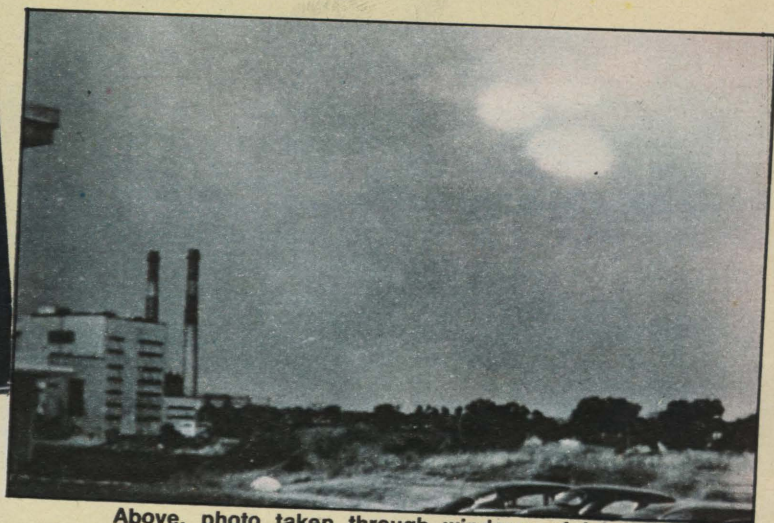




Above, possible UFO filmed by ATV on 26 October 1971. Below left, Sheriff Ackerman holding pictures of spacecraft at Annual Spacecraft Convention in USA



Above, photo taken through windows of laboratory at Salem Air Base, USA, at 9.35am on 16 July 1952. The objects moved at great speed



Mary Evans Picture Library



Left, UFOs or lenticular (shaped like a lens) clouds - which look like UFOs - seen in Taormina, Sicily, in 1954. Above, possible UFO seen in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on 18 April 1965

UFO'S - DO THEY REALLY EXIST?

Young Observer talks to some people around the world who may have seen them
 Edited by JANET CRUMBIE

Flying object on film in England

For many years, Lionel Hampden worked as a reporter and interviewer on a daily television magazine programme in the Midlands. His assignment for 26 October 1971, was to drive with his film crew and director to a village near Enstone in Oxfordshire and interview an old shepherd.

They met the shepherd and set up their 'gear' just below the ridge of a hill. The opening sequence would be the two of them walking over the top of the ridge. Filming began and Lionel and the shepherd started their walk.

'All of a sudden,' Lionel said, 'we turned and looked up and to one side. The extraordinary thing was that we all did it at the same time as if by instinct.' What they saw in the sky on that sunny morning was

a bright orange object which appeared to be about the size of a ping-pong ball. 'At first I thought it was the brightly painted nose cone of a training aircraft, catching the sunlight. After all, there was a military airfield nearby.'

Then the object started to move, accelerated and went through an S-type manoeuvre, leaving a vapour trail. As they filmed the 'thing' swooping around, it stopped quite still and the vapour trail vanished. 'It was totally silent,' said Lionel, 'and, as far as I'm concerned, aeroplanes don't just stop in mid-air.'

After hovering for a few seconds, the 'thing' flew away. The film has since been examined by experts, the military, space agencies and meteorologists. But no one has explained its secret. 'I am convinced I saw a UFO,' said Lionel, 'and I still am. More important - we FILMED it.'

St John Howell

Flying saucers in the sky

Sightings of unidentified flying objects (UFOs), and even close encounters of the kind reported here, are by no means confined to the 20th century. One of the first written reports of a UFO was made by Thutmose III, the warrior pharaoh, who records on papyrus that his people were so alarmed by fiery circles in the sky that he called out the army.

Most people now refer to UFOs as 'flying saucers', a description which dates only from 1947. An American named Kenneth Arnold described nine discs skipping along close to his small aircraft in the Rocky Mountains as looking like 'flying saucers'. Two of the most responsible organisations studying the UFO phenomenon are Contact International UK and the British Unidentified Flying

Object Research Association (BUFORA).

Tim O'Brien, scientist, archaeologist and academic, is a past president of BUFORA. He says: 'In the early days of serious study of UFOs, most people had theories based on the paranormal or extra-terrestrial. But some of the things we have discovered in recent years are so strange, so unbelievable, that we just cannot begin to understand, or even speculate, what they are. What we must do is make the most precise records of every sighting and feed them into the computer. Then we might get some idea of what is going on.'

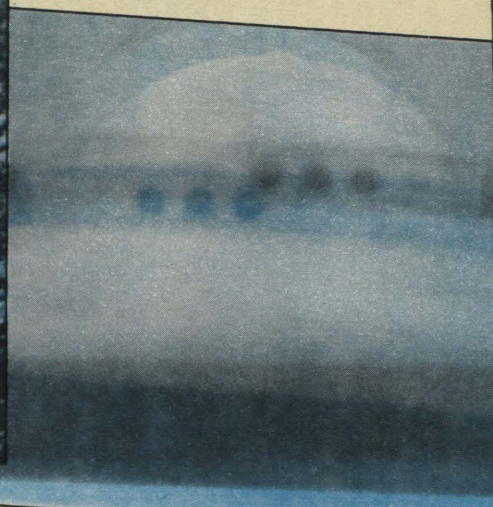
David Radley

Killed by shock in Italy

UFOs ceased to be an outlandish joke to fishermen in southern Italy after two experienced sailors were killed in bizarre circumstances.



Above, possible UFO seen in Peralta, New Mexico, on 16 June 1963



Above, Cedric Allingham described this as a 'flying saucer from Mars'. He saw it on 18 February 1954 at Lossiemouth in Scotland



Strange object seen over New York City at 11pm on 28 July 1952



Left, seen in Escondido, California at 10am on 10 July 1956 was this object: 60m in diameter, 13m in height, hovering at about 300m. Above, cloud seen in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1957. Right, UFO-like cloud from 'Mysterious World' book



R. Thompson

Gianfranco and Vittorio De Fulgentiis died on 12 October 1978. They were brothers from the town of Martinsicuro, near Pescara. A search found their boat on the sea bed but undamaged and the brothers had strange puncture marks on their faces. Other fishermen had reported seeing red balls of light following their boats.

The Italian navy investigated these phenomena. 'I had received reports from sailors about strange lights in the sky and did not believe a word,' said Lieut-Col Piero Gallerano of Pescara. 'These lights often follow boats. After one report a navy patrol boat saw a red light at sea level. This light shot up about 300m and disappeared. The boat's radio and radar jammed and the red disc was gone in about four seconds. We are sure it was not a signal rocket - it was a very fast unidentifiable flying object.'

Paul Pickering

A close encounter in Scotland

Robert Taylor is a quiet forester, *not* the sort of man to indulge in weird flights of imagination. But what he says happened to him on 9 November 1979 in Livingston, West Lothian, takes some believing.

That morning started much like any other: up at 7, breakfast, and off in his truck. He decided to check the gates against sheep getting in and eating the young trees. 'I walked down a forest ride,' he says, 'and as I turned the corner I couldn't believe it.

'There was a huge dome-shaped vehicle just sitting there and I could see right through it.' The machine, he reckons, was 6 to 10m across and 6m high. It stood on narrow rails each side. 'After a few seconds, two balls about a metre in diameter - like water mines

on long spikes - rolled out and came at me on my left and my right. I heard the spikes hitting the ground, and when they reached me there was a sickening, powerful smell. They tugged and lifted me, I felt my trousers being torn and that's all I can remember.' He must have been unconscious for almost half an hour and he came to some time between 10.30 and 10.45.

There were rips in his heavy serge trousers, leaving flaps an inch wide and two inches long on the seams each side near the pockets. In the grass were imprints like hoofmarks, about 12cm wide and digging down about 5cm at the front.

The police took photographs and the area was fenced off. Inevitably, there was a lot of scepticism but Bob remains convinced. 'I'd like to come across the vehicle again. I don't think its occupants meant to harm me.'

William Raynor

Mysterious meeting in Wales

A close encounter of the third kind is what 14-year-old Trevor Pratt from Hutton in Essex reckons he experienced. He was on holiday with his parents at Dovey Vale in Montgomeryshire, in 1975. At 5pm on 22 July, he went alone up a small hill where he saw a strange object. Later he described it to UFO researchers as 'like a paddling pool' about 13m in diameter and 3m high with circular lights at the base. Under a transparent disc were jelly-like beings composed of white discs which were pulsating and changing all the time.

Eventually the craft disappeared against the background and since then Trevor has experienced many after-effects. These include temporary blindness plus a personality change.

Paul Pickering

'I'm not fooled by UFO'

You've probably been watching Yorkshire TV's fascinating series 'Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious World' which looks at unexplained phenomena on earth. The programme on UFOs (unidentified flying objects) will be shown on Tuesday at 8.30pm.

In the book of the same title written by Simon Welfare and John Fairley (Collins, £8.95), Arthur C Clarke casts considerable doubt on UFOs' existence. 'In every single case, my UFO eventually turned into an *identified* flying object. Almost every one would have fooled most laymen: a couple fooled me for a while, and I consider that I have some expertise on the subject. . . The only thing I'm reasonably sure about UFOs is that they're *not* spaceships. That explanation is too naive and geocentric.'