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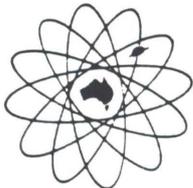
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# editorial

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## UFOs - THE NEW SCIENTIFIC ADVENTURE

The attitude one develops to the phenomenon of unidentified flying objects, whether it embraces the possibility of extraterrestrial visitations or not, will have no effect on extraterrestrials if they exist. Theories abound but no solid evidence, conclusively proving or disproving the reality of ETI, has ever been established.

Before we contemplate the motives of extraterrestrials and embark upon attempts to contact them, we have to verify beyond doubt that a percentage of unexplained events are directly attributable to alien visitors. This proof cannot be based upon the question marks remaining at the end of investigations, no matter how exhaustive.

Many people believe it is only logical to assume that there is other intelligent life in our vast universe. However, it does not necessarily follow that this alien life has chanced to pass our way. But if it has, we are on the threshold of the greatest revolution to have ever faced humanity. Contact with alien life, possessing the technology to travel freely in space, would alter our view of ourselves and our position in the universe. This altered view may have not only political but spiritual dimensions.

Tangible UFO-ETI related evidence, at this point in time, is so elusive that those against the existence of ETI are in a more secure position than those for. As we are all aware, misperceptions of mundane objects and events account for the majority of UFO reports. However, it does not necessarily follow that all UFO reports are of misperceived mundane objects and events. Unexplained cases do occur which leave physical traces and have physical and psychological effects on witnesses - these cause heated debate but no-one has the last say.

Because the potential for new knowledge, resulting from contact with extraterrestrials, is incalculably great, governments could not afford not to monitor the course of UFO research - it is good insurance. This involvement could be anything from the maintaining of routine files to active intervention - it would depend very much upon the nature of the particular government concerned and the stakes involved.

Likewise it is to an investigator's ultimate advantage to objectively allow for the possibility of ETI. This allowance will not reveal a diminished intelligence to other ufologists. Though, human nature being what it is, one will draw praise or criticism no matter what approach one takes to the subject. Inevitably those who expect quick answers to explain every facet of the UFO phenomenon will quickly fall away from the subject declaring knowingly that because they personally found no answers that no answers exist. Obviously this is an egocentric and extraordinarily narrow view of the situation.

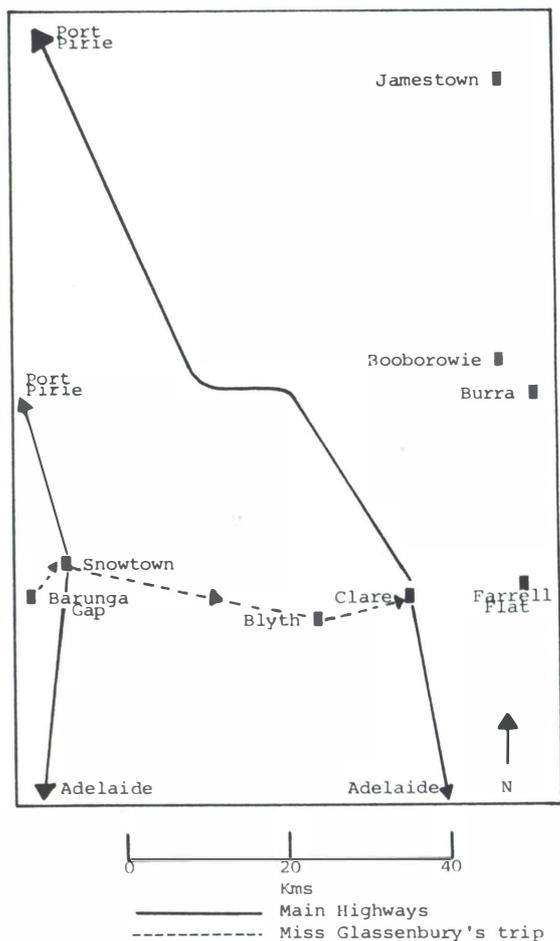
To extract the maximum amount of information from any data we must research and speculate to the maximum extent. Individuals tend, however, to theorise in one specific area which is necessary overall but, unfortunately, generates a lot of internal politics for, because of its sheer size, an overall picture is difficult to see. As always, in 1982, UFOFORAN will strive to present the BIG PICTURE to its readers.

Ufology is not coming to an end because of scientific scrutiny, but rather a beginning, for our growing knowledge of the subject increases our potential for new knowledge - this ever increasing knowledge results in the expanding involvement of science in the mysterious realm of unexplained UFO events. Eventually fact shall be separated from fiction.

---

# UNKNOWN OBJECT PACES CAR

BY KEITH BASTERFIELD (UFORAN Correspondent South Australia)



A 21 year old dental nurse of Clare, South Australia, who reported being "paced" by an unusual object, was interviewed by Ray Brooke, Liaison Officer, for UFO Research (SA).

This report has been compiled from Ray's interview tape, his comments and a report form completed by the lady concerned. She has kindly consented to the use of her name.

The location of the event was over roads between a farm west of Snowtown (130km N-NW of Adelaide) and Clare (125km N of Adelaide). It occurred between the hours of 10.35p.m. and 11.05p.m. on Sunday October 25, 1981.

Miss Christine Glassenbury was driving a Ford Falcon XD sedan by herself on her way home to Clare when the incident occurred. The night was clear, starlit and moonless. We take up the story in Miss Glassenbury's own words:

"I had been staying on a farm at Barunga Gap for the weekend and left there in my car on Sunday night at 10.30p.m. I had travelled about two miles (3km) when a very bright white light took my attention to my right. It was quite high at that stage and I wasn't really alarmed. When I had gone about another three miles (5km) it had come down much lower and was a little higher than the level of my car. Here I became quite frightened and wound up all my windows, locked the doors and put the radio on.

It seemed to be distinctly following me right away. It was a huge and very bright oblong light and appeared about twenty to thirty feet (6-9m) long. My eyes hurt if I looked at it for very long. I couldn't see any distinct outline, but it was very supernatural and definitely not a plane or helicopter. Going through Snowtown the object went higher, still to my right, and then came down again just after the town. I turned right onto the dirt road, between Snowtown and Blyth, and had only gone a short distance when it changed direction and went directly behind the car.

When the object did this I could see it in my rear vision mirror. I could see, too, that its angle when directly behind me was different. It seemed to have a circular front with a very large main front light. The object stayed behind me for about twenty seconds and my radio started to go very static with a type of humming noise and cut out completely a few times. Then the object went to my right and followed alongside my car. Just after this it seemed to 'throw out' an enormous beam of light. Something similar to an extremely bright spotlight which lit up the surroundings so I could see all the paddocks on my right hand side and all the road behind me. This lasted for about five seconds and then went suddenly dark again. When I think of it now, and of the picture in my mind, it was really quite pretty. Everything was illuminated, but very strange.

# UNKNOWN OBJECT PACES CAR

From then on the object kept changing direction from being alongside of me to behind me and never went to my left at any time that I noticed. Twice I saw an orange-yellow haze towards the back of it. At this time I passed my first car heading towards Blyth - I'm sure it was a Falcon ute (utility). When I went through Blyth the object went higher but was still on my right side.

On the straight stretch of bitumen, between Blyth and the hills, the object was at its lowest. It seemed about one hundred feet (30m) away from me but I think it would have been two hundred and fifty feet (75m) from the ground. On this straight stretch of road the object illuminated the whole surroundings again, the same as before. Here I accelerated to 150km an hour and then dropped back, but it was with me the whole time.

As I started to go up into the Blyth hills the object seemed to be heading for the trees in the valley. Going up the first hill I had trees on my right and was looking up high through the car window and couldn't see it at all - but when I happened to look down I saw the object halfway between the trees. From there it seemed to move very slowly, even perhaps hovering, and just before Armagh, which is about a mile from Clare, it just disappeared.

I do remember Venus being very bright that night, but nothing else to attract my attention".

## INVESTIGATION

Ray Brooke talked to Christine, viewed the car she was driving, and reviewed the locality with her. Questioning revealed that the object was seen as well as Venus which at this stage was at 17hrs right ascension,  $-26^{\circ}$  declination, and brightness magnitude  $-3.7$ , setting at 2230 hours central standard time (2330 daylight saving) in the SW sky. The object was "larger" than Venus, to the left of, and lower in elevation than Venus.

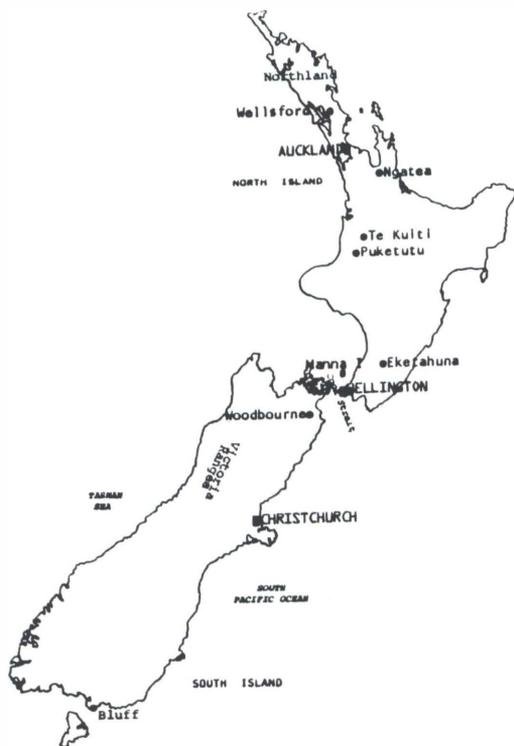
The size (moonsized), colour, shape and behaviour of the object appears to rule out aircraft or other conventional explanations and leaves this report as one of the few local "unknowns" for 1981.

## OTHER REPORTS

1. November 19, 1981 - A Mrs J. Button of Booborowie said that while driving along the Hallett road about 10km south of Jamestown she, a friend and two teenage children, spotted a cigar shaped light apparently following their car.
2. December 5, 1981 - At 1 a.m. a girl from Clare was driving between Blyth and Clare when she observed an unusual orange light in the sky.
3. December 5, 1981 - A similar orange light was sighted by two girls travelling from Clare to Blyth between 1.30 a.m. and 1.45 a.m. It became smaller and disappeared.
4. December 9, 1981 - Travelling between Burra and Farrell Flat a lady also reported a large orange light following her car. ■

**stop  
press**

Early in January, 1982, Bill Chalker spent four days in Canberra studying the Royal Australian Air Force files on UFOs - he is the first person to have ever been given access to these files. Bill is presently compiling this information - a full report will appear in the next issue of UFORAN.



# NEW ZEALAND

## UFOs

BY JOHN KNAPMAN

(*UFORAN Correspondent New Zealand*)

France, parts of North and South America and New Zealand have long been major UFO sighting areas, however, reports of controversial objects also come from almost every corner of the globe.

Over past years, New Zealanders from Northland to the Bluff have increasingly reported UFO activity over their area of the Pacific. Linked with these sightings have been the now famous "Ngatea circles" - circular patches of earth denuded of vegetation and sometimes containing within them what appear to be three prong marks.

One such circle which appeared at Eketahuna in 1965 was still clearly visible six years later. Grass and surrounding scrub had not grown over it. At Ngatea in October, 1969, local horticulturist, John Stuart-Menzies investigated one of the circles in the area and discovered "traces of radioactivity" when he ran a geiger counter test. In many instances the circles have been linked with sightings of strange airborne lights often seen on the ground or hovering immediately above it. Investigations by DSIR scientists, however, failed to produce any conclusive evidence about the circles. They examined only one, found no traces of anything untoward and, therefore, refused to conduct further tests on other similar phenomena. A Victoria University team also examined one of the circles and stated that it was caused by natural means such as wild pigs searching for roots. Because of such statements and the generally inconclusive results of the few tests conducted, serious UFO investigators generally regard the circles as non-specific circumstantial evidence. Several people more deeply involved, however, are positive the marks were made by UFOs. One such person is Puketutu farmer Charles Blackmore, a UFO sceptic until 1969 when a pond on his farm nine miles from Te Kuiti was subjected to strange lights in the night causing circular patterns to appear among flattened water reeds. The normally clear water in the pond took on a yellow tint and four tame ducks living there disappeared.

In most cases of night sightings reports have been mainly of bright lights of varying hues travelling at different speeds before disappearing. This has frequently led to charges of optical illusions from sceptics. But when such sights are seen not only from the ground, but also on radar and by pilots flying nearby, this argument falls apart. For example, on September 4, 1969, a Wellington radar station tracked an object emitting a blue pulsating light out over Cook Strait. The pilot and co-pilot of a Straits Air-Freight Express (SAFE) plane flying in the area at the time also observed the light which was

# NEW ZEALAND UFOs

estimated to be travelling at 25 knots at a height of 3000 ft. The SAFE pilot, Captain R. Cullum, when questioned observed that the only man-made object he knew which was capable of staying aloft at that speed was a helicopter but helicopters do not give off a blue light. It was one of those things, he added, which just can't be explained.

The following year, Christchurch meteorological radar tracked another phenomena which defied explanation. In November of that year, the radar station was tracking a meteorological balloon when it picked up a stronger signal and latched on to it. The object on the screen climbed at the incredible rate of 7000 ft. a minute, increasing its speed as it got higher. At 63,274 ft. the velocity of the object became so great that the radar station could no longer hold it.

During the early part of 1974, residents around the Hunua Ranges south of Auckland, many of them too embarrassed to give their names, reported numerous sightings of what they claim were disc or cone shaped objects giving off extremely bright light. Over the same period, Wellsford residents, north of Auckland, also made similar sightings. In the Dome Valley area near Wellsford Mr Eric Marks claimed to have seen, from close quarters, a huge "craft" about 100 ft. across - he said it looked like a plate with a dome on top and appeared to be suspended above the ground on "pencil-like rays". This description tallies with many others from over the years, both in New Zealand and abroad. An ex-merchant navy officer who is a trained navigator spotted what seemed to be a similar craft hovering over Mana Island near Wellington in 1958. He watched it with disbelief for a while before it took off vertically at terrific speed.

It was a similar type of craft - the classic "flying saucer" that Mrs. Eileen Moreland says she saw at very close quarters in a paddock near Woodbourne in July 1957. Mrs. Moreland reported that she was walking in the paddock when she noticed two green lights descending through the cloud and mist. She ran for the shelter of some nearby trees and watched as the disc-shaped craft came down, hovered a few feet from the ground about five yards from the trees where she, terrified, was taking cover. Mrs. Moreland said "I never want to see something like that again" and told air force officials the craft had tilted towards her, its dome was transparent and in it were two beings who appeared to be wearing coveralls (described by Mrs. Moreland as "like glistening chain mail") and opaque helmets down to their shoulders. Following a high pitched whining sound the craft shot off back through the clouds.

Scoffing has been a common reaction even in these cases of graphic close encounter reports. Ordinary men and women, singly or in small groups, are generally regarded by many sceptics as incapable of making accurate assessments usually because they lack the "training" - that aura of superiority accorded those with higher academic qualifications. However, while sightings by laymen are usually debunked out of hand, there is a marked silence when "trained" people come up with similar observations. A classic example occurred on May 1, 1965, when people in Wellington and Christchurch reported seeing a flight of strange objects in the sky heading out over the Tasman. They would certainly have been set to face the usual round of ridicule had not both the New Zealand and Australian Air Forces picked up seven UFOs over the Tasman at the same time. Civil Aviation also confirmed the sighting as did an aircraft crew flying over the Tasman who saw the flight. The debunkers also remained fairly silent when at Maraenui on May 8, 1970, the head teacher, his staff and most of the pupils of the local Richmond school, watched for three or four minutes while a brightly shining object described as elongated oval shaped hovered in the sky. The object appeared to change shape and become a transparent ball before reverting to its original form and heading off in a westerly direction.

In several cases a particular object seen in one area has also been observed in another area at the same time - there is no apparent collusion and the observers make up a complete cross section of society. It has been stated that similarities in the descriptions of UFOs result from widespread publicity about what other people claim to have

# NEW ZEALAND UFOs

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seen. Therefore, people reading these descriptions and seeing pictures of purported UFOs have been preconditioned, perhaps subconsciously, to think along these lines and to create, in their minds, such objects when they notice something unusual in the sky. This is a perfectly legitimate observations, however, it cannot account for the illiterate, unschooled Latin American peasant who comes forward with exactly the same description. Even in relatively sophisticated societies, it seems most unusual that the descriptions should tally so closely.■

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## Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS)

In its 3½ year existence, the public -interest group Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS) has endeavoured to:

Bring about a greater public awareness of the U.S. Federal Government's policies/practices as regards official collection and processing of UFO data;

Press for reform of Federal, state, and local-government UFO research activity so as to eliminate or reduce any tendency to keep the results of that activity secret or otherwise narrowly available to the citizenry;

Apply the provisions of the U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) toward ferreting from official files still kept from public view numerous UFO sighting reports, intelligence analyses, reporting directives, and other documentary evidence of the continuing governmental concern about the UFO controversy;

Publish our findings and recommendations.

### CAUS Renews Anti-UFO Secrecy Effort During National Freedom of UFO Information Week

At a press conference in Washington, D.C.. on October 27, 1981, CAUS legal advisor Peter A. Gersten announced the following initiatives to compel full accountability of the Federal Government's UFO policymakers in their suppression of official UFO documentation:

Establishment of National Freedom of UFO Information week which took place during October 25—31, 1981.

Hearing of oral arguments on October 28, 1981, in the plaintiff's appeal of CAUS Vs. U.S. National Security Agency (NSA). This landmark FOIA lawsuit to free some 135 UFO documents maintained by the Agency at its headquarters at Fort George G. Meade, Md., has resulted in worldwide news-media interest. Despite acknowledging that interest, the U.S. Federal District Court judge sided with the Agency without even inspecting for himself the documents in question. CAUS argues that the judge erred in that nonaction, that the "special circumstances" of the UFO controversy as a public issue requires the Court to go the distance on behalf of the public's right to know. Financing of this appeals litigation has been supported in part by the Washington, D.C.-based Fund for UFO Research Inc., which also contributed towards funding of the CAUS-led appeal in the celebrated case of Ground Saucer Watch, Inc., Vs. U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (1978 - 1981).

Drafting of a "Presidential Proclamation to Affirm Freedom of UFO Information and Expression". Purpose of the proclamation is to provide would-be "tellers-all" a waiver of their secrecy oaths and to have all suppressed official UFO-related records made available to the public - in the present and in the future.

Persons interested in 'joining in the CAUS' as UFO information coordinators and/or as contributing sponsors are asked to contact CAUS Assistant Director Larry Fawcett, 471 Goose Lane, Coventry, CT 06238, U.S.A.

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# LIGHTNING STRIKES AS THE CAUSE OF SOME UFO GROUND TRACES

BY MICHAEL HOUGH

## SUMMARY

Lightning causes some UFO landing traces, such as ground depressions and tree damage. A lightning strike on loose soil produces fulgurites: narrow tubes of fused silica glass, extending many metres into the ground. A strike on compact soil or rock produces glassy lumps or crusts. The effect on trees is varied - ranging from complete disintegration, to no immediate effect at all. Later wilting of foliage is common. Many trees in a clump surrounding a struck tree may die over subsequent months or years. Grass in fields is burnt brown when struck - in places, forming a branching pattern radiating from the impact point.

## UFO TRACES

The professional study of a UFO landing report should consider both the physical evidence for the event, and the psychological impact of the event on each witness. This impact is often so strong that the natural landscape is easily misinterpreted to support an exotic UFO encounter. Investigators should thus be familiar with natural "UFO-like" features of the landscape.

The types of UFO ground traces reported in Australia are (1):

- A. Concentric rings (e.g. Eton Range 1965).
- B. Oval nests of flattened grass (e.g. Tully 1966; Emerald Beach 1970).
- C. Oval depressions in the ground (e.g. Bourkes Flat 1966).
- D. Imprints (e.g. Orange 1977).
- E. Damage to flora.

Several types of natural explanations are possible:

1. Botanical (2): e.g. A - fungi (fairy rings and leaf smut)
2. Zoological (2) e.g. B - wildlife nests; D - burrows; E - disease.
3. Manmade: e.g. A - motorbike tracks; D - fence post holes; E - chemical sprays (and hoaxes, of course).
4. Geomorphological (3): e.g. C - claypans and gilgai.
5. Lightning strikes: applies to C, D and E.

An Australian UFO report that clearly fits category 5 is Boggabri (November 1970).

# LIGHTNING STRIKES AS THE CAUSE OF SOME UFO GROUND TRACES



*FIGURE 1: Artificial fulgurite made by passing electric current through a bucket of sand (8). Scale - 15cm high.*

A barren oval patch, 2m in diameter and 15cm deep, appeared in a paddock of sudan grass on the Erratt property, 10km east of Boggabri, NSW. A deep central hole, 50cm in diameter, had sides as "smooth as glass". Several smaller holes were near the edge of the circle. A fine whitish powder covered the surface. A Soil Conservation Service officer at Gunnedah, A.F. Clough, stated the origin to be "primary and secondary lightning strikes during the coinciding period of electrical storms". The white powder was natural salts desiccated by the intense heat (4).

This article summarises the effects of lightning strikes on soil and vegetation. These effects are more common than most UFO investigators appreciate. Several million lightning bolts hit the ground around the globe each day. A typical bolt has a potential difference of  $10^9$  volts, and a current of  $10^5$  amps, yielding  $10^{11}$  kw of power in the spark channel. Thus, substantial effects on soil and vegetation can be expected.

## LIGHTNING STRIKES ON SOIL

A lightning strike instantaneously heats the soil to 1800 deg.C., fusing it to glass. The glass color varies from translucent white, to tan to black. The glassy aggregates are called fulgurites and the glass itself lechatelierite.

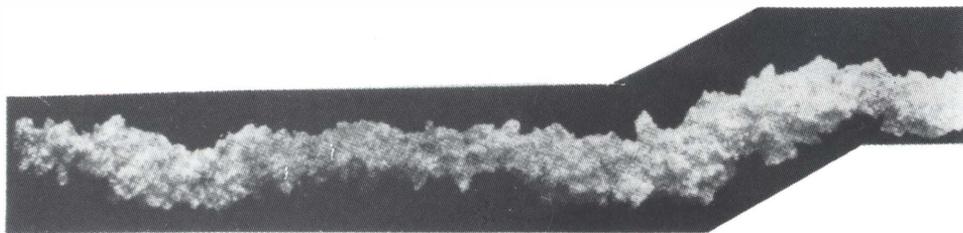
The shape and quantity of glass produced depends on the soil - its composition and degree of compaction - and perhaps on the type of lightning. For example, quartz sands are more readily fused than clay soils. Lightning is most likely to hit a locality that is high above ground-level (hills, forests), and/or that has high conductivity (e.g. water-saturated soil, ironstone beds, buried pipes).

Fallen power lines can produce the same effect, even though the current discharges into the ground at lower temperatures, and for a longer time period (5,6). At times, lightning brings down power lines (7). Fulgurites have also been produced experimentally by passing high voltage discharges into sand (8) (Figure 1).

The earthing of ball lightning can also possibly produce similar effects (9).

## EFFECT OF LIGHTNING ON LOOSE SOIL (DESERT, BEACH, & LAKE-SHORE SAND-DUNES)

According to eyewitnesses, lightning that strikes loose sandy soil produces long narrow fulgurite tubes (Figures 2 & 3). These extend down 1 - 20 metres into the ground



*FIGURE 2: Fragment of typical fulgurite tube (8), showing rough outer surface (partly fused quartz grains). Scale 15cm long.*

# LIGHTNING STRIKES AS THE CAUSE OF SOME UFO GROUND TRACES

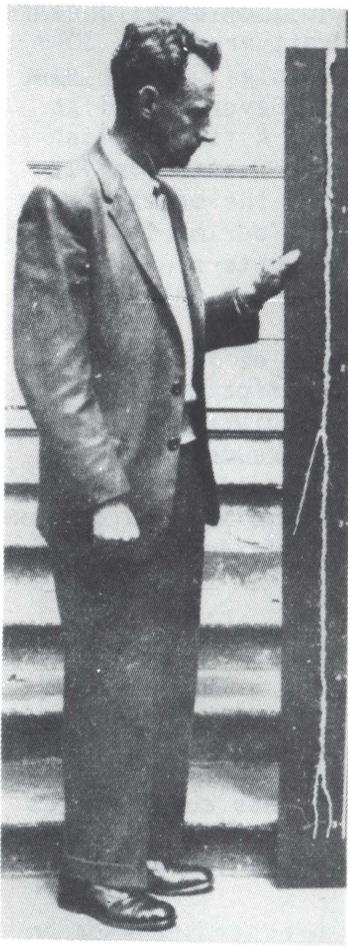


FIGURE 3: A 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-metre-long fulgurite from Karnak Victoria, mounted for display purposes (11A).

(6, 10). Many similar tubes of like origin have been found in Australia (11, 11A) and overseas (8, 12). Typical tubes have smooth hollow cores (mostly 2 - 20cm in diameter), in places as a loose spiral pattern. The irregular outer edges of tubes merge with partly fused sand grains. The glass is generally full of bubbles, and/or unfused sand grains (Figure 4). Organic matter near the tube is carbonised. If the ground is wet, clouds of steam are expelled.

Intricate branching of tubes at depth is common, resembling tree roots. (But the tubes have not actually replaced tree roots, according to eyewitnesses.) Adjacent tubes are known to link up underground. The lightning penetrates in search of the highly conducting water-table, and then spreads out through and/or along the conducting layer.

A single bolt can produce two or three regularly spaced holes in a line (10), e.g. 50cm to 3m apart. The holes are caused either by successive bolts from a drifting cloud, by multiple strikes of the same bolt, or possibly even by a forked bolt.

Tube fulgurites are so distinctive that they have been recognised in ancient rocks 250 million years old, now re-exposed at ground level (13).

Careful digging around the tiny holes at a site should uncover the tops of the glassy fulgurite tubes.

In clay soils, a lightning bolt digs a deep hole, but only fuses the soil in parts of the hole. One such hole (20cm wide at the top) extends vertically down 6m; dirt is thrown back from all sides of the hole for a distance of 1m, and heaped up 15cm above ground level (14).

## EFFECT OF LIGHTNING ON COMPACT SOIL, ROCKS, ETC.

Lightning that strikes a compacted soil or sediment produces irregular glassy lumps (9, 15), or short fulgurite tubes (7).

If lightning hits rock, as on a mountain top below cloud cover, a glassy crust is produced (16). Some rocks are split into pieces coated with glass. The lightning can also intensely magnetise the rock, such that compass readings become unreliable (13).

Lightning that strikes a concrete pavement leaves a black streak (e.g. 1m long and 5cm wide). The concrete is blistered and fused to a black glassy slag, and tiny black beads of glass are scattered about (17).

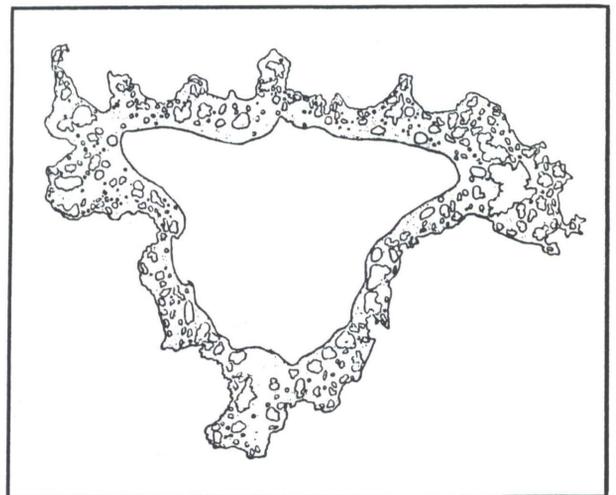


FIGURE 4: Cross-section of a glassy fulgurite tube from Macquarie Harbor, NSW (15), showing the irregular outer wall and smooth inner wall. Gas pores fill much of the space between walls.

# LIGHTNING STRIKES AS THE CAUSE OF SOME UFO GROUND TRACES



*FIGURE 5: Spiral furrows in the bark of a tree trunk caused by a lightning strike (21).*

## LIGHTNING-LIKE EFFECTS IN SOIL

Tree roots at the surface, particularly those replaced by or encased by opaline silica, carbonates or iron oxides, superficially look like fulgurite tubes (18).

Glass strewn about on the ground is not in itself proof of a lightning strike. Several types of glass exist (15):

- A. Volcanic (obsidian).
- B. Tektites - glass pebbles strewn over large areas of Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria, believed to originate from the impact of a giant meteorite in S.E. Asia 5000 - 30000 years ago (15, 15A).
- C. At meteorite crater sites - e.g. Henbury, Northern Territory.
- D. At atom-bomb test sites.
- E. Hay-silica glass (see below).
- F. Bottle fragments, etc.

Of these, only meteorite-impact glass (C) is like fulgurite glass in being chemically identical in terms of non-volatile elements to the surrounding soil.

Hay-silica glass. Two stacks of hay (13000 wired bales were burnt to the ground at Gnarkeet, Victoria, one night in 1961 (19). Auto-combustion or arson was suspected. The burnt-out stacks consisted of ash and fibrous and lumpy vesicular silica glass. The glass supposedly originated by fusion of the opal phytoliths that make up 5 weight % of the rye grass and oats. (Auto-combustion is caused by the heat buildup during composting of hay that is stacked while it is too wet. Burning proceeds characteristically slowly.)

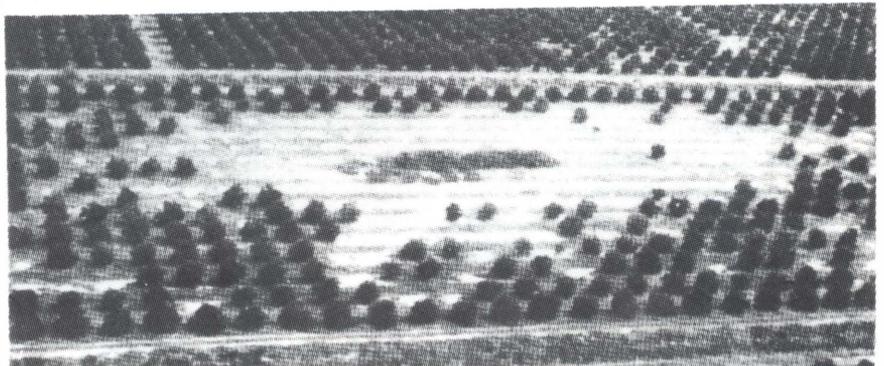
However, it is also possible that lightning struck the haystacks, with or without fusing part of the soil beneath as well (18). The wire around the bales would act as a conductor.

The high P, K and Na contents of hay-silica glass are unique. Even tiny beads of such glass that have subsequently been ploughed back into the soil can later be identified with certainty.

## LIGHTNING EFFECTS ON VEGETATION

Most studies of the effect of lightning on vegetation are qualitative observations only. Prediction of the extent of anticipated damage is thus difficult. Effects on trees are best studied because

- 1) lightning hits trees more often than grassy ground, and



*FIGURE 6: Tree mortality in a Florida citrus grove 2 months after a lightning strike (21).*

# LIGHTNING STRIKES AS THE CAUSE OF SOME UFO GROUND TRACES

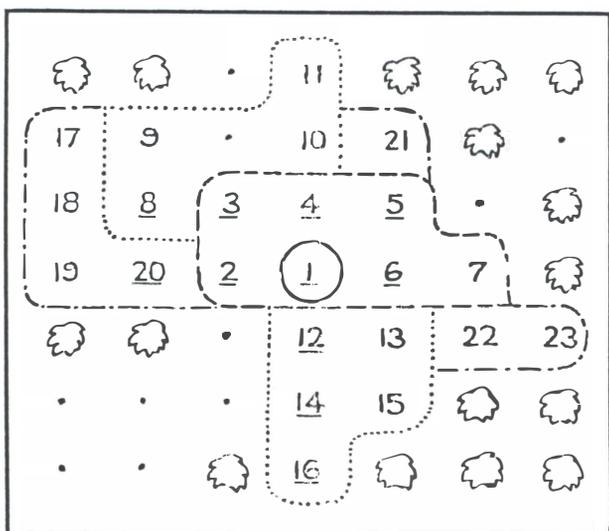


FIGURE 7: Tree mortality after a lightning strike in a coconut palm plantation, New Britain (23A). The numbers indicate the order in which trees died during the 10 months after tree No.1 was struck.

Tree-group mortality (21, 23, 23A). At times, a single lightning bolt kills many trees in compact circular clumps. The bolt passes into the ground below the struck tree and spreads laterally killing the roots of nearby trees. Up to 50 trees may eventually die. Several flashes killed 2300 trees in a Florida citrus grove in 1972 (Figure 6). Trees at the centre show the earliest and most severe effects. Mortality spreads outwards from the struck tree for time periods ranging from a few days to 3 years (Figure 7).

Damage to grass. Lightning that strikes an open field or golf course burns the grass brown. A branching star-like pattern of brown grass can radiate from the impact point of the bolt (24, 24A) (Figure 8). This probably happens when the ground is waterlogged and the bolt hits an isolated high-point, such as a flagpole on a golf course. A high electric current remains on the wet surface near the strike point and propagates outwards across the surface in well-defined branching channels of least resistance for distances of up to 10 or more metres. This shows that humans and animals caught in a wet field during an electrical storm are in danger of being electrocuted by the ground charge if they shelter near a tree. It is best to crouch down at a moderate distance from the tree (at least 10m away).

## LIGHTNING-LIKE EFFECTS ON VEGETATION

Wilting of tree foliage is also caused by disease, fire and wind damage, and by chemical spraying. Trees struck by lightning are more susceptible to later damage of these types - thus masking the earlier lightning effect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: I thank Frank Gillespie, Colin Phillips, Bill Chalker and Mark Moravec for providing information. The original draft of this article was delivered at UFOCON 6, Adelaide, October 1981.

2) the damage to trees and resultant fires reduce the value of forests as a timber resource.

Structural damage to trees (21). This is highly variable, ranging from complete shattering of a tree into slivers, to furrowing of the trunk, and to micro-grooving and showering of fibres and sap beads over the ground and nearby trees. A vertical or spiral grooving pattern on the tree trunk is sometimes produced (Figure 5). Certain tree species are more susceptible to damage than others. Some trees, even when seen to be struck by lightning, sustain no physical damage at all (22).

Physiological Damage (individual trees) (21). Some trees die within weeks or months of being struck, even if not structurally damaged. Others remain in good health. Common effects are rapid wilting of branch foliage ("crown dieback") and browning of stems. At times, tree roots are damaged sufficiently to cause the tree to die.



FIGURE 8: Starlike pattern of brown grass caused by lightning striking a golf course (24).

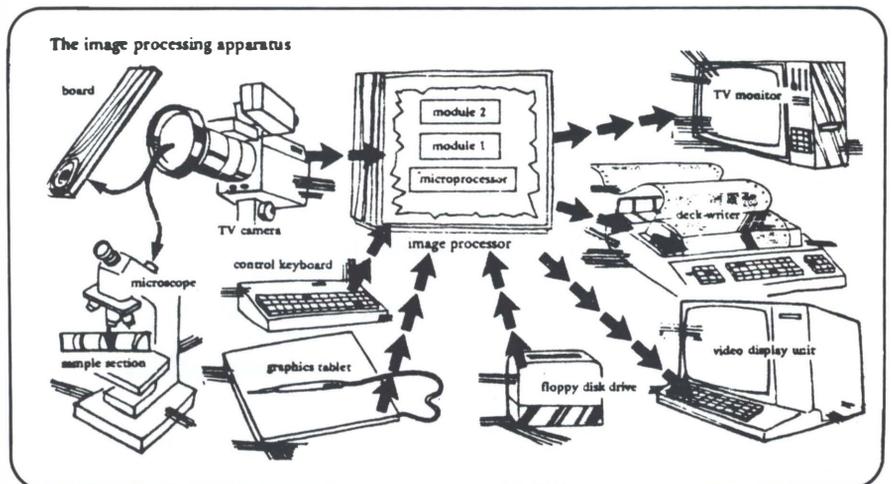
# LIGHTNING STRIKES AS THE CAUSE OF SOME UFO GROUND TRACES

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## WANTED - \$50,000

Scientists at the Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) Division of Building Research have developed a digital image processor which could possibly be applied in the analysis of UFO photographs. The equipment was originally intended to provide rapid information about the structure of wood, but it is already being used in medical research for the measurement of organs taken from test animals. Considerable versatility has already been designed into the equipment, and this could be further expanded by suitable programming of the microprocessor used to control the system. The only drawback is the estimated \$50,000 cost, which puts it beyond the reach of available UFO research funds.



The digital image processor with imaging, control and display attachments. For some applications the camera is mounted over a microscope, for others it is focused directly onto the sample.

- Frank Gillespie.

# A UFO VISION ?

the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'

1873, Parramatta, NSW, Australia

BY BILL CHALKER

---

"...aghast the Children of man  
Stood on the infinite Earth & saw these visions in the air...  
But many stood silent, & busied in their families.  
And many said, 'we see no visions in the darksome air'..."

- William Blake, 1797<sup>1</sup>

"Now I a fourfold vision see,  
And a fourfold vision is given to me;  
'This fourfold in my supreme delight  
And threefold in soft Beulah's night  
And twofold Always. May God us keep  
From single vision & Newton's sleep."

- William Blake, 1802<sup>2</sup>

## Prologue

Did a UFO land in Parramatta Park, New South Wales, during 1868?

Was there an encounter between a Parramatta surveyor and the apparent operator of the object?

Did the surveyor go onboard the object?

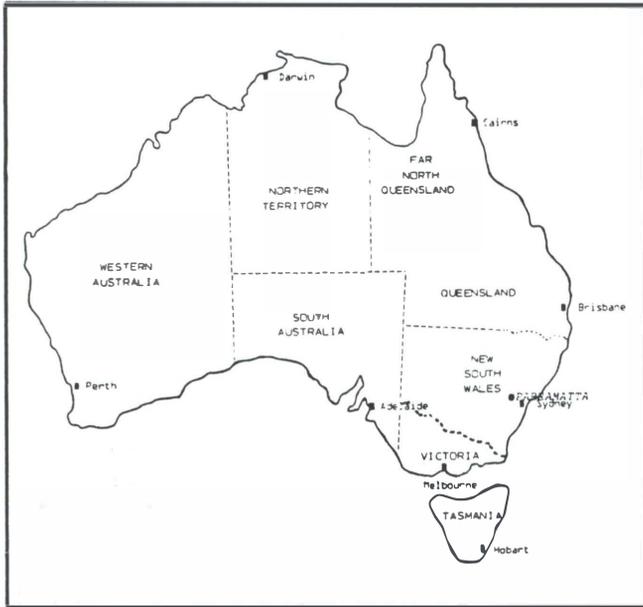
This article considers these and other questions and attempts some answers..

## Introduction

In about 1975, a 15 page document came to my notice<sup>3</sup>. The material described itself as a "Copy from the Memorandum Book of Fred. Wm. Birmingham, the Engineer to the Council of Parramatta. A machine to go through the air. A.D. 1873". It was ostensibly prepared by a group of people (5 in number)<sup>4</sup>, with the work co-ordinated by Mr T.V. Homan (now deceased)<sup>5</sup> - a former staff member of the UFO Investigation Centre (UFOIC). The undated copy was at least known to have been produced during the 1950s<sup>6</sup>.

Although somewhat sceptical of the authenticity of the account, I decided to document sections of the "Memorandum Book" in an accessible form (partly in an attempt to draw comment and possible clarification) and to that end, included it in a preliminary catalogue<sup>7,8</sup> of Australian UFO entity accounts, compiled by Keith Basterfield and this author in 1976<sup>7,8</sup>.

## the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'



Surprisingly, although the catalogue was widely circulated amongst the UFO research community, the 1868 report drew little comment. The memorandum book was again referred to in a paper, prepared by this author, in 1977<sup>9</sup>. At that time I noted:

"The Birmingham - Parramatta case of 1868 is perhaps one of the few cases in Australia which speaks directly of a 'contact' nature, but its historical nature prevents close critical enquiry. It is almost like a 'contactee' tale, but several aspects of Mr Birmingham's 'vision' suggest it warrants serious consideration<sup>10</sup>.

Birmingham could well have been Australia's first caucasian 'contact' percipient. His experience is steeped in symbolic images and an

interesting UFO sighting that followed in 1873 and poltergeist-like phenomena seemed to reinforce the 'contact' process<sup>11</sup>."

Apart from a few further references<sup>12</sup>, the account has received little attention. No one came forward, who had any knowledge of the affair, despite some press coverage in 1980 and 1981.

Although I had the "Memorandum Book" copy, in my possession for some years, other activities always largely managed to prevent me from carrying out my desire to confirm the possible historical validity of the Birmingham account.

It was not until January, 1980, that an oblique stimulus appeared, which was sufficient enough to encourage me to launch into what has developed into a detailed and exhaustive enquiry into the "Memorandum Book of Fred. Wm. Birmingham".

That stimulus was "An Account of a Meeting with Denizens of Another World - 1871 - William Robert Loosley - edited and with commentary by David Langford<sup>13</sup>". Although I found the Loosley/Langford account curiously unconvincing and unsatisfactory<sup>14</sup>, it was enough to project me into attempting to see whether there was something of substance behind the Birmingham account.

I wanted to find out whether, in the account, we had a factual description of real events, objective or otherwise. Psychological explanations loom large, as we shall see (DISCUSSION) and because of the nature of the account, it may be relevant to our understanding of modern day UFO "contact" and "abduction" accounts.

### The Account <sup>15</sup>

The "Memorandum Book, A.D. 1873" attributed to the hand of one "Fred. Wm. Birmingham, C.E. & Lic. Surveyor, Parramatta, Australia", gives an account of an "aerial machine" - "A machine to go through the air".

*"On the night of the 25th - 26th July Anno Domini (original spelling) 1868, I had a wonderful dream - a vision..."*

Birmingham described standing under the verandah of his rented cottage in Duck's Lane, Parramatta, when he saw up in the sky, to the north-east, the passage of a bizarre apparitional procession. This consisted of "the Lord Bishop of Sydney's head in the air looking

## the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'

intently upon me in a frowning half laughing mood...I watched it intently and when it had travelled to the east it dimmed - just as one loses his focus by quickly drawing in or out the slide of a telescope".

In the same manner, "the Premier's head twice appeared...this dimmed and again the Lord Bishop's head shone forth as it were looking intently and impeachingly upon me, and travelling southerly to about s.s-east".

Birmingham dropped his gaze to ponder the extraordinary display. "After some considerable time I determined to look at the head or heads again...", but they were gone.

### "A Machine to go through the Air"

"I retraced the course the head had taken and just in the spot where I first saw the head I saw an 'Ark' and while looking at it - moving along the same track as the head had taken - I said to myself aloud, 'Well that is a beautiful vessel'. I had no sooner ended the sentence than I was made aware that I was not alone, for to my right hand and a little to the rear of my frontage a distinct voice said, slowly, - 'That's a machine to go through the air'.

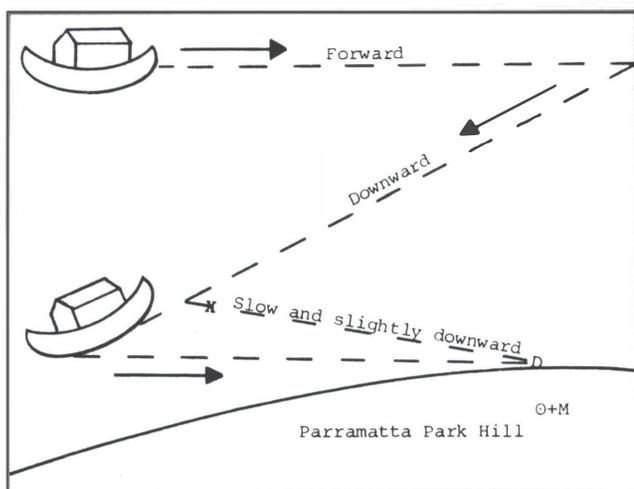
In a little time I replied - 'It appears to me more like a vessel for going upon the water, but, at all events, it's the loveliest thing I ever saw'.

I then felt that somehow or another the spirit and I were as it may have been spiritually on the highest part of the Parramatta Park".

By this time, "the machine" had moved through the air in a zig-zag fashion, "then quite, stopped, the forward motion and descended some twenty feet or so as gently as a feather on the grass", at a distance of about 20 yards from Birmingham and the "spirit".

Birmingham described the ark in the following way: "...though a brown colour (rubber!) all over at a distance...its peculiar shapings are well impressed upon my mind and the colour seemed to blend with faint, flitting shades of steel blue, below, and appearing tremulous and like what one might term magnified scales on a large fish, the latter being as it were flying in the air, (the machine has not the shape of anything that has life)".

The "spirit" was described by Birmingham as being "like a neutral tint shade (white? - B.C.) and the shape of a man in his usual frock dress".



Sketch (after Birmingham)

It said to him, "Have you a desire or do you wish to enter upon it!" Birmingham replied, "Yes".

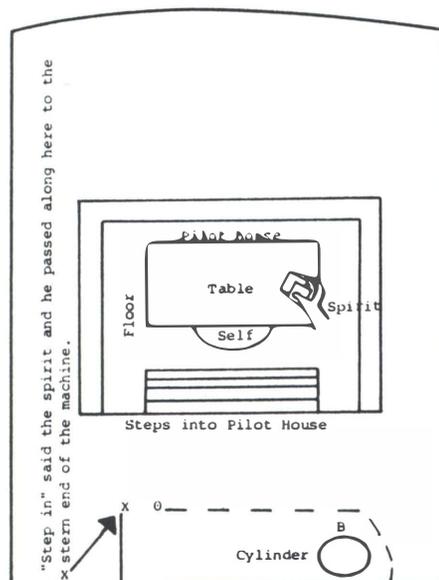
"Then come" - said the spirit, there-upon we were lifted off the grass and gently carried through the air and onto the upper part of the machine..."

### Aboard the "Ark"

On the machine, the spirit showed Birmingham two cylinders, located at the front and back of it, indicating their purpose, "by downward motion of hand".

The spirit beckoned the surveyor to enter the "pilot house" (as Birmingham termed a part

## the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'



Sketch (after Birmingham)

of the machine) saying, "Step in". Birmingham described how he went down about three steep steps. They led into the pilot house room, which was about three and a half feet lower than the deck of the machine. The only feature of the room was a table, about five feet by three and a half feet and two and a half feet high covered with material like oilskin, "or perhaps iron covered with rubber cloth tightly". About two feet separated the table and the walls of the room. Birmingham referred to how, "everything appeared very strong, the sides I noticed were extremely thick, about six inches - and I (then) wondered why they were so strong in 'a machine to go through the air'".

Standing alone at the rear end of the table, whereupon he rested one hand, Birmingham began to repent agreeing to "entering upon" the "ark".

"I felt miserably queer - just like one who undertaking a billet or post he knows nothing of. So I remained for some considerable time, when I was aroused as it were from my reverie by the voice of the spirit on my right hand, who said, 'Here are some papers for your guidance'".

The hand of the spirit was resting on the table and within it were several printed papers. The first paper was covered with figures and formulae.

"...Thinking the formulae and figures of other kinds might be too intricate for my comprehension I said to the spirit - 'Oh! Will I want them?' The spirit replied slowly, but with marked emphasis, 'It is absolutely necessary that you should know these things, but, you can study them as you go on'".

Among the "figures and formulae", Birmingham saw, were the following:

$$V = 550 + (500 + \sqrt{H}).$$

"I again cast down my eyes between my hands as it were on the table considering silently the words of the holy spirit and when I looked about I found I was alone in the ark!

So I fell, I suppose, into my usual sleeping state, and waking next morning deeply impressed with that vision of the night..."

### Precognition ?

Beyond the above experience, 1868 was "a most miserable year" for Birmingham. "I went about down hearted and with the remains of low fever - rheumatism, lumbago and the like". Early in 1869, Birmingham (formerly "twice elected alderman of Parramatta") was reading newly acquired engineering literature, to facilitate work on a report to the local council on "the waterworks scheme for supplying Parramatta with water" ("...many years surveying had made me quite rusty as to the little (engineering) I knew some 16 to 18 years before, I scraped up such useful information as I could speedily get or pay for"). Amongst the material he had bought and seen for the first time, were Molesworth's Engineering Tables for 1868. On page 137 of these tables, much to his surprise, Birmingham found the figures and formulae he had seen "in that vision of the night namely, 'July A.D. 1868'". They were present in connection with centrifugal pumps.

Birmingham pondered his "vision" occasionally but could only rationalise (to his own satisfaction at least) the first portion, namely that it reminded him "that I must serve God by conforming to the Christian doctrine and laws of his church. (Christ's Bride). As

to the second portion of the vision I could not conclude what it meant - at least in any satisfactory way ('a machine to go through the air' - or in other words, the ark mentioned in the Book of Revelations!)"

Things did not end there for Fred. Wm. Birmingham.

The Opening Gate

On March 27, 1871, he was crossing the lane from his neighbour Bartlett's well with a can full of water. Opening the gate latch to his verandah, Birmingham spilt some water. "I opened the gate and shut it after entering but on my way to the kitchen I heard it open.

After depositing the water there I passed through the sitting room to the verandah thinking the shock must have opened it. So I shut it again carefully looking at it as I retired into the room. But, to my great surprise the latch rose this second time! I thought it strange so I went out again and latched the gate, struck the posts, and the front of the gate, jumped on the verandah watched it for some 15 seconds, went backward into the room and round the table, looked out the window and keeping my eyes fixed toward the latch said aloud in a triumphant voice - 'Now you cannot rise' - I had no sooner said the sentence than the same (iron) latch rose up! And the gate opened!

I need hardly say I was astounded for a time. Well I went out and shut it, but, I did not repeat the challenge. The thing has sunk deeply into my mind even to my very soul, and I now know that the power of god never sleeps. (The latch for years before and years after this occurrence never did rise without hands to it or hand and cane)".

"A thing to be accomplished"

"Day by day and at night in my wakeful moments I have often rehearsed the wonderful dreams I have had, and coupling them one day with the vision of the Lord Bishop's head and the latch rising, I came down from the hill in the Parramatta Park firmly convinced that

the vision was gradually unfolding itself and 'the machine to go through the air' was a thing (through God's mercy) to be accomplished.

I sat down at the same end of the table where from I saw the latch rise, calculating pressures etc. and taking a match box in my hand and letting it drop on the table I said aloud 'But, how in the name of goodness can I overcome 'gravity''. I instantly felt in my left ear a sound like that produced by pressing a large sea shell close to one's ear, and the words 'Are not the sides greater than a third'.

Becoming excited and in great joy I said aloud, 'Yes, and the sides and bottom working together can overcome the top'. This was the first practical clue as to forming the interior parts of the machine I saw in the vision of the aforementioned night 25th - 26th July, 1868.

136 MOLESWORTH'S POCKET-BOOK

**BLOWING ENGINES.**  
 Capacity of air vessel = 20 times the capacity of the blowing cylinder if the cylinder is single acting.  
 = 10 times if double acting.  
 Velocity of air in the passages should not exceed 100 feet per second. Density of blast for iron furnaces from 2½ to 3 lbs. per square inch.  
 Each smith's forge requires 150 cube feet of air per minute. Density of smith's forge blast ½ lb. per sq. in. Each ton per hour melted in cupola requires 3,500 cube feet per minute. Each fiery forge requires 100,000 cube feet air for each ton refined. Each blast furnace 20 cube feet per minute for each cube yard capacity of furnace.

**CENTRIFUGAL FANS.**  
 D = Diameter of fan.  
 V = Velocity of tips of fan in feet per second.  
 P = Pressure in lbs. per square inch.  
 $V = \sqrt{P \times 97300}$   
 $P = \frac{V^2}{97300}$

**PROPORTIONS OF FANS.**  
 Length of vanes =  $\frac{D}{4}$   
 Width of vanes =  $\frac{D}{4}$   
 Diameter of inlet =  $\frac{D}{2}$   
 Eccentricity of fan =  $\frac{D}{10}$   
 Length of spinilla journal = 4 diameters of spinilla. Diameter of smith's forge nozzle, 1½.  
 Smithy blast from 0.25 to 0.3 lb. per square inch. Cupola blast about 0.8 lb. per square inch.

137 OF ENGINEERING FORMULÆ.

**POWER REQUIRED FOR FANS.**  
 p = Pressure of blast in lbs. per square inch.  
 A = Area of the sum of the tuyeres, in square inches.  
 V = Velocity of tips of fan in feet, per second.  
 HP = Indicated horse-power required  
 $HP = .000016 V^3 A p$ .

**CENTRIFUGAL PUMPS (Appold's).**  
 V = Velocity of periphery of pump, in feet per minute.  
 H = Head of water, in feet.  
 $V = 550 \sqrt{500 H}$   
 The arrow in the diagram shows the direction of rotation. The useful effect averages about 70 per cent. of the power exerted with curved arms.  
 Radial arms give a lower percentage than curved arms.



**SIZE OF PIPES OF CENTRIFUGAL PUMPS.**

Number of gallons per minute ...	25	70	150	300	500	1000
Diameter of suction pipe ... in	3	4	5	6	7	8
Diameter of delivery pipe ... in	3	4	5	6	6	7

## the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'

(About three years and nine months had passed away viz to the 15th of April, 1872)."

### "The most extraordinary cloud"

(And a UFO ?)

"My thoughts have been continually bent on unravelling and learning the matter, and the little monies I could spare went towards experimenting and each experiment learnt me something but, on the last of three principal occasions, I was disappointed and felt unhappy and laid on my back on my 'couch' for a long time (some hours) thinking and when I had finished all my thinking I said aloud to myself - 'Well, I don't care, I believe it firmly and try I will if I should fail a thousand times, to the day of my death I will believe in it'.

So saying I threw myself on my feet and went out to the kitchen (at 7p.m.) and slowly took my evening meal. The sun was or had just set. My door was open and my eyes were toward the sky which was quite clear, excepting three small clouds of Van Dyke brown colour, in the south-west a little separate.

The middle one being the largest, drew my attention and was without doubt, the most extraordinary cloud in its wonderful movements that I ever saw. I made a sketch of it which I keep because it is evidence that we are taught betimes by the great and good spirit".

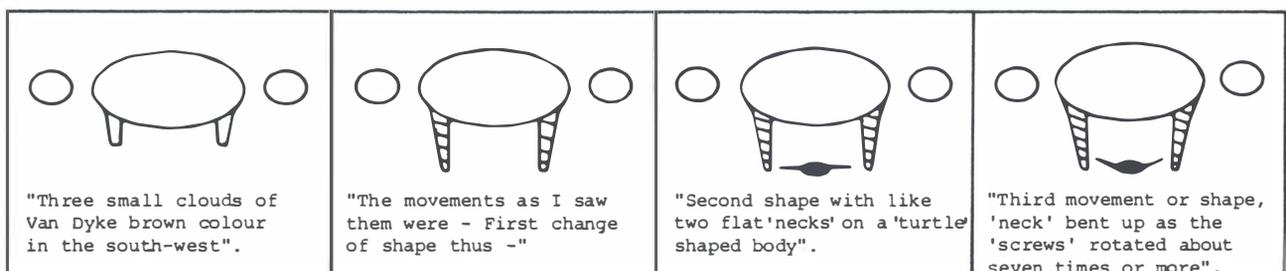
What followed has all the trappings of an unusual UFO sighting. It occurred on March 9, 1873, according to the memorandum book text.

Out of the middle "cloud" appeared two screw-like appendages, which projected downwards. Between these "screws" appeared a "second shape with like two flat necks on a turtle shaped body". How it came there puzzled Birmingham. The "necks" bent up as the screws rotated about seven times or more.

"As the screws reversed the neck(s) came down gradually to the horizontal position and after a few minutes (2 or 3 minutes) the screw part rotated the second time and reversed as before. After this double operation the 'turtle' disappeared, I then knew not where to.

After a few minutes lapse of time I was astonished (and said aloud) 'Well I declare! The turtle is forming again', and sure enough, in the same shape and place it remained for a pause of a few minutes, and to my surprise the movements were exactly the same as the previous series, namely, twice screwed and twice reversed all the same forms as before.

After a couple of minutes the turtle began to fade away and the last shred of it I saw winding around and going upwards to the middle cloud and to my surprise the two big three-threaded screws folded up like the arms of a bear and lost their shape in the middle cloud! Just after this the whole three clouds which had remained stationary in the sky for, as truly as I can reckon, (without a clock or watch) twenty to twenty five minutes or so - moved quickly south-easterly, formed into one cloud and in about three minutes melted out of sight. This going away of the clouds was so quickly done that I had to rise quickly and step out of doors to watch them!"



## the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'

"There may be a meaning in all this"

*"I thought silently over the thing that was shown me, and said I to myself 'How could these things be done!' So I concluded that the cloud material was worked upon by positive and negative electricity - for wind there was none seemingly - after some lapse of time I said to myself 'There may be a meaning in all this' - doubled over and twice each time. I then thought of Pharaoh's 'dream' of the fat and the lean kine - but said I (inwardly) 'Pharaoh's was a dream but this just now seen by me was in daylight!'*

*It sunk as it were deep into my soul and I concluded that the thing was shown me by God, but I could not on that day unravel it - but my fixed belief then (and ever since) was that there was a meaning - a teaching for me in it".*

There the account finishes.

### **The Background to the Manuscript**

Before discussing the account we need to see whether we are dealing with a copy of a legitimate historical document or a literary hoax perpetrated more recently.

As far as it has been possible to determine, the copy of the Memorandum Book of Fred. Wm. Birmingham, from which the above account is drawn, was made by T.V. Homan, during the late 1950s<sup>16</sup>. Mr Homan acquired the manuscript, when it was given to him, by a Mrs N. de Launte. Mr Homan came to know the de Launte family during the fifties, apparently because of his fringe interests in matters occult and spiritual.

Mrs de Launte obtained the original memorandum book from a Mr Wallace Haywood, a teacher, who lived in the Park, Parramatta, a street which ran along the south-western perimeter of Parramatta Park. How Mr Haywood obtained the memorandum book is unclear, but it is known that it was in his family for quite a long time, either obtained directly or indirectly. It may be significant that Haywood's home was situated within a few hundred yards of "the highest part of the Parramatta Park" - Parramatta Park Hill - ostensibly the landing site of the ark in Birmingham's vision<sup>17</sup>.

#### FRED. Wm. BIRMINGHAM - THE MAN

Was Fred. Wm. Birmingham a real person?

What does the manuscript tell us about Fred. Wm. Birmingham?

In 1872, Fred. Wm. Birmingham describes himself as "The Engineer to the Council of Parramatta. C.E. & Lic. Surveyor, Parramatta". From at least 1868 to 1873, he was living alone in a rented cottage in Duck's Lane, Parramatta. Before 1868, he had been "twice elected alderman of Parramatta" and by 1869 was working for the Parramatta Council on "the water works scheme for supplying Parramatta with water".

What is historically confirmable of all this?

Surprisingly all of it turns out to be confirmed after detailed historical research! Not only was it proven that Birmingham, an engineer and surveyor, did live in Duck's Lane, Parramatta, between 1868 and 1873, as alleged in the Memorandum Book, but a detailed chronology of the man emerged, which was consistent with the individual described in the Memorandum Book.<sup>18</sup>

I was even able to determine, much to my surprise, that the "rented cottage in Duck's Lane", in which Birmingham experienced his 'wonderful dream' of 1868, still existed in 1980! I was amazed to be able to stand on the verandah of the "rented cottage", under its

## the mystery of 'a machine to go through the air'

'convex corrugated iron roof' and contemplate the reality of the 'vision' on the night 'of the 25th - 26th July Anno Domino, 1868'.

### THE MANUSCRIPT - ITS HISTORICAL VALIDITY ?

Surprisingly I found nothing in the Memorandum Book of Fred. Wm. Birmingham...A.D. 1873", which was inconsistent with information known at that time in the 19th century.

No apparent anachronism exists in the manuscript's text. The allusion to Birmingham's surprise as to why the ark's furnishings were "extremely thick" and "very strong", and the references to rubber, steel, centrifugal pumps and "positive and negative electricity" are realistic for the period of the manuscript - 1868 to 1873<sup>19</sup>.

The Memorandum Book is therefore consistent with the period in which it is based. Research has taken the established existence of the document, back at least to the early 1940s, when it was in the possession of the Parramatta school teacher. The case for the manuscript being what it purports to be - a Memorandum Book written by a Parramatta resident in 1873 - is, I believe, well established. The chance of it being a literary hoax perpetrated around the early 1940s or earlier, certainly seems quite remote.

### **Discussion**

Many aspects of the Birmingham vision are common to the rich harvest of "contactee" stories of the 1950s, other "contact" tales and even "abductions".

Some of these elements include "the invitation", "levitation", tours of the "machine", "alien tutelage", ESP, precognition or other faculties, disorientation and bizarre "follow up" experiences.

The invitation to go onboard is very common, particularly in the contactee tales. This freedom of choice seems to be waning in the face of the wave of recent abduction accounts. Levitation of the witnesses is of course reported widely in modern accounts. In many reports today, percipients are also shown how the UFO operates. However, most such events, as in the Birmingham account, are curiously unconvincing, in that the "entity's" actions seem so cursory. A frequent element in modern accounts is also the spartan nature of the inside of a UFO. So often the description parallels Birmingham's description of the "pilot house" room on the ark. Of course there are many exceptions.

"Tutelage" or the imparting of "significant" information to the contactee is, of course, a frequent element in such accounts. Quite often if such accounts have a semblance of reality about them, it is the percipient who applies the importance to the information and not the entities. However, in the case of Birmingham, the "visionary" information is deemed important by the spirit. Just how important the centrifugal pump equation was to Birmingham when he came across it in reality during his information research while working on the "water works" project, is not at all clear, since the nature of his work was not clear. However, such pumps were a relatively new innovation at the time, and to one, who professed to be "rusty" in the domain of engineering, the information may have seemed striking.

The manuscript seems to imply a measure of precognition or prophecy with respect to the viewing of the centrifugal pump equation in the ark during July, 1868, then coming across the same equation, and ostensibly the same page of material in early 1869. Birmingham professes it was the first time he had seen the equation and the Molesworth Engineering Tables for 1868. The page number was specified as page 137. The series of events do seem strange. However, Janet and Colin Bord managed to place some light on the matter. In their efforts to track down the Molesworth Tables for me, they could not find the 1868 edition. They did manage to get the 1863 edition. On page 137 of that edition we find the



"The highest part of the  
Parramatta Park"  
- Parramatta Park Hill.

equation in question! So the possibility of precognition wanes somewhat, despite Birmingham indicating he has not seen the Molesworth Tables before. At best, this aspect of the Memorandum Book mystery can only be viewed as a minor mystery.

Birmingham describes his "obsession" with the machine to go through the air and how he came to believe it was a thing to be accomplished. Similar obsessions or "inventions", "devices" and extraordinary machines pervade modern contact literature. Remember George Van Tassel's "Integration" and Howard Menger's "free energy motor".

Weird "follow-up" experiences are touted as standard fare for UFO contact experiences, however, it often seems that contact percipients connect an array of questionably unusual events together into a consistent progression of contact. All one can perhaps say is that Birmingham's reported experiences are on a par with modern contact follow ups, i.e. "poltergeist" phenomena, "voices", subsequent "UFO sighting", etc. To many it would seem that some strange plan is at work and one was caught up in it. Others see their place or participation as an indictment of their own "special" status.

By all accounts I believe it is fair to say that the Birmingham vision of 1868 and subsequent events, embodied many of the features that appear time and time again in modern contact, contactee and abduction accounts<sup>20</sup>.

Perhaps Birmingham's account not only mirrors modern accounts. Where else do we encounter tales of invitations by strange entities, to go into unusual realms? The following four categories feature such elements. The literature on each is striking, with respect to the subject at hand. I will not detail them here, but suggest to the reader that explorations into these areas may be rewarding from a number of points of view - Shamanism, the "aerial people" of the Middle Ages, fairy lore and the visionary sphere invite consideration<sup>21,22,23,24</sup>.

The bizarre nature of the Birmingham vision (the dream-like quality of the account, floating heads, spirits, flying, instantaneous relocation, poltergeists, voices and not-the-least - visions - all elements of dreams, psychotic episodes, hallucinations or other realities, depending where your preferences lie), does not, in my mind, lessen its relevancy to modern UFO accounts of contacts, contactees, abductions and the like.

The impossible and the totally absurd are no longer strange bed fellows in today's UFO accounts. For example, in the provocative Andreasson Affair, we are confronted with a vision of the legendary Phoenix<sup>25</sup>. Removal of bodily organs and replacement with special "materials", prominent features of the esoteric shamanistic tradition of ritualistic initiation - "the experience of death and dying again" - appear in many modern accounts of UFO abduction. The "celestial ascents" of "aboriginal men of high degree" to meet with the "sky beings", Baiame, Gion, Biral and others, were often replaced by "descents" into "other realms" - the underworld or under the sea. What do we find in the bizarre Filiberto Cardenas abductions:

"Cardenas spoke of being taken by three human-like entities dressed in tight, white suits to a beach where the aliens apparently worked a combination lock on a rock. The rock opened, revealing a tunnel, and they rushed down into the sea at a "great velocity"<sup>26</sup>.

So as the bizarre fabric of UFO experiences continues to be woven onto the world scene

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and incorporated into our culture at what seems to be both a subtle but profound level, I consider it unlikely that such accounts will cease. The bizarre and the impossible will continue to emerge. But at what level of human existence are these sorts of experiences occurring<sup>27</sup>.

Is the vision of Fred. Wm. Birmingham objective or subjective in nature? Does the Memorandum Book record a real physical event or is it principally psychological in origin? Perhaps the event had some physical basis, but was embroidered by fantasy and imagination.

Probably most contactee, contact and abduction events of the modern era beg the same questions?

Are there any avenues to explore which might shed light on these questions?

Perhaps the situation is insoluble, but contemplation of such questions, I believe, is healthy, and may lead to a greater understanding of ourselves and perhaps, just perhaps, the greater world at large.

It may be easy to dismiss the Birmingham account, since it is of an historical event and, therefore, alludes real critical inspection. After all the account is obviously a dream, delusion, vision or hallucination, the argument would go?

However, I do not believe we can escape the remarkable degree of correspondence with contemporary UFO events. What one applies to the Birmingham vision could perhaps be equally applied to UFO events.

What follows are some points for discussion. Their inclusion does not necessarily imply my belief in the plausibility of their implications, however, I believe each are worthwhile points to make if we are to encourage healthy speculation and debate on the issues raised.

What if we speculate that the Birmingham manuscript describes a vivid hallucination perhaps embroidered with remarkable imagery and unusual events, possibly of both an objective and subjective nature? What is the latest thinking on hallucinations?

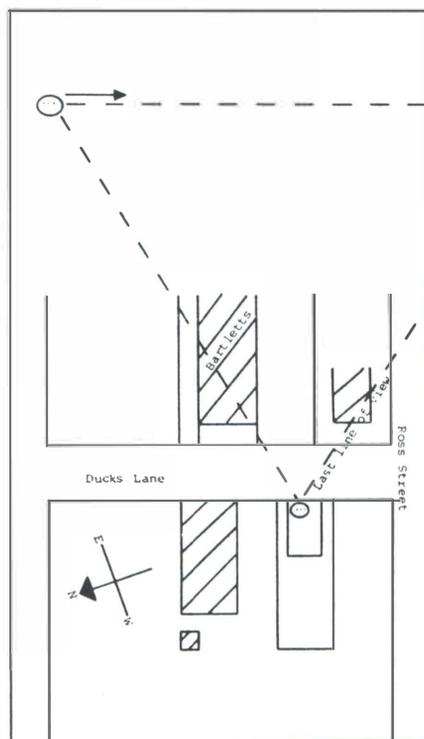
Some recent work undertaken by Dr Ronald K. Siegel has lead to many rich insights into the world of hallucinations. The discoveries are not without their relevance to our theme<sup>28</sup>.

Research is showing that a growing number of events can lead to hallucinatory types of experiences. Later we will see how much these events intrude on our "UFO domain". The events include falling asleep and waking up<sup>29</sup>, insulin hypoglycemia, the delirium of fever, epilepsy, psychotic episodes, advanced syphilis, sensory deprivation, photo stimulation, electrical stimulation, crystal gazing, migraine headaches, dizziness, variety of drug intoxications, religious exaltations, and extreme hunger, cold or thirst<sup>30</sup>. Recollect that Birmingham remarked "1868 (was) a most miserable year to me in many ways I went about downhearted and with the remains of a low fever..." Is it relevant that the most exotic episode in Birmingham's account occurred in 1868?

Siegel defined stages of hallucinatory experiences. He emphasised the second stage situations led to complex images - "an activation of images already recorded on the memory".

Religious symbols, small animals and human beings seem to predominate at this level. Is it not interesting that the Andreasson Affair is so heavily steeped in religious symbolism (not undoubtedly a little influenced by her beliefs). The Phoenix episode cannot be avoided. Jung once described the dream of a six year-old girl in the following way:

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Sketch (after Birmingham)

"She dreamt she stood at the entrance of a large, unknown building. A fairy led her down a long colonnade and conducted her to a sort of central chamber. Similar colonnades converged from all sides. The fairy stepped into the centre and changed into a tall flame. Three snakes crawled round the fire, as if circumambulating it<sup>31</sup>".

The correspondences with the Andreasson Affair and other contact and abduction cases is startling.

The anthropomorphic vision dominates not only deep hallucinations, but figure largely in UFO entity reports. Creatures similar to us always appear. "Monsters" are few and far between. If they do appear, they are not far removed from science fiction or popular culture (e.g. the entity in the fascinating Fortunato Zanfretta affair looks remarkably like "the Creature from the Black Lagoon"). Whether they are dwarves or angelic "Venusians", the similarity with man remains.

As the depth of the hallucinatory events progress, the number and complexity of imagery increases. Tunnel-like perspectives and imagery characterised by a bright light in the centre of the field of vision predominate. The correspondences with many experiences which are currently holding sway with the general community are extraordinary (e.g. out of the body experiences, near-death experiences and UFO abductions!).

Siegel noted that common images also included childhood memories and scenes associated with strong emotional experiences that the percipients had undergone. "These hallucinatory images were more than pictorial replicas; many of them were elaborated and embellished into fantastic scenes<sup>32</sup>".

None more fantastic than an examination table inside a UFO!

Childhood memories can remain latent and objectify themselves sometimes into a startling perception of reality.

Perhaps it is not surprising that in the David Seewalt abduction at Calgary, Canada, of November 17, 1967, the boy likened the alien "operating room" to the hospital experience he had of an appendicitis operation when he was in Grade IV. "One of the orderlies who had wheeled David into the operating theatre on that occasion was old, and under Dr M's questioning, David conceded that he had wrinkled skin on the back of his hand..." The entities who examined him had "rough brown skin like crocodiles". Did the whole affair emerge from "a mental miasma arising from too many TV saucer shows and science fiction books in combination with the subconscious memory of his appendectomy...<sup>33</sup>?"

The idea of some sort of hallucinatory mechanism is offered, at least partially, in the new book, "The Tujunga Canyon Contacts". The book describes identical "dreams" shared by people who had yet to meet and an expanding circle of UFO "contagion" emanating from the primary abductee, Sara Shaw. The UFO percipients whose experiences the book relates were homosexual. Sara Shaw, in particular, was concerned about her sexual identity at the time she was abducted and examined medically. No doubt a "strong emotional experience", which co-author, Rogo, uses to interpret the abduction as "a rape fantasy drawn from her mind and objectified into physical reality in the form of a genuine UFO sighting and abduction".

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Rogo suggests: "UFO abductions occur when the witness is in a state of psychological need, and when the unconscious mind needs to impart an important message to the conscious mind. Once contacted by a human mind in such a state, the supermind creates an abduction experience for the witness by drawing upon information and preoccupations buried deep within his mind. It structures this information as part of the abduction scenario and presents it to the witness in objectified form. The supermind does all this by relying upon a prototypical experience, which it then individually moulds to best communicate a vital message in symbolic form to the witness<sup>34</sup>".

The relevance of Rogo's theorising to the issues raised is I hope apparent, although it is on dangerous ground shared by the extreme forms of 'tulpa' or 'projection' theories. The objective status of abductions is, at least on the basis of the evidence so far to hand, still in question.

Siegel notes that given a sufficiently deep hallucinatory experience, the event can become quite "objectively real" to the observer. In other words, the percipient can no longer distinguish reality from hallucinations<sup>35</sup>.

Siegel further notes: "The remarkable constancies of drug induced hallucinations lead naturally to an inquiry into how universal they may be. Some of them are strikingly similar to the primordial or archetypal forms (such as the mandala, the mystic symbol of the universe employed in Hinduism and Buddhism as an aid to meditation) that the psychoanalyst C.G. Jung described as part of man's collective unconscious. Moreover, as many anthropologists have noted, the hallucinogen-inspired art of many primitive peoples often contains constants of form, colour and movement<sup>36</sup>".

Siegel's cross-cultural studies of drug visions have shown that the constants of hallucinatory experiences transcend cultural boundaries. Siegel elaborates:

"There is a universal common denominator of behaviour. It's something similar to what Jung called the collective unconscious, typified by symbols like the mandala. Whether you use that kind of labelling or choose to call it something else (the "supermind" of Rogo and others - B.C.), the fact remains that, given an infinite variety of stimulations, the brain seems to respond in finite ways... (The) brain respond(s) in patterns that are definable, predictable, and explainable in terms of where they came from and how they were produced<sup>37</sup>".

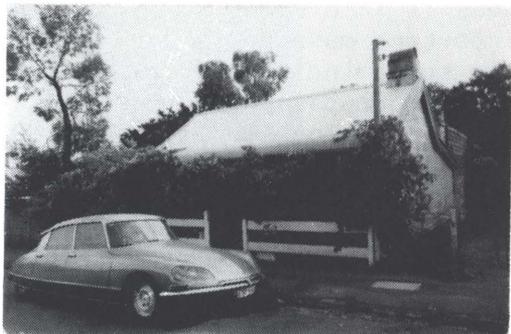
The universality of hallucinations, the world of exotic imagery and the like, is startling. I have already referred to the correspondences between UFO accounts and shamanism, and others have noted similarities with other experiences<sup>38</sup>.

Dr Siegel himself notes: "We've found an uncanny parallel between the experiences of UFO abductees and the phenomena of drug induced visions.

That's not to detract from the romanticism or novelty of these visions or their utility in inspiring creative endeavours or giving support to transcendental experiences. But it is to say that they are very similar for all people...<sup>39</sup>"

The specific content may differ, but the basic components of these visions will be the same for "Aboriginal men of high degree", a Parramatta surveyor in 1868 or 20th century UFO abductees.

Contactee, contact and abduction experiences may be only human responses to the more objective aspects of the UFO phenomenon. I have little doubt that there are objective phenomena involved in the UFO mystery but as researchers, we must be very cautious in deciding just where that stepping off point occurs between real objective physical events and the realms of imagination, fantasy and elsewhere.



"Cottage in Duck's Lane"  
as it is today.

Perhaps such events are manifestations of an extraordinary technology, which is like magic to us (to paraphrase something Arthur C. Clarke once said) and we are missing the meaning or the point of it all?

However, for the moment, until acceptable and testable physical evidence emerges for the reality of contactee, contact and abduction events, I prefer caution and suggest an open minded, but critical approach. I think known hypotheses such as psychological processes (that are well attested) should be seriously considered before we accept that such events represent "technology". At the moment, the evidence seems to be suggesting that the best fit hypothesis

for these events will have some significant faculty of the human mind as its basis.

With caution we may eventually be able to decide unambiguously whether contact and abduction accounts are genuine extensions of the apparently more objective manifestations of "mainstream" UFO activity. It is a quest for which any number of possibilities may eventuate. The looking will surely be fascinating.

### Epilogue

"Like a mirage that shows a magnificent city, the images of hallucinations are actually reflected images of real objects located elsewhere. The city is no less intriguing and no less worthy of study because it is not where we think it is. Further experiments will help localise it".

- Dr Ronald K. Siegel, 1977<sup>40</sup>.

"The machine then, quite, stopped, the forward motion and descended some twenty feet or so as gently as a feather onto the grass at P.P. (Parramatta Park)".

- Fred. Wm. Birmingham  
Parramatta Park, 1868.

The holder of Australia's first aerial pilot's licence was William E. Hart, a Parramatta dentist. He taught himself to fly a Bristol biplane well enough to qualify for the Royal Aero Club's Aviator's Certificate in November, 1911<sup>41</sup>.

On June 29, 1912, Hart won Australia's first air race. He challenged the visiting American flier, "Wizard" Stone, to a twenty mile race for a stake of 250 pounds. Stone lost his way, landing at Lakemba, but Hart, a much less experienced pilot, finished the flight in 23 minutes and landed as planned in Parramatta Park.

"...I came down from the hill in the Parramatta Park firmly convinced that the vision was gradually unfolding itself and 'the machine to go through the air' was a thing (through God's mercy) to be accomplished".

- Fred. Wm. Birmingham, 1873.

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The late Fred Phillips, the Eslings and the late Tasman V. Homan for the manuscript.

The Mitchell library (Sydney), Mr Frank Bloxham (President of the Parramatta Historical Society), Mrs Harwin (Secretary of the Parramatta Historical Society) and Dr Michael Hough for their help in finding the historical Frederick William Birmingham.

Dr Ronald K. Siegel for his work on hallucinations and mapping our mental landscape.

I alone am responsible for the context in which these sources find their information in this paper. The presence of their material within these pages does not necessarily reflect their agreement with the paper's threads of reasoning. Ultimately be it fantasy, fiction, allegory or fact, the story attributed to F.W. Birmingham and the perspective I have weaved, are I hope of benefit for casting light on some of the lesser understood corridors of the human mind and the strange phenomena that regails it from within and without.

Special thanks to Janet and Colin Bord for their research conducted on my behalf into F.W. Birmingham and some of the points raised in the manuscript.

### NOTES & REFERENCES

- 1: From "The Four Zoas", Night the Second, Lines 121, 122, 126, 127. See pg. 283, "Blake - Complete Writings" edited by Geoffrey Keynes, Oxford University Press, 1969, 1976.
- 2: In a letter to his friend and patron, Thomas Butts, 1802. Milton Klonsky in his "William Blake - The Seer and his Visions" (Harmony Books, NY, 1977, pgs. 10-11) explains Blake's visionary credo: "Fourfold vision", Blake's "supreme delight", "is only when the phenomenal world has been transcended by the Divine Imagination and reunited with Spirit". "His 'soft Beulah's night', where vision, annealed by passion, becomes threefold, is Blake's erotic realm of the creative unconscious, presided over by the Daughters of Inspiration (the dream world)". "Twofold vision", with him "always" is merely Blake's own imagination, "heightened to vision". "...single vision, exemplified by the hypnosis of Newtonian science, occurs when we see with, not thro', our eyes".
- 3: Ex (the late) Fred Phillips, Honorary President of UFOIC (now UFO Research NSW). Sadly Fred passed away during 1981.
- 4: The "group" consisted of T.V. Homan ("Co-ordination"), Mrs N. de Launte ("Manuscript"), Majorie Esling ("Caligraphy"), David Esling ("Drafting") and Judith Lambert ("Transcription"). Only T.V. Homan was known to have been a member of UFOIC.
- 5: Tas Homan told me on a number of occasions that the "copy" was an authentic copy of the original manuscript. However, he declined or could not tell me more.
- 6: The "copy" was found by Fred Phillips while he was organising papers for June Marsden. On the "copy" was written "Who sent this to me? Inside a New Zealand Trade Magazine, Dec (sic?) - 1958". This was written by June Marsden at the time she found it.
- 7: "An Australian Catalogue of Close Encounter Type Three Reports", 1977.
- 8: Ibid.7; At that time I made this comment about the account: "Although this seems a 'dream encounter', it is perhaps relevant in terms of the Vallee 'Magonia' theory and modifications of it". "The Parramatta 1868 event is very unusual, but it reflects many of the dream-like aspects of modern day encounters with UFOs...".
- 9: "Beyond the CE3 Down Under, 1977, by this author.
- 10: Ibid.9, pg.2.
- 11: Ibid.9, pg.3.
- 12: See pgs.9 & 73 of Keith Basterfield's excellent publication: "An Indepth Review of Australasian UFO Related Entity Reports" - ACUFOS - June, 1980, where Keith suggested "dream/imagery" as a possible explanation for the main event.
- 13: David & Charles, 1979: according to the publisher's blurb: "one of the most remarkable fragments of Victorian writing ever to be unearthed, the hitherto unpublished account" of a Buckinghamshire cabinet-maker's encounter with "denizens of another world".
- 14: Having read the Loosley/Langford book, I share Janet and Colin Bord's scepticism about the authenticity of the account. Colin Bord wrote a pointed review of the book for "Fortean Times", No.31, Spring, 1980, from which I quote (with permission): "The UFO witness and author of the MS was William Robert Loosley, builder, cabinet-maker and undertaker, of High Wycombe, Bucks., who lived from 1838 to 1893 and whose

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strange experience occurred in 1871. Briefly, his report tells how one night he saw a bright, starlike light land in a nearby wood, and the following afternoon he walked to the area and found two apparently intelligently controlled mechanical contrivances. The smaller appeared to be specimen gathering and the larger attempted to communicate with Loosely by means of an increasingly elaborate series of visual holographic symbols which were meaningless to the simple builder and joiner. Prevented from leaving the scene of contact by the attentions of the smaller machine, he was forced to spend several hours viewing this tedious display until suddenly both machines turned their attention away from him and he was free to return to his home. Late that night he saw the bright, starlike light again land in the wood and a short while later take off again, having presumably taken the two machines aboard". Langford fails to provide any proof for the authenticity of the document he quotes. In fact Colin suggests "the wordy phrases read more like a parody of a Pepysian diarist than a self taught Victorian artisan". Langford makes a detailed interpretation of the complex "communications" but the arguments are so closely made that "one inevitably wonders which came first, Loosley's account of the pictorial symbols he saw or Langford's explanation of them". Colin Bord makes four pointed objections and concludes: "Before the Loosley contact of 1871 joins the ranks of these apocryphal reports, editor Langford and his publishers should be challenged: Either satisfy the four points ... or admit the book is an ingenious hoax of interest only to readers of science fiction". Strangely enough, a book entitled "The Necronomicon - the Book of Dead Names" which purports to be a study of the "long lost book" of Lovecraft fiction fame, was co-researched by none other than our friend David Langford. The team which produced the book are positing it as an authentic MS, however, Lovecraft made it a game to fabricate authentic documents. The Necronomicon was one of them. Perhaps the Loosley account is in the same basket.

- 15: From my personal files - the account is given here for the first time in such detail.
- 16: Ibid.6.
- 17: In a recent interview, Mrs Majorie Esling, told me of the history of the Birmingham manuscript, as she was able to best remember it. Apparently sometime during the 1940s, Mrs Esling's mother, Mrs N. de Launte, as a qualified nurse was looking after a Mrs Haywood, the wife of a Parramatta schoolteacher, Mr Wallace Haywood. Out of appreciation, Mr Haywood gave Mrs de Launte a small black book, which consisted of a cover made of imitation leather/ oil skin, with an inlaid cross on the front. It was estimated to be about 6" x 4" in size, handwritten with pen & ink and supplemented with rough sketches. Mrs Esling remembers her mother showing her the "memorandum book" from time to time, but she was (and still is) not particularly interested in its strange contents. She recollected that the little book described how the writer saw a strange "aircraft" over Parramatta, but noted that the account did not refer to it as a "flying saucer". The manuscript was obviously an old one, consistent with the dating of the account (1868 - 1873). The "memorandum book" was placed in a drawer and largely forgotten for a number of years, until the family made the acquaintance of Tasman V. Homan during the early 1950s. Homan was both intrigued and impressed by the manuscript since to him it was very meaningful as a provocative historical description of a modern mystery that fascinated him deeply - flying saucers! Although the de Launte/Esling family often made fun of Homan's "flying saucer" beliefs, they were sufficiently impressed by the depth of his interest to consider giving him the Birmingham manuscript. Mrs de Launte did finally give Homan the "memorandum book". The manuscript may have drifted into obscurity had not the account of the Parramatta surveyor held such sway over Homan. Homan eventually went to the trouble of producing a "copy" of it. Although he lists Mrs de Launte, her daughter, Majorie Esling, and David Esling as having assisted in the production of this "copy". the family cannot recollect taking an active part in it. Mrs Esling does, however, remember the original book and her mother making a gift of it to Mr Homan. Transcription of the "copy" was also attributed to a Judith Lambert, who it seems, was both a writer and an acquaintance of Homan. As far as I have been able to determine, Homan's copy of the "memorandum book" remained among a small close group of acquaintances. It had certainly not found its way into the literature. The manuscript would have probably remained unknown, had it not been accidentally "rediscovered" by Fred Phillips. He subsequently passed it onto me and since then parts of the account have percolated into the literature. Only now has the whole story been told.
- 18: The National Directory of NSW, 1867, Samson & Co. pg.522, lists Birmingham, Frederick William as living in the Parramatta, Penrith, Picton, Campbelltown, & C. area. Pg.521 of the same reference lists Bartlett, William in the same area (a Mr Bartlett is referred to in the "Memorandum Book" as a neighbour in Duck's Land). The Official Post Office Directory of NSW (Bailliere's 1867) compiled by Authority, F.F. Bailliere, Publisher, Sydney and Melbourne, lists on pg.258, in Parramatta, Co. Cumberland: Birmingham (sic) Fred., engineer, Duck Lane, along with Bartlett, John Wm., gardner, Duck Lane. The Mitchell Library of Sydney holds two maps prepared by F.W. Birmingham:
- (i) "Township of St. Joseph, situated around the Haslem Ck. railway Station, to be sold by J.V. Gorman, surv. by F.W. Birmingham, Syd., 1867".
  - (ii) "Plan of the Subdivision of the Palmer Estate, adjoining the town of Parramatta - map designed by F.W. Birmingham, C.E. & Land Surveyor, Parramatta, April, 1870".
- Parramatta Council confirmed to me that F.W. Birmingham held the position of alderman to Parramatta Council in 1865. He resigned in March, 1866, then returned in 1867 and served for one year. Thus we have documentation confirming, "I being twice elected alderman of Parramatta". Further research indicated the following: Greville's P.O. Directory of 1875-77, lists "William Birmingham, surveyor, Duck's Lane, Parramatta". Sands Country Directory of 1881-82 lists "F.W. Birmingham, Parramatta, civil engineer, Trott St Parramatta". This apparent address change is misleading. A map included

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with the "memorandum book" has Ducks Lane intersecting with Ross Street. If you take a modern Street Directory, it is Trott St, that intersects with Ross St. An historical search provides us with the answer. Sometime during the period 1875 to 1882, Ducks Lane was renamed Trott Street. Clearly with the evidence at hand, we have firmly established that our "Fred. Wm. Birmingham" lived in Ducks Lane, Parramatta between 1868 and 1873, consistent with the "memorandum book". After 1891, no further record is extant of F.W. Birmingham. A death certificate was registered in Parramatta on December 19, 1892, detailing the death of one Frederick W. Birmingham, on December 16, 1892, at the George St Asylum. The certificate describes the man in bare fashion: "male 70 years", occupation "unknown", no relations, parents, marriage, children are specified. Cause of death was "Diarrhoea - Exhaustion" lasting three days. I. Waugh, the medical attendant, last saw him on the same day as his death. The "informant" of the death was the Matron Superintendent of the George St Asylum. It was noted that he was born in County Mayo (Ireland) and had been in Australia for forty years. The Death certificate records that he was buried on December 19, at the Church of England cemetery at Rookwood. The undertaker was one William Metcalf (sic?) with the minister being a Rev. Dunlop. Witnesses to the burial were Jeffery Rogers & Robert Howe. The George St. asylum was an "asylum for the destitute", "aged indigent men: - men without relative or means of support. History is sometimes harsh. The finality of Birmingham's passing is recorded in the Registrar of the Church of England cemetery at Rookwood. It notes that Frederick Birmingham, aged 70, was buried on December 19, 1892, in Grave 894, in Section L. That section was set aside by the State Government as the "Common portion" and was often referred to as the "pauper" section. The grave is unmarked.

- 19: Birmingham's surprise is consistent with the contemporary conviction that flight would only be achieved with lighter-than-air "machines", namely balloons, and later the "airship". Jules Verne in his prophetic book, "Robur the Conqueror" (or "The Clipper of the Clouds"), published in 1886, not only pre-empted the American "airship" waves in 1896 and 1897, but defined the future of "heavier-than-air" aerial machines.
- 20: See the Encyclopedia of UFOs, edited by Ronald Story (Doubleday, 1980).
- 21: "Beyond the CE3 down under" by this author, 1977. See also Elkin's "Aboriginal Men of High Degree" & Eliade's "Australian Religions" & "Shamanism".
- 22: See, for example, Vallee's "Passport to Magonia" & Leslie, "Flying Saucers Have Landed".
- 23: See Vallee, "Passport to Magonia"; Clark & Coleman, "The Unidentified".
- 24: See for example "The Candle of Vision" by A.E. Quest, 1965.
- 25: "The Andreasson Affair" by Raymond E. Fowler (Prentice Hall, 1979).
- 26: "Abducted" by A. Hendry, "Second Look"/"Frontiers of Science", July-August, 1980.
- 27: See, for example, "Mysteries" by Colin Wilson & "Apparitions" by Aniela Jaffe, re thoughts on the perspectives for such experiences.
- 28: "Hallucinations" by Ronald K. Siegel, Scientific American, October 1977, pgs.132-140, and "Cartographer of Consciousness" by Brian Van der Horst, Omni, September 1980, pgs54-58.
- 29: See Keith Basterfield's book "UFOs - the Image Hypothesis, Close Encounters of an Australian Kind".
- 30: Ibid.27, and Persingers, "Space-Time Transients & Unusual Events".
- 31: Jung's "Flying Saucers", pg.19.
- 32: Ibid.27, Sci. Am. Pg.136.
- 33: FSR Vol.20, No.6, 1975, pg.26, "Crocodile-Skinned Entities at Calgary" by W.K. Allan.
- 34: "The Tujung Canyon Contacts" by Anne Druffel and D. Scott Rogo (1980).
- 35: Ibid.27, Omni, pg.55; See also Hilgard's "Divided Consciousness".
- 36: Ibid.27, Sci. Am. pg.136, 138.
- 37: Ibid.27, Omni, pg.58.
- 38: "The Presence of Other Worlds" by Wilson Van Dusen (Perennial, 1974).
- 39: Ibid.27, Omni, pg.58;
- 40: Ibid.27, Omni, pg.58.
- 41: "Australia's Yesterdays" (Readers Digest, 1974), "Australians in the Air", Greg Copley (Rigby, 1976).
- 42: Ibid.24, pgs.93-97. ■



## WILLIAM C. CHALKER



William Chalker

William (Bill) Clifford Chalker, a Quality Assurance Manager in the food industry, has had a long association with UFO research. He is Director of UFO Research (NSW), a scientific consultant with the Australian Centre for UFO Studies and a representative for the American UFO groups APRO and MUFON.

Born in 1952, at Grafton, NSW, Bill took an early interest in science and the unusual. Widely reported UFO sightings during 1965 and 1966 sparked his interest. Indeed Grafton area sightings gained worldwide prominence in 1966. A leaning to science lead Bill into a deeper interest of the UFO subject.

A wave of UFO and "nest" reports on the north coast of NSW (in particular at Bungawalban on a property owned by local parliamentary member Mr Ian Robinson) in 1969, began Bill on a path of active investigation.

He started affiliations with the UFO Investigation Centre (UFOIC - later to become UFOR (NSW)) and APRO, and in 1971, with a science scholarship awarded by the Tooheys Company, began study at the University of New England, Armidale, NSW, for a degree in science.

While at University, Bill led a small team of people, which actively investigated UFO reports in the New England and North Coast regions of NSW. During this period, from 1971 to 1974, the highlights of Bill's research were the extraordinary "flaps" centred at Kempsey (1971) and Tyringham - Dundurrabin (1973), complex UFO and apparent psychic activity at Mount Butler during 1972 and 1973, and his own witnessed observations of a daylight disc over the university campus during 1972.

In 1974, he successfully completed his studies and early in the following year led the Bachelor of Science with Honours, conferred on him. Bill majored in Physical and Inorganic Chemistry and Pure Mathematics.

1975 saw him come to Sydney and begin a closer involvement in the reformed UFOIC which led to the emergence of UFO Research (NSW) in March 1977, under his direction. Bill and UFOR (NSW) have investigated many outstanding UFO events including the Bents Basin "robot" case of 1972, the UFO physical trace event at Penrith in 1976, a UFO landing at Orange, in 1977 and a remarkable close encounter at Bakers Creek Falls in 1978.

He met his future wife, Anne, late in 1976 and as a clinical psychologist, she shared his interests in the UFO subject. They married in early 1978 and in November 1980, had their first child - Kieran William - Kieran is reportedly being groomed as a major new intellectual force in ufology and important statements are deemed to be soon forthcoming. Move over Bill.

In 1979, Bill consolidated his long time interest in UFO landing and physical trace cases and formed the Australian Physical Evidence Study Group (APESG), as a specialised research arm of the Australian Centre for UFO Studies. Bill is working towards the publication of a major document on Australian physical trace cases.

Bill has written widely on the UFO subject with contributions being carried in such publications as the British Flying Saucer Review (FSR), the MUFON Journal, the APRO Bulletin, Psychic Australian and Omega (UFOs & Science - to be published February 1982). He has been



a regular contributor to Australian UFO publications and edited his groups publications UFOIC Newsletter, then the Australian UFO Researcher - until they ceased publishing to support the co-operative publication venture of the UFO Research Australia Newsletter (UFORAN). Contributions by Bill, along with a biography and position statement appeared in the massive "Encyclopedia of UFOs" edited by Ronald Story (1980). He co-authored with Keith Basterfield, Australia's first catalogue of CE3 events (1976). Bill also contributed the Australian case content in "Are we being watched?" a childrens UFO book by Janet and Colin Bord. He has had published major papers on many topics including Australian physical evidence, historical Australian reports (pre 1947), the RAAF and UFOs and Australian "interrupted journeys".

He recently undertook Australia's oldest retrospective UFO investigation, when he researched the story of the 1868 "UFO vision? of F.W. Birmingham" (see this issue). He is currently undertaking a detailed investigation of the RAAF involvement with UFOs and is the first UFO researcher to have been given permission to study all their files. This study of the RAAF files has been scheduled for January, 1982, and we may be able to report on whether the visit came to full fruition.

Bill's main interests in the UFO subject are the study of UFO "flaps", physical evidence, historical reports and official involvement. His aims are to isolate a large body of high quality information about "high strangeness" physical trace cases (CE2 events) for the purposes of attracting scientists into supporting a sophisticated rapid intervention group program. Bill also seeks to try and elevate UFO phenomenon into a "repeatable experiment" status, via the study and investigation of the validity of UFO flaps and other means. He is hopeful that this will bring the study of UFOs into the area of direct experimentation.

Beyond his UFO interests, Bill has an extensive interest in folklore and Fortean phenomena in Australia. His other interests include shamanism, Jungian psychology and the paranormal. He has a vital interest in the philosophy of science and its interaction with anomalous phenomena.

Bill is a keen reader and collector of books on a wide range of material and has a personal library in excess of 1500 books. He is a particular fan of H.P. Lovecraft (the Cthulhu Mythos), William Hope Hodgson (Carnacki the Ghost Finder), Stephen King (The Shining, Danse Macabre), Peter Straub (Shadowland and Ghost Story) and Colin Wilson. To sustain himself, and maintain a perspective on the world at large, he keeps up a daily dose of "Footrot Flats" and "Doonesberry".

Bill has seen great strides in ufology over the last decade or so, and looks forward to being a part of the challenging years ahead. He hopes that all UFO researchers will meet the tasks ahead with a real spirit of co-operation and open-mindedness.

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PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR UFO STUDIES:

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Available from: ACUFOS, PO Box 546, Gosford NSW 2250, AUSTRALIA. (Prices are Australian \$. Overseas orders should be placed by way of International Money Order made payable to "The Australian Centre for UFO Studies". Prices include surface mail postage).

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## HANGAR 18

(A film review by Pony Barenson)

Contrary to what publicity suggests this is a fictitious not a factual film about a crashed UFO and subsequent government cover-up.

Visually this movie is impressive, the UFO interiors are, for example, particularly realistic.

The film's political intrigue was well written and acted and hence very convincing. However, not being an American citizen I cannot judge whether this is an objective representation of American political strategy.

Had it not been for a scientific wizard, and his trusty computer, the movie would have been considerably longer. Together, computer and wizard made light work of extraterrestrial writing revealing that long ago aliens (gods) came to Earth and interbred with prehumans then left - but were preparing to return.

Two irate astronauts who have been falsely accused of negligence provide plenty of action in their quest for truth and justice.

Hangar 18 had a fiery "we're not telling" finish - very vexing to those of us who had confidently awaited a climactic final revelation.

This movie is entertaining rather than enlightening, interesting rather than convincing. I enjoyed Hangar 18 and, therefore, recommend it - just remember to ignore television advertisements promising answers to supposed factual events for this is misleading promotion for a fictitious film.

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*(A review by Vladimir Godic)*

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I highly recommend this excellent service to all those seriously interested in ufology and related subjects.

The "1982 Arcturus UFO Literature Reference Guide and Catalogue" will be reviewed in the next issue of UFORAN.

## AUSTRALIAN BOOKS ON UFOs

*(Reviewed by Mark Moravec)*

### PART 3

Over the years, a number of Australian books on UFOs have been published. The books, which vary greatly in quality, are briefly reviewed below.

ALIEN HONEYCOMB by John Pinkney and Leonard Ryzman. Sydney: Pan, 1980. This book purports to present "the first solid evidence of UFOs". A sighting of a nocturnal light in Queensland is tenuously related to the discovery, several years later, of fragments of "honeycomb" material found scattered over neighbouring properties. The authors have withheld their samples of alleged "UFO wreckage", apparently believing that only a United Nations agency can be trusted in their analysis. Other, more critical researchers have been able to obtain samples of the same material from the property owners. Independent chemical analysis has confirmed that the honeycomb material is strictly terrestrial fibreglass. The material has been used in the past, in the same honeycomb form, as an insulation material in aircraft and satellites. This book is only recommended to psychologists who are interested in a case study of "the will to believe".

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