

# **EUFOSG**

**The Official Journal**



NOVEMBER 1977

## **Essex Unidentified Flying Object Study Group**

A non-profit making organisation, dedicated to  
the investigation of the Unidentified Flying Object phenomena

ESSEX UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT STUDY GROUP

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Content

Editorial .....	page 2
Next Group Meeting .....	page 3
Group Meeting 28/10/77 .....	page 3
Investigations .....	page 4
Some thoughts on the E.T.H. ....	page 10
Fireball over the Soviet Union .....	page 11
The Star of Bethlehem .....	page 12
C.SUI - Part II .....	page 14
More Triangle puzzles .....	page 15
Letters .....	page 16
Skywatches .....	page 17
Advertisements .....	page 17
Odds and Ends .....	page 18

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**IMPORTANT:** Please send any correspondence regarding UFO reports to Head Office, or telephone Mr. Doug Canning on 01-803-9544.

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**EDITORIAL: UFOs galore!**

How many UFOs have YOU seen? One? Two, maybe? Many people would say that to see even one is an extremely fortuitous event, but some witnesses of this rare and very little understood phenomenon see far more than their fair share, and occasionally stretch the imaginations of even the 'gullible' ufologists to the limit.

Report No. 1 (INVESTIGATIONS) in this issue might have one believe that the witnesses saw a record number of UFOs, but there is always someone else who can do better! The holder of the record in Essex as far as we know is Russell Smith of Basildon, who over the last two years is thought to have seen between 100 and 200 objects, many of them with witnesses. This is over two years, though, and the short term record must go to Mr. Ken Brockett, an amateur astronomer from Barking, who lives only  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile (1.2 km.) from the witnesses in Report No. 1 of this issue. In just three evenings during September 1975, Mr. Brockett witnessed some 50 UFOs, which appeared to be making for the gasworks on Beckton Marshes! His wife saw them as well. This area of Barking seems very prone to UFO activity, and we have another witness living here who has seen these objects on and off for the last 14 years, again with other witnesses.

When it comes to the most UFOs seen in one go, though, a lady from Basildon stands out from the rest. On the evening of 21st May, 1977, she saw 23 UFOs all at the same time. In this case there was a gigantic stationary saucer-shaped mother ship, or carrier, and 22 'scout craft', the latter just "joy riding" about the sky in groups (I wish I could have seen that!) The figure of 23 was checked again and again by the witness - the objects being in view until she tired and ventured indoors from her garden more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour later, just after 10.30 p.m.

Now, what about the world records? As regards the most UFOs seen in one go, things are very uncertain, for there have been many occasions when UFOs have given 'displays' to whole towns, and although no reliable counts were made of the objects visible, they probably surpassed 50 in some cases.

Mr. George Friedrich, of Custer, Wisconsin, U.S.A., lays claim to having seen more UFOs than anyone else in the U.S.A., or even the world! On three days in July 1973, Mr. Friedrich witnessed 55 (logged) UFOs. Since then, though, he has seen many more, and so he may have a good claim to the title.

How many of the objects counted during the above mentioned cases were, in fact, aircraft or satellites, etc., is quite unknown, but certainly there appear to be certain spells when UFOs concentrate themselves over specific areas for short periods of time, i.e. intense mini-flaps.

(If you know someone who has seen 'more than their fair share' of UFOs, either personally or in a book, write and tell me, c/o. Head Office).

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## NEXT GROUP MEETING

The EUFOSG will be holding their next Meeting on Friday, 27th Jan. '78. at 8.15 p.m. The meeting will be held at Harts Lane Hall, Cowbridge Lane, Barking, Essex. We are hoping to have a guest speaker and our Mr. Ron Markwick will be speaking about Spring-Heeled Jack, and discussing Gillon's, perhaps genuine, speech over Southern T.V. on 26th November, 1977.

GROUP MEETING - 28th October 1977, 8.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.

Harts Lane Hall, Cowbridge Lane, Barking, Essex.

This Meeting was quite well attended and attracted people from a considerable distance away. Very welcome was a new member, Mr. P. Lang, who had travelled all the way from Watford, Herts, while some others came from Harlow and the other side of London, many having heard the Meeting advertised on Capital Radio and Radio London.

Mr. Ron Markwick, the Group's Technical Advisor, began the Meeting with a very broad talk on UFOs in general. He mentioned numerous UFO associated phenomena, such as Spring Heel Jack, and more up-to-date items such as those rules laid down by officialdom re. the sighting of UFOs by military personnel. Ron also quoted extensively extracts from the Bible ("the best UFO book ever written," in Ron's opinion).

At 9.10 p.m., the coffee break arrived, and many people acquainted themselves with other members of the Group (an important part of any meeting (including skywatches) is socialising - especially in such a flimsy subject as ufology).

Immediately following the break there was a raffle, the prizes being two copies of the book "Diary of an Alien", by Richard Spencer, who had autographed these books especially for this purpose.

At about 9.40 p.m., Mr. Dan Goring continued the Meeting with an account of the UFO landing at Hainault, Essex, on 3rd May 1977. Various suggestions were put forward to try and explain the craft and the damaged bush it allegedly 'sat on' in more mundane terms, but nothing really concrete was established that would have accounted for the evidence. A double page spread in the "Ilford Recorder" describing the newspaper reporter's findings was also taken into account, and one or two small anomalies were noted, together with Ian Ridpath's<sup>3</sup> rather negative views. Brief details of the suspected landing in Hainault (see September 1977 journal, p.3.) that the EUFOSG had investigated were also given.

Another more recent case was then described; a sighting that had taken place over Parsloes Park, Dagenham, at 8.30 p.m. on 4th September 1977. Mrs. M. and her son spotted one (all so familiar) saucer-shaped object approach their house from the north-east, and after completing a number of 'orbits' over Parsloes Park, together with odd, constantly changing views of itself and positions in the sky, the object's movements being so unusual that Mrs. M. had great difficulty in finding the right words to describe them, it glided away towards the west (London direction). As to the object itself: around the rim were six evenly spaced windows; on the top was a centrally placed "aerial" which had a flashing red light at its base, and attached to the underside were four hemispheres, again evenly spaced, and it was these darkish protuberances that set some of us thinking of the 'scout craft' photographed in 1952 by the late George Adamski, which also had domed 'feet'.

Next came Mr. Malcolm Jay, who described the principles of his highly successful magnetic needle UFO detector.<sup>4</sup> Mr. John Saville then described other electronic methods of UFO detection, but these were very involved indeed and probably baffled (unintentionally) many people present.

The time rapidly passed by, and at 10.50 p.m. the Meeting was drawn to a close.

Ref's and notes

1. Many thanks to Mercury Publishers (A6) of Worcester for obtaining Mr. Spencer's autographs. See the September 1977 journal, p.15, for a review of "Diary of an Alien".
2. See "Flying Saucer Review", Vol.23, No.2, 1977, p.8.
3. See "Some thoughts on the extraterrestrial hypothesis" in this issue.
4. Explanatory literature obtainable from: Malcolm Jay, 102 Nelson Road, Chingford, E4 9AS, England. (please enclose stamp).

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INVESTIGATIONS

Although September yielded a fair number of UFO reports, activity has been fairly quiet since then. The evening of 31st October, produced a mini-flap in the west parts of Essex, but that is about all that has happened and the major wave has still to materialise. I would be very surprised, though, if it hasn't shown itself by the January 1978 journal.

Editor

Report No. 1 (Case No. 1977-5-6) Level A

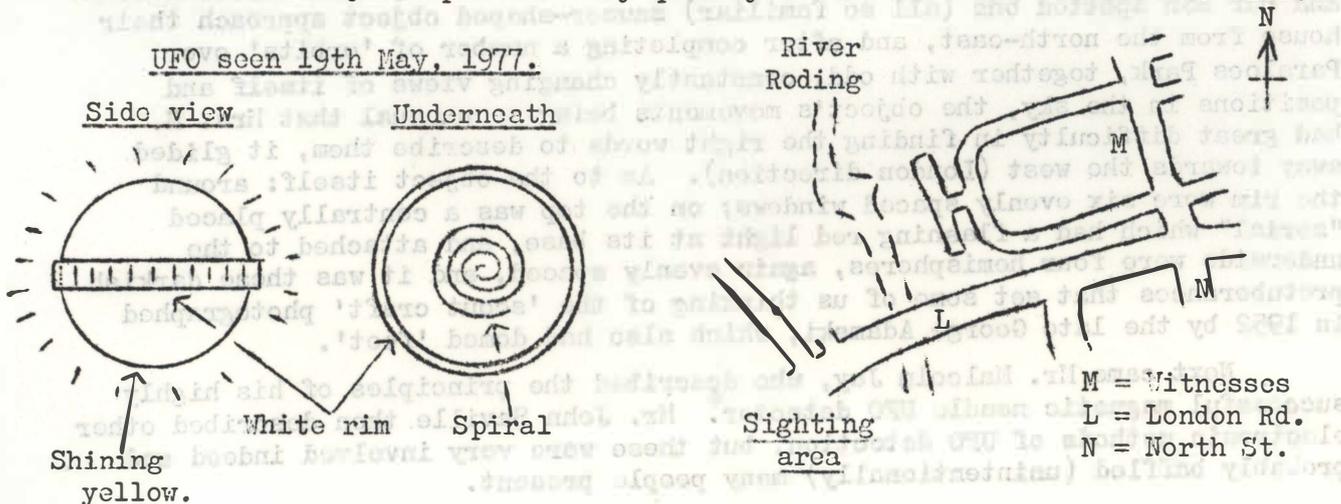
UFOs 'invade' Barking

On Thursday, 19th May 1977, a strange craft was seen in the sky close to the River Roding in Barking, Essex.

At 10.30 p.m. that day, young Terry Mills and his wife, Maureen (fictitious, real names on file), saw for the first time in their lives an UFO. The Mills live in a densely populated area with maisonettes, flats and houses all around them, Terry and Maureen living in a first-floor maisonette themselves. Mrs. Mills was the first to see the object from her bedroom window. Then she and her husband rushed out on to the landing outside their front door, and were shortly joined by some neighbours. The object came over from the west and was described as a bright yellow ball encircled by a slowly rotating white rim. This rim, thought Terry, had a series of vertical pillars at regular intervals, the white light coming from somewhere inside. The underside of the object appeared hollow, a spiral pattern creating this either real, or illusionary effect. There was also a strange humming noise coming from the object in bursts, a whistling noise being noticeable between each burst.

When an aircraft approached from the south, the object darted towards it, but instead of colliding with the 'plane the object 'leap-frogged' over it. After this the object sped off very quickly to the east and was lost to view.

UFO seen 19th May, 1977.



On Sunday, 22nd May 1977, the same or similar object appeared from the south and was visible for about half an hour. During this time it performed various movements and finally disappeared, again in the east.

Terry became very interested in UFOs after the initial sightings, and he spent a lot of time looking for them from his landing.

On Wednesday, 25th May 1977, at 10.50 p.m., Terry was again facing west when out of the blue appeared a brilliant green ball! This ball had very jagged edges and was covered in blue specks! He knows this sounds quite ridiculous, but this is what he witnessed. Anyway, this ball came vertically down to the height of some neighbouring maisonettes, about 250 feet (76m.) away, and executed a 90° turn. It then hit the roof of these first-floor maisonettes, which are about 45 ft.(14m.) high, and exploded with a "puff"-like noise. A short while later the mysterious yellow-orange UFO passed over, from which Terry believes the fireball to have come from.

Terry very soon found himself giving an account of his sightings to Radio London, and this was broadcast one afternoon. The local newspapers also found out about his sightings and took a great interest in his accounts - so much interest that one newspaper sent a reporter and a photographer round one evening in the hope of photographing Terry's UFOs.

Apparently their luck was in, and Terry related that the reporter - but not the photographer - rushed back into the safety of his passageway after seeing one object swoop over! It wasn't an aeroplane or a satellite, Terry was told, and they left a little while later with the promise that an article - including some photographs that had been taken of the object - would be published. "Good!" thought Terry. "Now people will know that I've not been making it all up." But it was not to be.

It is worth re-noting at this stage that the Mills were not the only ones to have seen the UFOs. Their neighbours and friends had seen them as well, but they didn't want to get involved with newspapers and the like, and so disclosed very little. Terry had made the situation much worse in this respect, for once he had spotted a likely UFO - looking object, he went and knocked on his neighbours' doors, and on so many occasions that their patience was nearly exhausted, and they just weren't interested any more. EUFOSG investigators questioned some of the more 'willing' witnesses, and although their accounts tallied to a certain extent with Terry's, they were not that convincing: some of the alleged UFOs were undoubtedly aircraft or satellites. Anyway, back to the promised newspaper account!

Terry received a 'phone call from one of the two newspaper representatives the following morning, and was informed that checks had been made for satellites, but had proved negative.

That same day, I (Ed.) received a mid-day 'phone call from the newspaper in question; from one of the two representatives, in fact. I must explain that at the time I had no knowledge of Terry's sightings, for Barry King - a "UFOIN" member - was the investigator of this particular case: the EUFOSG were to investigate later on. The reporter explained that he had seen an UFO and he wanted to check for satellites that may have been present. I'm not exactly sure, but I believe that I asked him if his UFO could have been a satellite, and he told me that it couldn't. This certainly sounded strange, for why check for satellites if you know that the object wasn't a satellite? Anyway, I knew that the Radio Research Station at Slough, Buckinghamshire, could help him, but since I didn't have their telephone number about me I referred him to the British Astro. Assoc'n. (B.A.A.) in London, who would have their number. Seeming greatly relieved at having 'struck gold' at last, he brought the conversation to an end without disclosing any more information than I have included here.

Terry 'phoned the same newspaper later on that day, and was told that there was some bad news for him: the UFOs of the night before were satellites, and the photographs hadn't revealed anything anyway! This matter of the photo's was rather strange, Terry remarked, considering the very sophisticated photographic equipment the photographer had brought along that evening.

The promised newspaper article did appear, however, but apart from describing Terry's sightings, all it really did was find fault with Barry King's satellite information, which would explain the request for the satellite tracking station's whereabouts.

### More sightings

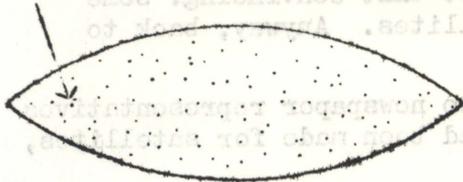
The UFO sightings continued unabated, but things were really getting bad now, for the humming noises that the objects were giving off quite frequently were no longer just of an audible nature; they could be 'heard' inside Terry's head as well! The objects were also passing overhead in the early morning it appears, for the strange noises used to wake Terry up and drive him practically mad at times!

Terry and his friend managed to record some of the more audible noises on cassette tapes, but they were not clear enough to hear them to advantage. We tried to find a natural explanation for these strange hums and whistles, and although we believe that a nearby gasworks was responsible for the latter, a satisfactory explanation for the humming noises was never established, despite exhaustive checks made at many nearby factories and other likely establishments.

It was noticed that on many occasions there were similarities in the sightings. The object often appeared as a yellow, swift moving sphere usually appearing in the western sky and disappearing in the eastern sky. Terry also noticed that the sightings, in general, were occurring a little later each time he saw an UFO.

On occasion there was the 'odd' UFO seen, like the one of Monday, 6th June 1977. At 10.10 p.m. that day a strange object passed over the rooftops of the maisonettes to the south. This object was bi-convex in shape, black and covered in red spots! Apparently Terry had binoculars trained on this one, and could only see the spots through these. (Anyone well versed in ufology will appreciate that in this subject nothing, however strange, is impossible!)

Red spots on black background.



UFO seen 6th June, 1977.

Just about every night from 19th May to 10th or 11th June, was fine and clear, and Terry - often accompanied by his wife - spotted an unusual object on nearly every one of these days! A long spell of very cloudy weather prevailed after this when the object was rarely seen, apart from a few sightings in the early morning when, after being awoken by the humming noise, Terry would look out of his window and sometimes see the object below the clouds.

### T.V. troubles

Then there was the problem of Terry's colour T.V., which allegedly behaved most peculiar whenever an UFO passed over, especially (to begin with) the BBC1 channel. There was one occasion, we were told, when at about 10.45 p.m. on Saturday, 25th June, 1977, while Terry and Maureen were watching a programme on BBC1, when the picture went berserk with yellowish-green lines flashing all over it. Not only did the picture go haywire, the sound did as well, for the mysterious humming noise came through the speaker! Immediately thinking there was an UFO lurking outside, Terry looked out of the window, but saw nothing. Only at 11.02 p.m. did he notice a bright white ball of light pass below the clouds, but we feel this could have been an aircraft or a satellite. Terry subsequently asked his neighbours if their television was affected that evening - apparently it was. Then T.V. engineers were called in, but they could find no

fault with the T.V's and put it all down to bad aerial reception/car interference etc. (The whole area was having the same trouble, we were told, but natural interference may be the genuine problem here, and not UFO interference.)

### 'The Hum'

The EUFOSG were called in on this case (on the 17th June 1977) after the original investigator dismissed himself, believing that either Terry was deranged, or imagining everything he saw to be an UFO! From what we had been told, though, this all sounded a very interesting case, particularly since 'The Hum', or so it had been nicknamed, had been heard up and down the country during the same period. Terry even accompanied members of the EUFOSG in a number of unpublicised skywatches at the rear of the maisonettes in the hope that his UFOs would reveal themselves to us. Terry was so anxious to convince us of their reality, though, that he jumped to hasty conclusions, thinking that nearly everything that moved (or didn't move) was an UFO!

After this, things looked rather bad for Terry, and very few people had any faith left in his sightings. To most people it seemed obvious that he was either crackers, or had only wanted publicity and the company of some new faces. He'd obviously had a whale of a time and had achieved his objective for over a month. One or two ardent investigators still carried on holding their own skywatches though, but they quickly gave these up.

In Terry's accounts of the sightings, some very UFO-related events were mentioned, and we wondered just how much of this he had read in various UFO library books that he had about his home. It was discovered that he had obtained these books, though, after the initial (and most interesting) sightings. It is possible, of course, that these books influenced his descriptions of the aforementioned sightings and associated noises. However, there definitely seemed to be something ufological going on here, although, perhaps, not quite as much as Terry was trying to have us believe. Before the initial sighting Terry and Maureen had never taken any notice of UFOs, either in the newspapers, on T.V. or anywhere else. Their first UFO, at least, does appear to be something out of the ordinary, even if we can make nothing out of the others (which were not as spectacular). Still, this is not the end of the story for there was one last act to be played out in this 'saga'.

In all I (Ed.) received, I suppose, about six telephone calls from Terry during the latter part of June and early July, telling me of further UFOs he had sighted shooting across the sky. Then, on the evening of 6th July, I received what I believed to be his final call, but it wasn't Terry who had to tell me something - it was his wife!

Maureen related in a rather frightened voice that a visitor had called at her house. She briefly told me what this person had said to her, but I really needed to talk face to face. Anyway, Terry came on the telephone afterwards and he sounded even more frightened than she did, so I spent 15 minutes or so trying to calm him down - which I did to a certain extent. Two days later I managed to visit them and discover just what had really transpired.

At 9.30 a.m. on 6th July, Maureen answered a call at the front door. Waiting outside was a smartly dressed man (suit, shirt, tie, etc.) of about 30 years of age. A conversation then took place which resembled the following:

"I'm from the Government," he stated in a clear and unmistakable English voice. "Is Mr. Mills there?" "No, I'm afraid he's at work. What is it? Would you like to come in?" replied Maureen.

From this point onwards individual questions and answers cannot be recalled, but the man, who presented no credentials and declined to enter her home, went on to tell her that he (or they) had heard of Terry's sightings and he happened to mention the local newspaper(s). He was particularly interested, it seems, in obtaining the names and addresses of the other witnesses to Terry's sightings. Maureen thought that he had no right to ask such questions,

and furthermore, he seemed to know an awful lot about UFOs, and too much about what was going on as regards their own sightings for her liking. After a while, seeing that he was getting nowhere, he told Maureen:

"Now you leave the UFOs alone, they're not doing you any harm..... and if you don't leave them alone, we'll make you leave them alone."

He then left. Of course, Maureen told Terry what had happened, and that was the end of the sightings - as far as the news media was concerned.

#### Editor's comments

After speaking to Maureen I was convinced that someone had visited her on the day in question. So who was this visitor? Was he a hoaxer..... or the genuine article? Personally, from what I've seen transpire lately, I believe him to have been the latter, but there is no way of knowing for sure. If he was the latter, then he has mildly admitted that UFOs do exist! Intentional??

Inv's. S. Chuter, P. Spink, D. Goring,  
J. Saville, R. Lake.

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#### Report No. 2 (Case No.1977-10-4) Level A

##### Strange object seen from Saffron Walden, Essex.

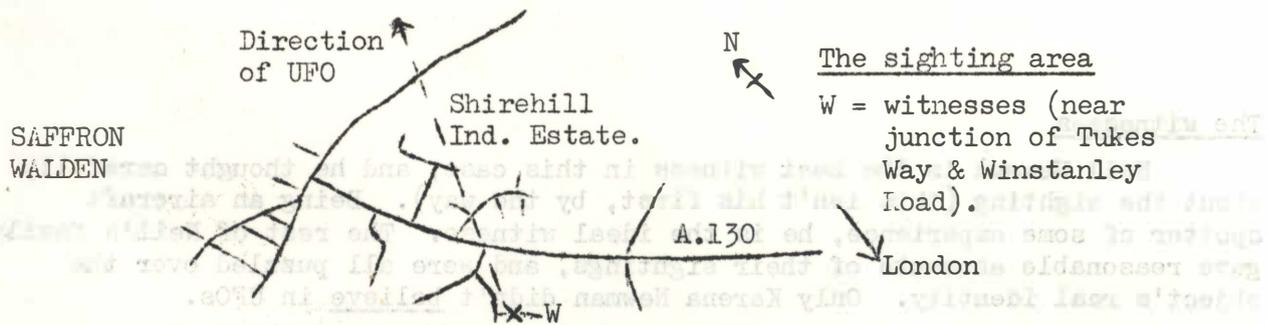
On Thursday, 6th October, 1977, Mr. Bill Eden, an EUFOSG investigator living in Chelmsford, Essex, received a 'phone call from the Saffron Walden Police, and was told of an UFO that had been seen by residents in that town. The next evening Mr. Eden, together with Mr. Bernard Gowing, another EUFOSG investigator, visited these witnesses (five in all) and produced the following report.

At about 9.40pm on Thursday, 6th October, Neil Newman, 18, was walking home from Mrs. Julia Wicken's house when a bright white light low in the N.E. sky took his attention. He thought, at first, that it could have been a pair of car headlights on the Shirehill Industrial Estate, but as he continued watching the light dimmed, as if moving away. However, a moment or two later it grew very bright, causing him to think that it was now coming towards him. The brilliance then diminished again, and as it did so it changed through pink to a deep red colour. He then thought of obtaining another witness and brought Mrs. Wickens out to see it.

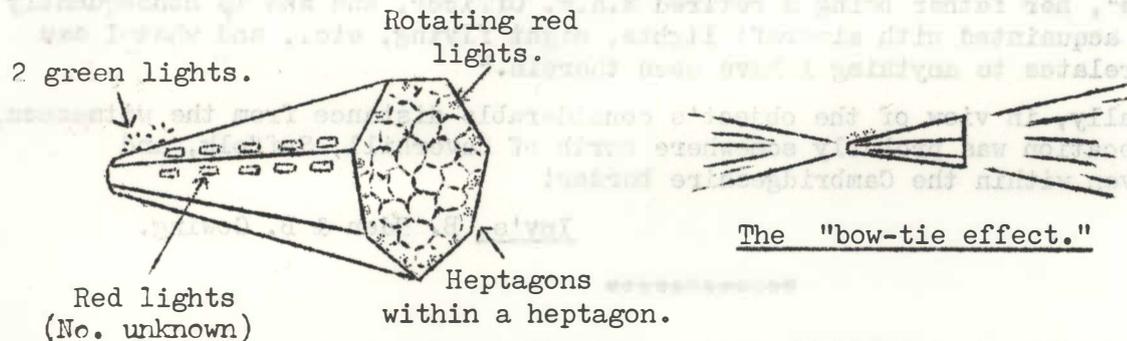
As they both watched they saw the light cease its variations in brightness and traverse the sky by a few degrees, the witnesses using a street lamp as a reference point. During this traversing manoeuvre, it also dropped by a few degrees, and after completing these movements, which took a few minutes, the light began to swing slowly back and forth in a pendulum-like motion, which Mrs. Wickens said was quite pleasant and had a slightly mesmeric effect on her ..... "I could have quite happily stood and watched it all day," she related.

After a few minutes, Neil fetched from his home nearby a pair of 16x50mm Swallow binoculars, which he uses for aircraft spotting, and studied the light through them. It was very apparent that the object displaying the lights was slowly rotating and therefore displaying different sides and light sources to them. Mrs. Wickens then suggested that the police should be informed.

The rest of Neil's family were then alerted, and Karena, his sister, Nigel, his young brother, and Mrs. Newman, his mother, also observed the light through the binoculars.



From all the information available, a good composite picture was obtained.



The basic shape is that of a cone lying on its side. Along the length of the 'cone' were two rows of very bright red lights, with two green lights at the pointed end. This pointed end, when viewed head-on, had two bright white lights, and the grey body of the 'cone', which would be spreading away from the observer, might have tended to look like a surrounding glow. Viewed from the base, there was a very brightly lit framework, the shape of the lit areas between the frames being the same as that of the cone's base - seven sided plane figures: heptagons. The 'cone' itself was thought to have had seven sides also. (The base was bright enough to be uncomfortable on the eyes when viewed through the binoculars!) Surrounding the perimeter of the cone's base were red lights, which Mrs. Newman thought were themselves rotating. The side of the 'cone' opposite the two rows of red lights was unlit, and would explain the virtual disappearance of the object at one stage prior to the use of the binoculars.

The idea that the 'cone' was rotating is additionally supported by the fact that Neil Newman stated that as it turned he saw the green 'nose' lights briefly reflected along the body. The rotating of the 'cone' occurred for several cycles, the object finally fading away.

The brightness at each end displayed itself, when side-on, as two flared beams of light, one from each end, "giving a bow-tie effect."

Mrs. Newman said that she saw a second object along with the main object, but smaller and fainter. Since the two objects' motions were incongruent (according to Mrs. Newman), aberrations within the binoculars would not be a satisfactory explanation.

#### Additional data

Length of time object visible: About 35 minutes.

Estimated altitude: Unknown.

Estimated distance from witnesses: Probably 10 miles (16km.) or more.

Greatest apparent size:  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) at arm's length (Neil).

Estimated real size: Unknown.

Elevation of object when first seen: About  $10^{\circ}$ .

Elevation of object when last seen: About  $5^{\circ}$ .

Audible emissions: "Possible rumble" (Neil).

Weather conditions: Very cloudy, slight wind, quite cold.

Air traffic: Southend and Stanstead Airports, and the Military Aero Information Service had no knowledge of any aircraft being in the area at the time of the sighting.

### The witnesses

Neil Newman is the best witness in this case, and he thought carefully about the sighting (this isn't his first, by the way). Being an aircraft spotter of some experience, he is the ideal witness. The rest of Neil's family gave reasonable accounts of their sightings, and were all puzzled over the object's real identity. Only Karena Newman didn't believe in UFOs.

Mrs. Wickens, a teacher, added that she had "lived 16 years in the Forces life", her father being a retired R.A.F. Officer, and she is consequently "very well acquainted with aircraft lights, night flying, etc., and what I saw in no way relates to anything I have seen therein."

Finally, in view of the object's considerable distance from the witnesses, its true location was probably somewhere north of Haverhill, Suffolk, and possibly even within the Cambridgeshire border!

Inv's. B. Eden & B. Gowing.

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### SOME THOUGHTS ON THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL HYPOTHESIS by Ian Ridpath.

Are some UFOs of extraterrestrial origin? This is a reasonable question in view of our current speculations about other life in the Universe. Evidence that we are being visited would be an exciting discovery, and would save us a great deal of trouble attempting to detect interstellar radio messages. So what is the truth about UFOs as alien visitors?

Alas, after several years of close interest in the subject, I have to conclude that the UFO evidence is very poor indeed. I know of no UFO that has subsequently been identified as an extraterrestrial spacecraft - although I know of plenty that have been identified as bright stars and planets, aircraft, meteors, and so on. There are also plenty of elaborate hoaxes, which is perhaps not surprising in view of the vast sums of money to be made from a good UFO story.

UFOs certainly exist, in the sense that honest and sincere people see things in the sky that they cannot identify, and are genuinely baffled. Many such sightings are usually made by people who are unfamiliar with the sky - even Jimmy Carter's UFO turned out to be the planet Venus. But when a genuinely exceptional event occurs, there is no shortage of witnesses and confirming evidence.

For instance, in August 1972, a meteor skipped through the Earth's atmosphere at a height of 40 miles before returning to space. This is an extremely unlikely event, and occurred over one of the least populated regions of North America. But it was seen by thousands and photographed by hundreds - there are examples in the July 1974 issue of "Sky and Telescope". Some of you may also remember in December 1968 the amazing sight of the fuel dump from the top stage of the Saturn V rocket that sent Apollo 8 on its way to the Moon, which was widely seen and photographed in England. Needless to say, such conclusive confirming evidence never accompanies UFO reports.

I deduce from this what I term the UFO Uncertainty Principle: it is impossible to have a sighting that is both highly reliable and highly specific. By a highly reliable sighting, I mean one with many independent witnesses who agree on what they saw. But these usually refer to something unspecific, such as a mere light in the sky. By a specific sighting, I mean one which speaks of silvery craft and space-suited UFO-nauts. But these are highly unreliable - they always seem to happen to one or two people in the middle of nowhere, with no independent evidence. What's more, claims of such spectacular meetings with UFO-nauts or even abduction by them are put forward in books written with the most unreliable Sunday newspaper style of journalism. The modern industry of flying saucer paperbacks amounts to nothing less than a con trick to defraud the public.

Let's look at it in another way. Imagine, for instance, that millions of years in the future we discover an emerging civilization on a distant planet. What would we do? We would either land and make our presence known, or we would observe circumspectly so that no one would know we were there. Unless interstellar travel is much easier than we have imagined, we would not keep dropping in frequently (no civilization would fund such a wasteful space programme). We might resurvey the planet every few centuries if it were not too far away, but in between we would leave a machine to keep watch for us. Personally, I believe that it will always be easier to establish contact between civilisations by radio messages than by personal visits. No such radio messages have been detected. Yet we are asked by UFOlogists to believe that there may be an unspecified number of personal visits each year.

Such beliefs are based on the same geocentric outlook as so much religion: the assumption that we are important enough to be worthy of special attention. If we are the only advanced lifeforms in the Galaxy, then we are indeed special. But if there is a lot of life in space, we are certainly not worth much attention.

It is now more than 30 years since Kenneth Arnold's first famous flying saucer sighting, in June 1947. Since then, scientists have come to accept a new category of aerial phenomenon, known as ball lightning, of which there are numerous reliable personal encounters and photographs. But in that same time, the field of UFOlogy has failed to produce one concrete example of extraterrestrial visitation.

Don't you, as experienced sky-watchers, think there are enough stimuli, both natural and man-made in the sky to account for UFO reports without recourse to the added hypothesis of alien visitation? Of course, if you are sufficiently convinced of the extraterrestrial origin of UFOs, then you can cash in on your belief by placing a bet with Ladbroke's bookmakers. Several thousand pounds have so far been staked on the expected imminent arrival of an extraterrestrial spacecraft on Earth - and the day that Ladbroke's pay out, I shall be happy to admit that the first alien visit has taken place.

In short, though, I believe that if we really were the subject of alien visitation, we would either know nothing at all about it, or that it would already be so obvious we wouldn't be sitting here arguing.

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(Ian Ridpath, who lives in Ilford, Essex, is a writer on astronomy and space. His book on the search for life in space, called "Signs of Life", is published by Kestrel Books (hardback) at £2.75 and Peacock Books (paperback) at £1.25).

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Well, here's a smack in the eye for ufologists! Are there any challengers to Mr. Ridpath's views? If so, write to the Editor, c/o Head Office, keeping your letter specific and please, not too long. Ed.

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#### FIREBALL OVER THE SOVIET UNION

'TASS reported that on the morning of 20th September 1977, an extraordinary fireball flew over the western part of the U.S.S.R.

This astonishing sight was seen over the areas of Leningrad and Petrozavodsk. The observers were not 100% certain, though, that the spectacle was a meteor. Similar descriptions of this object have come from various witnesses and the authorities are studying the reports.

In Petrozavodsk, by Lake Onega near the Finnish frontier, they observed the sudden flash of a tremendous star in the black night sky, which was sending out a stream of lights in the direction of the Earth. The star was moving slowly across the sky, and after a short while stopped over the town. It was like a jellyfish, and was sending down a terrific amount of small beams of light. After a little while these beams of light ceased, and the 'jellyfish' started moving again in the direction of Lake Onega.

The Director of the observatory in Petrozavodsk, Dr. Gromow, said that never before that date had they seen anything like it. He said that during the 24 hours (of that day) there were no changes in the atmospheric recordings, and (the USSR) hadn't carried out any technical experiments which could have caused this unusual sight.'

"Tydzień Polski", 24th September, 1977.

(Credit to Mr. B. Walecki for the translation from the Polish)

Not mentioned in the above article was: the time - about 4 a.m., and the fact that after moving towards Lake Onega from Petrozavodsk, "... grey clouds then appeared with a 'semi-circular aperture bright red in the centre' and lasted 10 to 12 minutes...."

Extract from "Daily Colonist Victoria", B.C., Canada, 23rd September, 1977. (Credit: "Viewpoint Aquarius" Nov. 1977.)



Apparently, "Res Bureaux Bulletin", No. 25, quotes sources that give "the launch contrails of Cosmos 955" as the explanation for the fireball. 'Cover' for the UFO?

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THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

'As the festive season of Christmas approaches some people still perhaps wonder what the Star of Bethlehem really was.

Actually, the Star of Bethlehem is mentioned only once in the Bible - in the New Testament, St. Matthew, ch.2. vv.2 and 7-10. It refers to a star which seems to move in an extraordinary manner, viz.

"and, lo, the star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was".

This certainly marks the star as being unusual and worthy of investigation. First of all, when did the star actually appear? Of course, we know it appeared when Christ was born. But the commonly accepted year of birth of Christ is in fact wrong, being incorrectly calculated as A.D.1 by the Roman monk, Dionysius Exiguus. In fact, even the birth date December 25 is incorrect. Common usage of this date made it accepted over the years. The correct birth-date of Christ is in fact about 4 B.C., possibly in March, although it is not precisely known.

However, given that 4 B.C. is approximately correct, scientists can look at old astronomical records, calculate with accuracy astronomical events or appearances, and guess as to the other possible astronomical events or objects appearing around that date. The more likely of these have been briefly considered below to see whether any of them could correspond to the Star of Bethlehem.

#### 1. An Appearance of a Planet:

Even astronomers in ancient times knew a good deal about the positions of planets, and King Herod, in Christ's time, when enquiring of the Star of Bethlehem (Matthew ch.2, v.7 - "Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared") would almost certainly have known or easily have found out from his own advisers whether the Star of Bethlehem was a planet. After all, an object such as, say Jupiter or Venus can, at times, be quite brilliant and unmistakable in appearance. Thus, as it would seem unnecessary for Herod to ask the three Wise Men about a planet's whereabouts, it can be assumed that the Star of Bethlehem was something other than a planet.

#### 2. Appulse:

A close visual approach between two or more planets. Calculations show that the planets Jupiter and Saturn were visually close together in the sky in 7 B.C., the date being near to the birth date of Christ. However, these two planets at that time were not so close as to be mistaken for one object (Star of Bethlehem), especially by the three Wise Men. It is unlikely, therefore, that the Star of Bethlehem could have been an appulse of planets.

#### 3. Nova / Supernova:

These occur unexpectedly and one could have been a strong contender to be the Star of Bethlehem. However, the old astronomical records, although incomplete, do not mention such occurrences and therefore scientists think that this suggestion is unsatisfactory.

#### 4. Variable Star:

Another contender could be a variable star but, again, the old records do not tend to support this idea.

#### 5. Comet:

This idea is very possible. The bright Halley's Comet made an appearance in 11 B.C., (which is near to the birth date of Christ, but perhaps not close enough to satisfy scientists.)

#### 6. Meteor:

It is unlikely that one meteor, which is caused by vaporization of a minute dust particle in the Earth's atmosphere, could be the Star of Bethlehem. However, it is remotely possible that one meteor could have followed another meteor and been confused for the same object. The criticism here is that the Star of Bethlehem "stood over where the young child was," hardly a recipe for a meteor or meteors.

#### 7. Unidentified Flying Object / Flying Saucer:

All the other suggestions have weaknesses and thus we are left with the suggestions of a UFO or, more controversially, a flying saucer. The UFO aspect could cover a vast array of possibilities for which there is insufficient space here to discuss. The theory has been promoted that Christ could have been a being of extraterrestrial descent, even if born on Earth. So could the Star of Bethlehem have been a flying saucer, i.e. a spacecraft?

These, then, are some of the possibilities, about the Star of Bethlehem. None is totally satisfactory; but perhaps they will provoke thoughts among readers who may well have different views.'

D.R. Keedy, F.R.A.S.

"Shields Gazette & Shipping Telegraph",  
21st December, 1976.

## C.SUI (Coesione per Lo Studio Unito dell'Insolito)

In the September issue of the Journal we published the first half of an article describing a new Association established in Italy. This is the concluding second part of that article.

### PART II :-

#### Tasks for Study

C.SUI is in the 'experimental stage' at the moment, but Secretarys' offices have already been set up, although only in Italy, for other countries do not yet have a sufficient number of collaborators.

Secretarys' offices in Italy are:-

Piemonte: ACOM, sez.B - Alessandria.

Lombardia: G.U.B. - Brugherio (Milano).

Toscana: Group Q.D. (sez.BLPT) - Marina di Carrara (Carrara).

Lazio: Group M.13 - Roma, and 'Gruppo Ricerche UFO' - Roma.

Puglie: Gruppo 'Alpha Orionis' Manfredonia (Foggia).

Liguria: Centro Ufologico Ingauno - Albenga (Savona).

Abruzzi: Sez. Ufologica Aquilana - L'Aquila.

#### C.SUI Bulletins

Some collaborating groups are printing bulletins that have now become associated with C.SUI. This means allocating just one page of their publications to C.SUI.

These bulletins will be reviewed in 'CIRCOLARE', and will eventually receive monetary contributions and articles, etc., from Administration. Individual bulletins need change neither their title or structure.

#### Present bulletins of C.SUI

1. VIMANA - A SIRIO Group publication (SIRIO holds the Central Seat at Aosta). Contains all matters studied by C.SUI and publishes collaborators' articles.
2. CIRCOLARE - Under Mr. G. Mariotti (who runs Administration at Trento). A journal devoted to periodical news and facts inside C.SUI.
3. GIORNALE UFOLOGICO (G.U.B.) by Brugherio at Milano. Deals with ufology and astronomy. Well documented.
4. ANDROMEDA - C.I.U. (Pescara). Devoted to ufology and astronomy.
5. ALPHA ORIONIS - by the group of the same name (Manfredonia - Foggia). A journal devoted to astronomy and navigational astronomy.

Other magazines are:- NURAGHEX, IL GIORNALE DEI MISTERI, LA VOCE DEL GIRRI, SPATIO E CIVILTA and many more.

#### Study Committees

These studies include: detailed reports on navigational astronomy, archaeology, parapsychology, telepathy and the Kirlian camera.

Historical ufology from 1600 to 1900 A.D. is also being studied. Two groups in Rome are logging UFO reports concerning the quinquennium 1970-1975 in Lazio. Some Groups in Piemonte (with ACOM's collaboration) are collecting UFO reports in the region for the period 1970-1976. A monogram has also been written about the planet Jupiter by a student of the university.

#### Conclusions

Very soon we will see the first results of C.SUI from the work study committees. Every task allocated to those in C.SUI will be developed with the best possible care.

C.SUI couldn't exist if we didn't all have different ideas. C.SUI is, perhaps, the only association to amalgamate the small groups who, by themselves, lack sufficient experience and documentation.

I believe that the idea of a collaborative organisation is the only answer to superficial Italian ufology.

All groups really interested in C.SUI's activities can become an integral group or an individual collaborator. To do this, the group or individual should send their request to Administration, c/o:

Mr. Mariotti Giuliano, Via Delle Cave, 14, 38100 Trento, Italy.

Anyone interested in supplying material for documentation should send it to the Central Seat: Gruppo SIRIO, c/o Consolati Marco, Viale Conte Crotti, 27, 11100 Aosta, Italy.

Organisations who print publications are invited to send a copy to the Central Seat to become a 'bulletin of C.SUI'.

One final word. Anyone who hasn't understood any part of this two-part article can write to me for an explanation, which I will gladly give:

Mr. Ferraris Enrico, Via Montello, 23, 15100 Alessandria, Italy.

I would also like to thank all the groups who have allowed me to write on their behalf.

Ferraris Enrico,  
President A.C.O.M.,  
President of Secretary's office-  
C.SUI.

(With the kind collaboration of Mr. Giuliano Mariotti - Administrator, Trento, and Mr. Marco Consolati - President, Central Seat, Aosta).

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#### MORE TRIANGLE PUZZLES

'American and Soviet scientists are joining together in an effort to pierce the myriad mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle, site of a disproportionate number of boat and aeroplane disappearances .....

The (research) project, financed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is part of a broader U.S. - Soviet programme began last year to study oceanographic phenomena such as currents, magnetism and whirlpools in addition to meteorology and geochemistry .....

Some researchers have put (the phenomenon) down to nature playing fast and loose in the area with whirlpools and whirlwinds, while others hold that it stems from an abstruse combination of electromagnetic forces caused by molecular disintegration.

Still others contend there is an advanced civilisation living in the unexplored depths of the Atlantic which regularly scoops up men and machines from the surface as part of an ongoing science project.

The mysterious disappearances have also been written off as the work of hostile aliens in flying saucers or somehow related to energy sources emanating from the supposed lost continent of Atlantis.

Together with Canada and Britain, the U.S. has already carried out research on magnetic aberrations in the zone, noted as far back as 1928 by aviator Charles Lindbergh who reported irrational compass and altimeter movements off the coast of Florida .....

Meanwhile the zone is expected to draw other conundrum buffs this summer following the organisation of a tour there by Charles Berlitz, author of a best-selling book on its mysteries.

Berlitz, a member of the language-school family, plans to lead a submarine expedition to prove the existence of a giant pyramid on the ocean floor.

Cont/over

Several months ago, a pyramid-shaped form was picked up by sonar at about 900m, and mystery of mysteries, the form - about 128m. (high) with a 164 sq.m. base - stood at the same latitude as Egypt's famed pyramids.'

Extracts from a Perth, Western Australia newspaper article of August 1977.

(Credit Mrs. J. Pillings,  
EUFOSG member)

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LETTERS :

Dear Sir,

It is generally agreed that the study of an unknown quantity requires the expertise of several people in differing fields who have the similar ultimate aim. We are led to believe that this is indeed happening in the embryonic science of Ufology with several "centres" of UFO study being established in different parts of the world. This quasi-scientific attempt to "solve the mystery" is headed by the much publicised "Centre for UFO Studies" in Illinois, USA. Some of these Centres even have access to computerised systems and data has been produced to "prove" this, that and the other. An attempt is being made by various eminent persons within these Centres to provide some form of basis upon which future research can be based. The logging and establishment of various "patterns" relating to the phenomena are gradually being analysed to provide more and more evidence for the reality of its existence. No one characteristic attributable to the phenomena has actually been proven to accompany each sighting as yet, but we are left in little doubt that certain characteristics are there to be studied. Although I think that most people will agree that the Centres are no nearer to "solving" the mystery, at least a serious attempt is being made. One may argue that it is probably not possible to study this problem with our "primitive" equipment, but we have to start somewhere.

Bearing the above in mind, it must seem obvious that small UFO groups like the EUFOSG, not having the "expertise", sophisticated equipment or the financial resources of the larger Centres, are not really in a position to analyse large amounts of data and formulate hypotheses based thereon. However, they do have an equally (some say more important) role to play in other fields.

a) To publicise the true facts of Ufology to as wide an audience as possible and to stimulate their interest accordingly.

This policy is at present being carried out by the EUFOSG with great success. Recent public meetings, being widely publicised in the local press, the attendance has been considerable. The excellent introductory talks and displays of UFO literature has enabled the general public to see through the Establishment's veil to an un-dreamt of reality. (From my experience it appears that most people only have the vaguest idea of what it is all about, and as sightings reported in the newspapers are usually dismissed the next day as Venus or other misidentifications, those people who did find the article interesting are "put off" for life and henceforth regard all subsequent sightings in that category.)

b) To collect facts relating to UFO events, evaluate them as to their authenticity and try to publish as many "cases" as possible.

This policy is also being pursued by the EUFOSG via their excellent journal and "contacts" in various local newspapers.

c) To pass all local "data" to established Centres for comparative analysis etc.

To the best of my knowledge, this is also being done.

It can clearly be seen that the EUFOSG knows exactly where it is going in the field of Ufology, and appreciates the limitations and potential in differing fields, and is not subject to delusions of self importance that has occasionally been the case with other "fringe" groups.

Yours faithfully,

Bob Easton, R.I.C., BUFORA.

#### SKYWATCHES :

The skywatch of 15th October '77, was held on some waste ground not far from the River Roding at Barking, Essex. Not being externally publicised, only some eight people (members) turned up, but this was sufficient. This particular place had been chosen because of all the sightings made by the witnesses in Report No. 1, who live only a minute's walk away. A bright star-like object was seen in the east as the evening drew on, but upon checking this was found to have been Jupiter.

The next skywatch - held in Parsloes Park, Dagenham, Essex, on 19th November - was, due to bitter cold winds, only attended by four members. Nothing was seen.

Although this completes the co-ordinated skywatch programme for some months now, we will be holding a special Christmas skywatch on Saturday, 17th December 1977, at 9.00 p.m. The venue will be at the rear of the Crown Public House (in the fields) on the B1007, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex.

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#### A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

##### "VIEWPOINT AQUARIUS"

A newsletter type publication including news of UFOs, ideas on Theosophy, Yoga, Meditation and Healing, etc. Interesting news from abroad (U.S.A. via "The National Enquirer" for example) is included in this periodical. Sample copy sent on request to "Viewpoint Aquarius". 35p per copy (or a donation welcomed). 11 issues per year. Send to "Viewpoint Aquarius", c/o. Fish Tanks Ltd., 49 Blandford Street, London, W.1.

"SKYWATCH" is full of National and International UFO News, Sightings, Readers' letters, Group News, Articles, Advertisements, Contributions/paper clippings are always welcome. Full credit given. Membership and subscription to MAPIT and "Skywatch" if £2.30. (six issues). Single copies 29p including postage. Back issues available. Write to: "Skywatch", 92 Hillcrest Road, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5SE.

##### RES BUREAU BULLETIN

A frequent Newsletter telling of UFO sightings, Fortean phenomena, world events, etc. For details of subscription rates write, enclosing one international reply coupon, to: Mr. X, Box 1598, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 508, Canada.

"THE LEY HUNTER" - A magazine of Earth mysteries. £2.50 for 6 issues (1 year).

Write: P.O. Box 152, London, N10 1EP.

##### ESSEX HEALERS' ASSOCIATION

The Essex Healers publish a Newsletter concerned with spiritual healing and the fine work being carried out by their many members. Write for details to: Hon. Registrar, Mr. R. Snelling, 35A Lottem Road, Canvey Island, Essex.

"DIARY OF AN ALIEN" by Richard Spencer.

A fine little book dealing with the mysterious life and times of Moses. pp.56. Price 50p plus 15 p & p. (Overseas: \$2 post paid). Write: Mercury Publishers (A6), 53 Rose Avenue, Worcester, WR4 9PX.

ESSEX UFO SIGHTINGS FOR 1976 by Andy Collins.

A smart publication containing over 40 detailed UFO investigations in the Essex area, with a sample of witnesses' drawings towards the end. A collective analysis is also included, together with the compiler's comments and conclusions. Interesting to everyone and essential for research! Order yours now while stocks last! 85p. each incl. p & p. Write: Mr. Andy Collins, 19, St. Davids Way, Wickford, Essex SS11 8EX.

"FORESIGHT" A bi-monthly magazine concerned with the spiritual aspects of man's being. Do you seek a purpose to life? Meaning to the events that happen around you? Spiritual guidance in this new Age, and a general knowledge of psychic phenomena, mysticism and UFOs? Single copies 15p plus 7p postage; yearly subscription 90p plus 42p postage. Apply to: FORESIGHT Organisation, 29 Beaufort Avenue, Hodge Hill, Birmingham B34 6AD., England.

O d d s \_ \_ A n d \_ \_ E n d \_ \_ s

Who's flashing who?

A number of witnesses to UFO sightings have noticed the definite response of UFOs to flashing lamps held by the observers. We have noticed that a red light flashing at a constant rate in the UFOs' direction invariably arouses their curiosity, and brings them physically very much closer to you. The power of the torch is not important and a normal white light torch can easily be made adaptable by placing a red cellophane sweet wrapper, for example, over the end. Other colours will work as well.

If you are fortunate enough to witness even a very remote 'LITS' (Lights in the sky) type of UFO, try out the above, and please let us know if you have any success!

Editor

'MAN BITES U.F.O!'

Director Steven Spielberg has spent the past six months making a movie, Close Encounters of The Third Kind called after the category of US Air Force Project Blue Book sightings where contact with non-Terrans purportedly occurred. Since Spielberg's success with Jaws, he has placed Richard Dreyfuss as the dumb Earthman who bumbles into a mighty spaceship parked on a mountain-side. Astrophysicist Dr. J. Hynek is advising for the movie and was the USAF's UFO detective for 21 years. Dr. Hynek said most encounters of the third kind were with shy aliens 4ft tall, spindly bodies, big domed heads and eyes like bicycle reflectors. Sounds like it should put UFO research back fifty years!

"Psychic Australian", Vol.11, No.4, April 1977.

BACK ISSUES OF THE EUFOG JOURNAL (Sept.'77, May '77 and March '77) are available from Head Office at 43p each incl. p & p.

LIGIA BOOK SERVICE - 9, Grange Road, Off Goldthorn Road, Wolverhampton, WV2 4PL. s.a.e. for Occult Book List.

A defunct publication?

Does anyone know what's happened to the Warninster "Fountain Journal"? The Group hasn't seen a copy since June '77. (Please write to the Editor).

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS - We do hope that you've enjoyed the journals, and will still be reading (and enjoying) them next Christmas!