutely believe that some kind of monster lives in the lake, some insist there's no such thing and then there's the 95 percent of us who are somewhere in between."

Nielson recognizes that holding the contest won't make believers out of the naysayers, but he hopes the resulting attention will spark imaginations and attract a few visitors who like the idea that some things just can't be explained.

So far, he said, the reward has led to two reports by people who claim to have seen something bobbing out on the lake, but nobody has turned in any evidence.

Whether anyone ever learns anything definitive about a strange creature in Lake Pepin remains to be seen, but, at least for now, the secret remains safely shrouded in the shadowy depths.

WVLT-TV (Online)
Knoxville, TN
May 6, 2008

More crop circles appear in East Tennessee

Madisonville (WVLT) - Man-made or alien-aligned? For the second time in two years, a crop circle's appeared in Monroe County.

Volunteer TV's Mike McCarthy's walked the crop circle.

Does anyone know what made this? Not just yet, but everyone has their own theory. This new designs just down the road from the first crop circle. That appeared last May also in a wheat field. Neighbors say whoever, or whatever did it worked quickly and quietly.

Beyond still-standing blades, there are others pushed in a perfect pattern.

"I don't know whether it's man-made or not," resident Johnnie Helm said.

It's the second Monroe County Crop Circle in two years. These lines and curves appeared in Johnnie Helm's 50-acre wheat field Monday morning.

"I didn't hear nothing. And I'm up and down all night," Helm said.

Her neighbor, Jean Merrell first spotted the bent blades.

"I always look out the window, and I thought, my goodness, what's in the field? What's happened?" resident Jean Merrell said.

The "what"? Well, the crushed crops form a triangle. At each corner a pair of circles, but "how" and "who" wilted the wheat is a crop quandary.

"I really don't think it's man-made. I don't believe anyone could do that,

that quick and so perfect," Merrell said.

These thin lines are the only paths in and out. Helms says they're from crop fertilization and they've been here months. The new field phenomena's less than a half mile from last May's Crop Circle just outside Madisonville. Investigators ruled that design "non man-made." Crop circle researches came to investigate last year's design. As for this one, they want to come back.

"They'd have to be very careful, cause I ain't talked to the man I rent it to," Helm said.

For now the rows of curved crops inspire...

"I think it's something fantastic myself," Merrell said.

...Not scare.

"If it's aliens and they want me, they'll come and get me. Will you put up a fight? No. Why? I'll talk to them. What if you don't speak Alien? They better speak English," Helm said.

And Helm wants to know...why her backyard?

Investigators with the independent crop circle researchers organizations plan to scientifically test this design next week, but they still have to get helm's permission. We've haven't revealed the exact location on purpose. Her land's private property. She doesn't want strangers trampling the crops. So public visits are off-limits, for now.

LEADER-POST

THE LEADER-POST
Regina, Saskatchewan
May 14, 2008

By Jana G. Pruden

Cow found mutilated in Saskatchewan

Pregnant cow found with missing parts in Stockholm area

REGINA -- A macabre mystery that pops up around the world has surfaced once again on a secluded Saskatchewan farm.

The most recent case of cattle mutilation occurred in the Stockholm area, just yards away from where Heather Harris and her husband slept. Harris was out tending the cattle the next day when she made the grisly discovery.

"It's hard to describe what she looked like ...," Harris said, recalling finding the cow's corpse. "I told my husband, 'You don't even want to see this.'"



This cow was found mutilated near Stockholm.

Courtesy of Heather Harris

The pregnant cow was missing its rectum, female organs, udder, navel, top and bottom lips, one ear and one eye. The animal's tongue appeared to be cut out.

Harris said there was no sign of blood in the area, and all of the injuries appear to be precise incisions. Harris said there were no signs of struggle in the area, and no tire tracks, footprints or blood anywhere around the animal.

The gruesome scenario appears to be a classic case of "cow mutilation," a bizarre occurrence attributed variously to natural predators, aliens, government operatives, cults and a variety of other elusive sources.

Mutilations first rose to public prominence in the United States in the 1960s, and have continued to surface around the world ever since -- including from time to time in Saskatchewan.

Documented mutilations are remarkably similar and often involve the removal of one ear, the animal's eyes, udders and sexual organs, tongue and lips. They are also characterized by a lack of blood and what appear to be clean incisions and cuts.

Many who have studied cow mutilations maintain the deaths are attributed entirely to natural sources, in particular the effects of scavengers and predators, coupled with the effects of dehydration and decomposition.

But others aren't so sure. Some surmise the mutilations are the work of alien spacecraft conducting experiments or gathering genetic information from the animals, and others believe they are conducted by cults or Satanists who use the animals' blood and body parts for rituals.

Still others maintain the mutilations to be part of a government conspiracy -- whether testing high-powered laser weapons or doing covert research about radiation, mad cow disease, or other cow illnesses which could spread to humans.

After looking at pictures of the remains of Harris' animal, veterinarian Dr. Kathleen Francis said she was shocked.

"Anything that could make that kind of incision took a little bit of skill," said Francis, who has been a vet for 11 years. "There was absolutely no blood anywhere around the carcass which was really weird, you know, to be able to make those kinds of cuts without losing blood somewhere on the ground."

Francis discounted predators as a possible cause of the cow's death, noting there were no bites or claw marks on the carcass. She said the bloodless wounds could mean some kind of electric cautery unit was involved.

"I'm not so convinced I believe the alien theories, but I could certainly go for the cult or that kind of thing happening. ..." she said. "It kind of makes you think -- strange things are out there."

Harris said the experience has left her shaken and she is unwilling to go outside by herself at night. But after reading up on some of the theories, Harris says she still isn't sure what to think about the bizarre occurrence.

"I know from what I've seen on the Net they put it down to cults or extraterrestrial ... but I don't know," she said. "I just know it's very, very freaky."

THE REPORTER

Sand Mountain
THE SAND MOUNTAIN REPORTER
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By Lionel Green

In search of Bigfoot

ONEONTA — Hawk Spearman remembers his face-to-face encounter with the creature.

It was April 1999 in Coshocton County, Ohio.

"We had just moved to this location about month or so before," he recalls. "I walked up the hill behind our home to look at some large humanlike foot tracks I had found a few weeks before.

"The foot tracks were close to a power line alley. I found the old tracks but did not find any new ones. I decided to look around to see what kind of wildlife I could find and look for a good area to hunt in later in the year.

"I was walking and looked up towards the top of the hill about 100 yards or so away and saw what looked like two people standing, facing each other beside the telephone pole. I did not know if they were hunting or what, so I decided to leave the area.

"I turned to leave, walked about 50 yards and right in front of me stood a large, hairy, bipedal creature about 6 1/2 or 7 foot tall. It had hair from head to toe. The hair on its head was longer than on the rest of its body.

"It was reddish brown in color. I would compare the shoulders to someone wearing football pads only wider.

"It had a large rock — one that would take two good men to carry — in its hands, and at first, it was paying no attention to anything in particular. Then it looked up and saw me standing there. We both screamed about the same time. It threw the rock towards me, and it landed right in front of my feet. "I took off down the hill and it ran up the hill towards the phone pole. It took me a good 20 minutes or more to walk that far up the hill, but only took me five minutes to get back down.

"I never in my life expected to see anything like that, but I am very fortunate that I did."

The encounter set Hawk on his current quest and is ultimately the reason he founded an Alabama chapter of the Elusive Primates of North America, or EPNA, earlier this year. The fledgling chapter is a volunteer group with about six members and is looking for more. Membership is free.

Hawk and his wife, Karen, have dedicated almost a decade of their lives to finding proof of Bigfoot's existence.

"We have been in this research for about 10 years," says Hawk, who operates an animal control business. "We do not see ourselves as experts in this field of research because in our opinion there is no such thing as an expert in Bigfoot research and never can be until Bigfoot is proven to exist without a doubt.

"There are many very good researchers from all walks of life, past and present, who have trekked through the woods for many years and have invested time and energy into proving the existence of this creature by following leads and interviewing countless eyewitnesses.

"Many foot tracks have been cast and even more pictures and videos taken, but to date there still has not been enough proof to satisfy the skeptics or the scientific world that Bigfoot really does exist."

Hawk and Karen live in Altoona, a small town in Etowah County about 30 miles from Albertville. They were hosts to a meeting of EPNA this month at the Oneonta Public Library.

On display were the plaster cast of an odd-looking footprint, hair samples from some creature, audio recordings of strange sounds in the forests and photos showing the well-camouflaged visage of something ... or was it simply an eerie pattern of shadows and light?

Hawk will not say definitively if the creature he saw was Bigfoot. But he wants to solve the mystery one way or the other.

EPNA investigates

Enter EPNA, the group dedicated to answering the question, "Does Bigfoot exist?"

The group investigates strange footprints, sightings and sounds reported in the region. EPNA is currently working on a handful of active investigations.

When EPNA surveys a location, its members typically set up voice-activated audio recorders and motion-sensitive cameras near a bait bag in isolated spots.

The Spearman's are focused on Marshall, Blount, Etowah, Jackson and Shelby counties but are willing to delve into substantive cases in all parts of the Southeast. Last year, Hawk says he joined an expedition in Texas looking to find Bigfoot. It came up empty, but Hawk notes, "A lot of people said they seen some things."

At EPNA's meeting this month, two residents requested the group look into possible cases in their neck of the woods.

"I want to make the meetings comfortable for people to talk about this," says the 35-year-old Hawk. "It takes a lot of courage to talk about it."

Hawk shrugs off any ridicule he receives for his interest in the semi-mythical beast.



"I have people calling me that crazy Bigfoot guy," he says. "My wife's called me worse."

Frankie Green, of Oneonta, reported strange sounds and footprints in her area, adding older relatives mentioned similar incidents in the past involving screams that sent frightened hunting dogs running back home.

"Whatever it is, it's been around a long time," says Green, who discovered EPNA in a newspaper article. "Some of my neighbors have seen and heard things. It sounded like a bull hollering. It was a weird sound, but there's no cattle around. It's not too far from Palisades Park. There's a lot of wild terrain in this part of North Alabama."

Hawk agrees.

"There's a lot of caves back there and a food supply big enough to support a 'squatch," he says.

In fact, Hawk was busy Thursday setting up a camera and recorder at the Green location after a flurry of activity last weekend. Hawk says Green's daughter and son-in-law heard screams in the woods so convincing they thought a child was lost and called law enforcement.

Hawk says three dogs turned up missing and another canine was injured in the area that night. He suspects a large cat but is reserving judgment because the sounds came from the area where suspicious Sasquatch-like footprints were photographed in 2005.

Regina Sloan, of Straight Mountain near Springville, also attended the EPNA meeting in May. She heard a high-pitched scream in the wild near her home.

"My husband thought I was playing a trick on him," Sloan says. "He heard it and came running in the house to get his gun. He said it sounded like something that was hurt. I've heard several stories from people with similar descriptions, like no dogs would bark when they heard the screams."

Sloan's mother, Judy Keener, remembers hearing those screams in the same area in the 1970s. The sounds still resonate three decades later.

"It did it three times and nobody else heard it," Keener says. "I was scared to death."

Neither mother nor daughter speculates about what made the screaming noises.

CONTINUED ON
NEXT PAGE >>

CONTINUED FROM
PREVIOUS PAGE

"If it exists, God created it and it's OK with me," says Keener. "As long as it doesn't come near me."

Is Bigfoot here?

EPNA plans to investigate cases in the Boaz and Lake Guntersville areas soon. Bigfoot probes are usually sparked by calls from concerned residents.

The Spearmans say many sightings occur right before storms and in the presence of a significant swarm of locusts or grasshoppers. Hawk thinks Sasquatch uses the abundance of bugs for a protein fix.

With seven reports in the past two months, Hawk anticipates increased Bigfoot activity as people get out more in the summer. The Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization has documented 50 reported listings in Alabama, according to its Web site.

Washington, with 433, has the most in the U.S.

Hawk stresses his intentions are purely scientific.

"We will not kill the creature," he says. "We will attempt to capture it for scientific study. If they're a new and unknown species, they need to be protected."

Hawk's belief is tempered with a healthy skepticism and is quick to note Bigfoot research is filled with a lot of fraudulent claims.

With his coyote-teeth earrings dangling from his lobes and long dark hair flowing down his back in a ponytail, the half-Apache and half-Cherokee Indian speaks bluntly about his work.

"We investigate all calls seriously," Hawk says.

"I believe Sasquatch is prehistoric men or cave men. But we leave it up to individuals to believe or disbelieve."

His wife, Karen, is also part-Cherokee. They wrote a lengthy publication documenting their research called "Bigfoot Seekers." The couple is also mentioned as Ohio researchers in a book by Loren Coleman called "Mysterious America."

Some of the recorded vocalizations Hawk played at the meeting come from Marshall and Etowah counties. Many of the noises sounded like apes and monkeys in a jungle.

"We've had activity in Snead and Guntersville, Boaz and Blountsville," he says.

One of the latest sightings occurred earlier this month in Etowah County, when a woman reported seeing a 7-foot-tall hairy creature crossing a road on two feet while she was driving between 7:30 and 8 in the morning.

Hawks calls such sightings urban 'squatches and says they'll become more prevalent because of human encroachment into previously undeveloped areas.

"A lot of them are seen in broad daylight," he says.

Hawk describes cases where humans were allegedly kidnapped by Bigfoot, and even witnesses who say they've seen family units. Hawk thinks the research community should call the younger Bigfoot by the name "squatchlings." He lists people, like park rangers and politicians, who've reported sightings. Still, the creature is not taken too seriously by most in the scientific community, who often classify its cryptozoological study as a pseudoscience.

Hawk tries to get expert opinions on possible evidence when he can. For example, he shows a hair sample with part of the skin still attached that he sent off for DNA testing to a

primate research center. He says it came back "unknown."

The hunt goes on

The Spearmans are devoted to the search for Sasquatch.

"I imagine I could buy four or five new cars and a new house just off what we've spent the last 10 years," Hawk says.

The Bigfoot bug even bit Karen's 16-year-old daughter, Mandy.

"Finding the tracks is what excites me," says Mandy.

"We don't like to take small children with us when we go out," Hawk quips. "We prefer older children for bait."

Peculiar tracks, fleeting glimpses, simian sounds, pungent odors ... but no bona fide evidence. How can Bigfoot stay so elusive in the modern world?

"We both believe the Sasquatch has remained a mystery because it is that - elusive," says Karen. "Let's say you lived in the woods and everything you needed was right there. There would be no reason for you to venture away from what you know. For example, in the year 2000 in South America, an Indian tribe, that had been thought to be extinct for over 300 years, walked out of the rain forest.

"They were wearing their native clothing, speaking their native language, everything they have done for centuries. The reason they walked out of the rain forest is because people were destroying a part of the rain forest those people lived in and they had no choice.

"For years there had been reports of people seeing the members from this tribe roaming in the forest, but no one could find any evidence of them. When people reported about the sightings of these Indians, they were told it was impossible for these

sightings to have taken place because the tribe was extinct and had been for over 300 years.

"If an entire tribe of people can stay elusive for over 300 years, it would be much easier for a Bigfoot, who we believe live in small family units, to stay hidden for centuries."

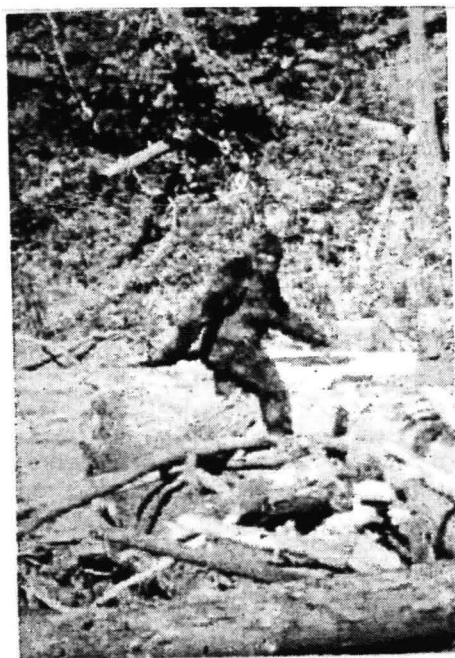
Karen says she just hopes Bigfoot is not killed by a human looking to make a buck.

"There's so many people that want to kill them for like a trophy," says Karen. "They think they're going to make a million dollars. They're not."

Adds Hawk: "Our only goal is to prove the existence of Sasquatch without killing it."

The Spearmans admit they're concerned about the consequences of their own search.

"We have asked ourselves many times if proving the existence of Bigfoot will help this gentle creature, or will it destroy something that has evaded man for centuries?" Karen says. "Should we move forward or should we discontinue our research? Until we can answer this question or someone can give us an answer ... the search continues."



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