

# *Abduction Watch 14* October 1998

## The Crowd of Unknowing

### Carve-up

The Derrel Sims Roadshow limps on, with fresh revelations from his motley bunch of not-quite doctors, new age scientists and dodgy analysts. His team certainly has the knack for publicity, with "Dr Roger K Leir", who I understand to be a podiatrist - treating hands and feet only, apparently not the same as an M.D. - having an article about an 'analysis' of the odd little objects he apparently cut out of the extremities of various abduction believers in both the June 1998 *MUFON UFO Journal*, and the UK *UFO Magazine* for November/December 1998.

You should read the article. Its language seems unnecessarily obscure, and its conclusions "these are structured objects which serve a purpose" wholly unjustified by the findings presented. I don't have space to set out Leir's claims, but in that most of you should have access to them (I imagine they're going to be out there on the Net somewhere - the first line is "On August 19, 1995, a historic surgery took place in Camarillo, California") some comments from a real doctor may be helpful. This GP is the member of ASKE who previously looked at Sims' claims of alien fluorescence, and while he stresses that he is no expert in histopathology, and has no knowledge of metallurgy, his comments may be helpful if read in conjunction with what Leir has to say. I hope to have further comments from other professionals in time for the next *AW*. In the meantime, has anybody wondered why in spite of his claims of scientific validity, Sims can't get one, single, real doctor to work with him?

"Re the encapsulation of the foreign matter in a 'dark gray shiny membrane' consisting of 'a protein coagulum, haemosiderin granules and keratin'. All of these are, as the paper admits, naturally occurring: the haemosiderin suggests a ferrous object which has, in effect, rusted. All this, I suspect, is no more than the tissue which develops around any retained foreign matter in the body, and I can't see how the author substantiates his claim that this combination of elements has never been seen before. The lack of any 'fresh or resolved' inflammatory or rejection process in the surrounding tissue suggests that the foreign body had been there for some time: once it is encapsulated, the inflammation has done its job, the encapsulation membrane isolating the foreign matter from the rest of the body.

The presence of 'nerve proprioceptors . . . which are never found . . . in the deep tissues next to the bone'. My understanding was that nerve proprioceptors (if such they were) are virtually universally present in all tissues . . .

The 'solar elastosis' (again, if it is that) is evidence of UV exposure but it is usually patchy and no significance attaches to the lesion found having been circumscribed: this is normal. It certainly does not indicate localised or circumscribed exposure to UV, otherwise we would say the same of, say, malignant melanomata which are also more common after excessive UV exposure, yet they are also discrete lesions. Nor does it necessarily indicate excessive general exposure - ordinary exposure to sunlight is enough to account for it; though it is more 'common' after excessive exposure, it isn't necessarily solely due to that factor.

In short, a poor piece of scientific writing which is unconvincing in its claims that these lesions were anything other than those which might be as well explained (we would say, better or more probably explained) as natural phenomena . . ."

## Montauk, LAPIS, and the propagation of Nazi myths

The Montauk Project - publicised, and presumably originated by, Americans Al Bielek, Preston Nichols, Duncan Cameron and Peter Moon - forms the basis for the worst-evidenced, most unbelievable set of claims that exist in our field. I don't think the material has ever been properly debunked (any relevant information would be greatly appreciated), although every element of it falls somewhere between preposterous and absurd. It is based pretty much on the premise that because of links with, or involvement in the (non-existent) Philadelphia Experiment, the writers can somehow travel through wormholes in time, being different people in different places and times, and reporting back on their alleged experiences.

Debunking Montauk shouldn't actually be difficult, but I think time in the USA would be needed to do it. Many of the claims demand the ability to research local geography and history, but that aside, much of the material is obviously sourced from books and accounts of equally unreal events and experiences, which the Montauk Four appear to accept, unquestioningly, as true. Nowhere is this more apparent than in their latest volume, *The Black Sun - Montauk's Nazi-Tibetan Connection* (in case you'd missed Montauk's earlier connections, they've included invisibility, the Pyramids and the Pleiades. As you might expect if you trawl low-grade New Age sources for ideas!)

*The Black Sun*, however, isn't just harmless rubbish. It isn't harmless at all. Which was why I was concerned to see that Al Bielek is the featured speaker, speaking on both days, at the LAPIS 'Saucers, Secrets and Superpowers' Conference at Blackpool in November. Although the book itself was written by Moon, the Montauk team work together. I'm told by Sam Wright, one of the Conference organisers, that although LAPIS aren't paying Bielek a fee, he is allowed to sell the Montauk books at the Conference. Which will include *Black Sun*.

So, what's wrong with this book? Well firstly, it really is rubbish. It includes extensive material about the supposed reality of the *Vril* and *Haunebu* Nazi flying saucers, complete with illustrations. If there's one issue that all serious investigations of German wartime UFOs agree on, it's that the *Vril*, *Haunebu* and *V-7* material is not only a fake, but a recent fake, too, concocted well within the last 20 years. That Moon and the Montauk believers accept it as true, and publicise it so vigorously, only confirms their gullibility, and their incompetence as researchers. (Unfortunately, the same appears to apply to the Polish researchers featured in the current *UFO Magazine*.)

Secondly, it could reasonably be described as pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic and Holocaust Revisionist. I'll try to give you a flavour of the book's culpable failure to deal with the reality of the Holocaust, the grovelling admiration for the demented thuggery of Nazism, and the willingness to accept any claim with which, through Montauk's conquest of time and space, the Montauk authors might enhance their own self-esteem. And sell their wretched books.

"Hurtak says the most important aspect of the Third Reich is that they opened the window to other worlds . . . on the 3rd and 4th of January of 1934, Hitler and Himmler got together to discuss the Vril Project. They talked about the prospect of sending a huge space ship through a dimensional channel that was a tunnel independent of the speed of light. It was supposed to go to Aldebaran . . . Long before Roswell, there were similar incidents in Germany. This nation had the peak scientists in the world, and it stands to reason that they would have been contacted. . . People miss with regard to Mengele when they assume that the diabolical aspects of his work were inspired only by a lust for evil deeds. His "whimsical" (not a word anybody with an ounce of sense or compassion would use of Mengele) thumbs up or down at the death camps was not merely his rendition of a past life as Nero or Caligula. He was looking for specific genetic traits with his highly trained eyes. Mengele was diabolical all right, but there was a more exacting and greater scheme behind the holocaust than anyone has imagined . . . if *The Protocols (of Zion)* were a forgery, they are an exact methodology through which a group such as the Illuminati would use to control world politics . . . Jan (van Helsing)

claimed that Jewish factions currently run the country of Germany . . . reparations are still being paid by Germany to fund the state of Israel . . . Some (Germans) think that World War II was a manipulation by the Zionist Jews to engineer a situation where the Germans would fund Israel. This sort of thinking is common in Germany."

I spoke at some length to two of the organisers of the LAPIS Conference, and found that neither had even seen the book. Indeed, neither had any clear idea of what the Montauk myths are all about: they just wanted people to pay to come to their conference and had heard that Bielek was a good attraction. Neither considered seeking an alternative speaker, and neither seemed much concerned about having *The Black Sun* on sale at the conference. What's that line about what you are if you're not part of the solution??

### A Bunch of Fifes

It started so simply, and then got more complicated. And eventually, I found myself wondering why the hell we spend all this time and effort on studying reports collected by biased and incompetent investigators from confused and uncomprehending witnesses. Robert Moore, who promises to be an excellent editor for BUFORA, had asked me to write a response to an article by Malcolm Robinson about the 'Fife Incident'. Initially, I just agreed, but on further consideration sent Robert what seemed like a reasonable sort of letter . . .

Since I spoke to you about the Fife case, I've been having a think. You may recall that, prior to the last Conference, I contacted Gloria to explain that I understood that the family - the witnesses - didn't want Robinson publicising their case, and weren't happy with his investigation or his account of what had happened. Gloria acted very properly, and Malcolm changed the subject of his talk.

Now that he's supplied you with a lengthy piece for publication, I wonder if the family's attitude is actually any different? And whether anybody has asked them whether they want another piece published about them?

I suspect, having read a number of accounts of Fife, and some comments in private letters, too, that underlying the witnesses' discomfort is an element of disillusion with what they first believed to have happened. I rather think they don't want to retract, but nor do they want Robinson endlessly reiterating their earlier claims.

This does raise a problem, because if the case is never revised, then anyone publishing Robinson's account may simply be perpetuating a set of falsehoods. Consequently, can I suggest that - as we probably always should - you try to put Robinson's account to the witnesses, and publish only what they confirm as true, and give permission to publish. If that approach isn't followed then I don't think I'd want to contribute comments which, of course, I would want to be submitted as well."

You won't be surprised to hear that I think we should do this - check that we intend to publish is acceptable to the witness(es), and give them the opportunity to read what is to be said about them - in any serious or complex case. By serious or complex I mean one which involves any exotic or 'mental' element - something beyond CE1, or just possibly CE2. I suggest that if we were to revisit, reinvestigate, old cases fitting CE3 and above, in a rational and objective way, and ask what the witnesses think of them now, we would find that a high proportion would have reviewed their perception. I think we would find that although they would not always deny the reality of their experiences, they would have drawn different conclusions from them as time had passed. In many cases, I think we would conclude that the really significant encounter, which primarily shaped their perception of their experience, was actually the encounter with UFO investigators. Away from their influence, a more rational and balanced assessment may well have been made.

Unfortunately, Malcolm Robinson's approach to witnesses seems to allow little opportunity for quiet, rational contemplation. His account of SPI's investigation of the 'Fife' case - to which I have referred before - is a catalogue of investigator incompetence and investigator effect. The case having, apparently, already been investigated by an appointee of alien mouthpiece Tony Dodd, Robinson went along accompanied by Billy Devlin (see AW 10/11) and A70 'abductee' Garry Wood, all briefed by Linda 'Queen of the Mutes' Moulton Howe over the telephone. They spoke at length to one adult witness, and asked ludicrous, leading and wholly inappropriate questions of a ten-year old boy, who should never have been dealt with in this way. Channeller Graham Wylie (AW10/11) only became involved later when he "felt (as we all did) a negative feeling at one location (and) later performed a 'cleansing ceremony' at one site and he now feels that these 'beings' won't be back!!" (Of course, if they were never there in the first place, we can only wonder what Wylie 'cleansed'.) Robinson gave the case an immense amount of publicity, freely describing it as "amazing", "impressive" and "important".

To return to the plot, Robinson's immediate response to my reasonable suggestion that our articles be put to the Fife witnesses prior to publication was to send out another of his wretched circulars, this one titled 'The Fife Incident - Malcolm Robinson now believes that it may be a hoax!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!' (yes, that's 25 exclamation marks).

Suddenly, from being a case of importance, which warranted pestering a young child with pathetic questions about aliens and ghosts, Robinson decides that ". . . we have to say that this case is suspicious. I've had these feelings for some time now but never written them down", and notes, variously, that "Mary Morrison was a subscriber to a number of UFO publications prior to her UFO sighting . . . (she) bought a copy of a UFO magazine whilst on her trip out to buy a cup of coffee . . . 'perhaps' (please note that I say perhaps) her sighting did not occur and she concocted it with the others to test the gullibility of UFO researchers or just to see how far the story would go . . . They might not have known the full extent of how big the UFO issue really is in this country, and their make-believe story (if that is what it truly was) reached uncontrollable proportions and swelled across the globe (which it did). Better to say nothing perhaps lest they have to come clean!!!"

It's no secret that I don't expect any report of an encounter with alien beings to turn out to have been physically real, but nor would I try to blame confused and emotional witnesses - who I had deliberately sought out and whose story I had deliberately publicised across the world - for my own failures in investigation. All the information referred to above was available when Robinson set about selling this case: little or nothing has changed since. It seems possible that, when challenged to have his story checked and approved by the witnesses, he may have tried to find an easy way out of a potential problem. Let's be honest, it wouldn't be the first time something like that has happened

My personal view is that we shouldn't do any of this to witnesses. We shouldn't charge out, full of belief, devoid of proper caution, and anxious to find a story, briefed by a professional journalist, pressing a child for details of experiences that will please us, and do nothing for him. We shouldn't issue copious press releases about cases, inviting publication by all and sundry, without checking what we are publicising with the witnesses first. Even more important, we shouldn't then turn on those same witnesses and suggest they have set out to conduct a deliberate hoax unless we have very good evidence for doing so. That is a breach of trust rare even in the self-seeking craziness of ufology.

Robert Moore was absolutely right to try to present a balanced assessment of the Fife case. It was an extraordinary case from the outset and by its very scale and variety it raised, in a big way, questions about the nature of anomalous experience which, if answered, would solve so many of our problems in understanding what triggers the reports with which we try to deal. But the nature and character of ufology in the UK - and the USA as well - made it almost inevitable that it would be investigated by a bunch of amateur, unscientific, over-eager believers in aliens and abduction, who would fail miserably to find or preserve any worthwhile data about the experience the witness(es) had undergone. Who would, as usual, identify only the noise, and completely miss the signal. Even Mulder and Scully - and Chris

Carter bears a heavy responsibility for these wannabees who parade their ignorance all over the UFO press - remember that they work for the FBI, get the job done, and write-up their reports in a calm and competent fashion. Our most prominent investigators hardly ever do even that.

The result of this failure in competent investigation is that while we have several shallow, publicity-oriented accounts of this case, we have no understanding of it at all. We don't know why and how these reports came about, what contributed to them, who of the witnesses perceived what, and when, what part was played by the interaction between the witnesses, and by their prior knowledge of the subject gleaned from such crackpot sources as *Flying Saucer Review* and *Alien Encounters*. All that will live on are the initial illusions created by SPI and Quest International and, now, this suggestion of a witness hoax. What a stupid waste of time and effort, when we might have learned, and understood, so much.

Doing anything on Friday the 13th? Why not come and hear some of this country's best informed academic sceptics (and me) at

**PARANORMAL AND SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS: A Free Conference on Friday 13th November at Manchester Metropolitan University.**

The conference is organised by The Association for Skeptical Enquiry (ASKE) and Manchester Humanists, sponsored by the Dept. of Sociology, at the Manton Building, MMU, on Friday 13th November 1998. Here's the timings -

12:00 - Opening Remarks and Welcome

12:15 - Dr. Richard Wiseman, Perrott-Warrick Research Unit, University of Hertfordshire.

*The Psychology of Luck*

13:45 - Kevin McClure *Alien Abductions*

14:45 - Dr. David Stretch, Dept of Mathematical Psychology, University of Leicester.

*Critical Thinking and Alternative Medicine*

15:45 - Dr. Tim Taylor, University of Bradford. *Pyramids Ahoy! Pseudo-archaeology*

16:45 - Dr. Michael Heap, Department of Psychotherapeutic Studies, University of Sheffield.

*Non-conscious Movements and the Paranormal*

18:00 - Dr. Christopher French, Department of Psychology, Goldsmiths College.

*The Psychology of Superstition*

19:00 - Mr. Tony Youens, Conjurer. *A Demonstration of Pseudo-psychic Trickery*

For further information, including advice on travel and access, have a look at the website. I think that the whole proceedings will be live on the site, too.

<http://linus.mcc.ac.uk/~moleary/ASKE/event.html>

### The 'Alien Symposium' idea - one step forward, two steps back

It's just 15 months now since the first *Abduction Watch*, and in that time there really has been some progress in dealing with this pernicious myth. Because the simple, underlying truth is that the less publicity alien abduction receives, the fewer people have their lives messed-up by believing in it, the highlights for me have been the failures of the news-stand magazines - *Alien Encounters*, *Sightings*, *UFO Reality*, *Enigma* and others - and the retirement of Tony Dodd, which seems to have ended the interest of *UFO Magazine* - justifiably the sole newsstand survivor - in most abduction material. I doubt that I've played any part in these failures - I notice that even Arcturus Books, long a brilliantly successful specialist mail-order business, is no longer even covering its expenses - but we may well have turned the corner.

Which is why, when some of the best minds, and clearest thinkers in our field - Andy Roberts, Jenny Randles and Gloria Dixon - started to organise a UK 'Alien Symposium' (AS) - hopefully to replicate the success of the 1992 MIT symposium, only with more media involvement - I decided not to be involved, despite my original admiration for the idea. When I saw Andy's list of who wanted to speak, and/or attend, I responded . . .

"Dear Andy/Gloria/Jenny

Thanks (to Andy) for the invite to an initial meeting but . . . I'm increasingly looking at the belief in abductions, which I have no doubt is a belief in an event which has no physical reality, and no cognitive non-human input, as a problem to be solved rather than a phenomenon to be investigated. Looking at it, if you like, as I would an unpleasant and dangerous belief, or even a form of mass hysteria which can produce self-harming behaviour.

On this basis, particularly having looked at the participants, I suggest that the AS - as have its predecessors - can have only one outcome: that the belief, illusion, contagion is spread further on the back of the event, complete with its 'name' and 'banner' and whatever. However many sceptics and doubters and rationalists may attend one of these events, it is always the proponents and the experiencers who dominate the media. Put a journalist among this lot and with one or two worthy exceptions they'll find, unerringly, the 'abductees', Pope, Mantle, Williams and Conway, and Budden and King if they're desperate. They'll be interested in the idea of the Charles Fort Institute, because *Fortean Times* is a great source of trivia for journalists, but they won't give a toss about the rational undertones the CFI involvement should carry. What evidence is there that the sceptical input to MIT had any real influence at all?

So, here we are, all personally uncertain or more about the reality of the abduction phenomenon, planning to give it its most public platform in the UK for years. This doesn't seem like a good idea. If I felt that we had the arguments to deal with abduction, I'd be happy to give it a try, but because this is a belief, the defence of 'if you aren't an experiencer you can't understand' is becoming increasingly common. If you've read *S.P.A.C.E.*, the *WSG's Rapport*, or even the *MUFON UFO Journal* recently (among many others), you'll know that we're up against a far more difficult situation than prevailed even five years ago.

I don't really know how to deal with the personal effects of the abduction belief - publishing *AW* is pretty much the best I can come up with, and I've scrapped the book idea I was working on because that, too, would only provide another platform for the believers, who would inevitably attract the bulk of the media attention. But I'm pretty certain that the AS idea won't help potential abduction believers at all, so with the greatest respect I'll drop out of the planning at this stage."

Which is pretty much where I stand at present. Not with my head in the sand, believing that if we ignore abduction, it will go away, but conscious that, for a reason I don't really understand, accounts of abduction are somehow attractive to some kinds of people, who become convinced that they have had the same, or similar, experiences. And for that reason, the less favourable and attractive publicity that alien abduction receives, the better for everyone.

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