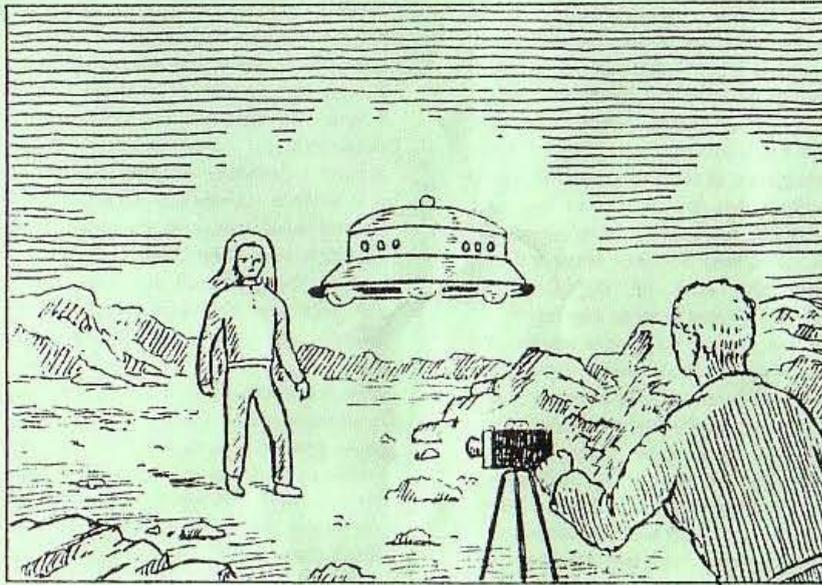


NORTHERN UFO NEWS

170

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JR Comments

The skeptics movement, with notable exceptions, have all the humour of a wet lettuce and, at times, not much evidence of a sense of fair play. I am beginning to have doubts about the entire debunking ethos after their record over crop circles. Grave charges? Certainly. Accurate ones? Lets see.

Take *The Skeptic* magazine. Editor Dr Steve Donnelly is a man I respect and who, indeed, I have recommended that researchers should work with in the past. He is a skeptic, certainly, but I felt one of the few with objectivity and open-mindedness.

The group NARO invited him and others from his illustrious team to participate in an investigation of the infamous Birchwood Mall security video case a year or two ago. The skeptics did not fully resolve it (nor did we) but - guess what? - they never wrote a word about the case or the fact that UFOlogists had invited them to join forces.

When I came to appear on the TV show *The Time, The Place* and we aired the film for viewers comments the *Skeptics* media spokesperson, Wendy Grossman, heard about the video in the green room beforehand and insisted on knowing what it was all about. I pointed out that her *Skeptic* colleagues surely had informed her of their work into this case - but she seems to have been told nothing about it. Yet informed criticism must have data.

Now I am not suggesting that the Birchwood film shows a spaceship. Nobody in their right mind would do so, and NARO certainly never has. It was a UFO simply because it appeared to be *flying* and the object was *unidentified*. Our task was to *identify* what it showed. We have contemplated many possibilities - as the long series on the case in NUN made clear. For instance, a luminous insect reflecting infra-red light from the cameras spot beam was one strong contender.

However, what the film does (or does not) show is secondary in importance to how the skeptics were associated with this case. They could try to argue that it was not their place to comment on the matter, but no restrictions were ever placed upon them, they never even asked to discuss the case in their journal and the fact that one of their supposed enemies - a UFO group - had brought them in from day one to try to resolve it in partnership might have merited a mention. They could have discussed what was published in NUN - as they usually have no reservations over that.

Am I a cynic in thinking that had skeptics helped find answers we would not have heard the end of it? So why was their involvement characterised here by silence?

Now the latest *Skeptic* magazine (Vol 8 No 6) strikes again. Dr Donnelly refers to my comments in NUN 168 about the recent *Horizon* documentary on alien abductions. Or rather, if you have read NUN you will *know* this was the context of what I said. If you just read *The Skeptic* this vital fact is denied you.

My remark, fairly obviously tongue in cheek, was about UFOlogists adopting bogus degrees because this seems to be the key to being taken serious by the media and (to an extent) the skeptics. I justified that quip by noting the way certain cults who profess doctorates get taken seriously and how a science programme seemed unable to express any interest in serious UFOlogy and only heeded what was said (however credible or not) if it came from other scientists.

Of course, all the reasoning behind my gripe and the objective criticism of the *Horizon* programme itself went out of the window in Donnelly's comment. His *Hits and Misses* column lives up to its name by never even mentioning *Horizon* - which any reader (with or without a degree) had to see was the whole point of my article and the motivation for this frustrated dig about inventing a UFO doctorate. Indeed, the fact that the piece was titled *Over the Horizon* might possibly have given a clue to most readers.

No, the subscribers to this leading skeptics magazine - influential scientists no doubt included - are seriously misled into believing that I have proposed that a UFO doctorate be conjured up not only less than flippantly but seemingly for no apparent reason other than to make us all look self important.

In my view this kind of shabby treatment of UFOlogy is not on, but it is sadly all too typical of what the skeptics afford us as a matter of course. It is time we spoke out.

It is with delight that I note how the objectivity and fairness of *Horizon* presenter, Dr Susan Blackmore, shone through by not only reading what I wrote but commenting rationally upon it. She retains my full respect.

Of course, the decent thing would now be for Dr Donnelly to read the article from which his extract comes, see the proper context in which my off the cuff jest was placed and so inform his readers of the truth behind those words. Hands up those who expect this to occur? But if it happens, I will be the first to issue the deserved plaudits

News Round Up:

:: David Jacobs was on *Countdown* (Channel 4) on 17 March. This was not the American UFOlogist, I should add, but the entertainer. To my surprise he repeated the yarn about the day he saw a UFO from Northamptonshire when driving on the M1 with politician Shirley Williams. This occurred in October 1983. I was surprised for a variety of reasons. Firstly, he told the same story when he appeared as a guest on the show in early 1994. Secondly, he still insisted he did not know what it was. This was a wee bit odd, because the radio personality *did* now know what his UFO really was. How can I be sure? Because I told him. Last year, only a few days after he first related the story on *Countdown*, we both happened to be guests on a BBC-1 chat show in Belfast. I mentioned it to him in the green room beforehand and it even cropped up in my conversation with the show's presenter. I explained to David that his UFO had been a 'bolide' - a bright fireball meteor. There is no doubt of this UFO, as it occurred soon after the Rendlesham Forest case broke in the press and I had to ensure that MP Major Sir Patrick Wall did not raise Shirley Williams' spurious encounter in the Houses of Parliament when he quizzed ministers on their UFO policy. Otherwise this might have distracted from the importance of the Bentwaters affair. David Jacobs was certainly interested in this solution when I offered it to him, several times during the evening asking me to spell 'bolide' and seemingly impressed that he had an answer to his after dinner mystery at last. So why, when he recorded the new *Countdown* series some months later, did he maintain to four million viewers that the sighting was still puzzling him? No doubt there is a good explanation...

:: The two London debates scheduled for 22 April were successful. The Society for Psychical Research held a one day symposium about alien abductions; albeit from a very humanistic perspective. There was little talk of aliens from zeta reticuli; although it was good to see the SPR take UFOs seriously for the first time in its 112 years of existence. One positive thing to emerge was that Professor Arthur Ellison, a former president and retired electrical engineer, agreed to try to help with my proposal for university backing behind a UAP study within the Pennine window area. If he can use his influence to effect such a step forward it could make a big difference.

The other symposium, the Fortean Times *Unconvention*, closed doors before it opened and around 1000 people sandwiched together inside. For 1996 it seems certain that a new venue will have to be found. Predictably the debate on crash retrievals saw much attention placed on Roswell and questions about the recently revealed film footage. It was fascinating to note that all the speakers - which included pretty well every shade of opinion from the outright debunking of Peter Brookesmith to the ETH endorsement of Jerome Clark and my own middle of the road ambivalence - seemed in unison in not holding out much hope that this footage is the great breakthrough others seem to be anticipating (see article on the next page)

:: There is the usual flood of book offers to record. *Midnight Books* (The Mount Ascerton Rd Sidmouth Devon EX10 9BT) (Tel: 01395 - 515446 Mon - Sat - afternoon and evenings only) has its new 40 pp Spring catalogue out. This is for me the best mix of second hand and new books which are all about the paranormal and one of the easiest to access from the UK (although they do sell stock overseas as well and it's a good way to get rare UK titles out there). In this issue the goodies include taking on the superb William Corliss sourcebook series (tough to get here but each one hundreds of pages of scientific anomalies across a wide range). Otherwise there are old and new UFO titles (including 'From out of the blue' at £6.50 - my recent update on the Bentwaters case never published in the UK and rarely in shops here), plus some good back issue mags such as *FSR Case Histories*, *The Unknown*, *Skeptical Enquirer*....

Arcturus Books (1443 Port St Lucie Blvd Port St Lucie FL 34952 Fax: (407) 337 - 1701 continues as ever to provide a US equivalent and your first chance to purchase new American titles, many of which will never make it to the UK. These vary from the incredible 'Alien Discussions' (see review this issue) which is rightly selling out very fast to the amazingly titled 'NASA mooned America' which purports to show that all space exploration was a special effects con trick! Bet that never finds its way into WH Smith.

In addition *Excalibur Books* (1 Hillside Gardens Bangor Co Down N. Ireland BT19 6SJ Tel: 01247 - 458 579) has a smaller list but often includes US imports at very reasonable prices - eg the new Randle & Schmitt book on Roswell ('The truth about the UFO crash at Roswell') at just £4.95 plus post).

:: Interested in UFO videos? So is Rod Haworth. He has one of the most amazing catalogues of rare footage, TV programmes and lectures by / interviews with UFOlogists worldwide that you could imagine. And he's always on the lookout for more. If you have unusual items that might build up his collection or want to see a copy of his catalogue, send an SAE (or international reply coupon) to: 37 Sandyway Drive, Harle Syke, Burnley BB10 2JS Tel: 01282 - 451315

Down in the forest, something stirs...

:: Thanks to readers Albert Budden, Nick Redfern and Roy Sandbach for updating information on what has been happening to sites involved with the Rendlesham Forest case. Quite a lot is the answer, Orford Ness, the nine mile long coastal shingle spit and home to the infamous lighthouse, had (according to *National Trust* magazine, Feb 1995) *been closed to visitors for most of this century.* They talk of the atomic weapons research conducted there (eg testing bomb detonators in special buildings still intact) and *Cobra Mist* - the NSAs over the horizon radar experiment. How Russian spies were intrigued by *a once a week unmarked lorry from Aldermaston* which would be *unloaded behind huge closed doors in a large sand dune.* It also reports the ballistic missile and radar tests begun there. But the MoD have now *sold Orford Ness to the National Trust for £292,500.* If you want to visit this site of great wildlife interest as well as such fascination to British UFOlogists you can do so from 6 June 1995. For details call:- 01263 - 733471.

Moreover, things have happened to RAF Bentwaters - the once active air base, now that the USAF have quit. Seems the RAF didn't want it either and it has been sold for £8 million. The purchasers could hardly be more appropriate. The Maharishi Foundation, linked to the Natural Law party, I believe, will be turning the 1000 acre property into a University of Natural Law that will teach 4000 students the skills of meditation and yogic flying (ie levitation)! Now, if there is such a thing as time travel and years from now at their annual Christmas bash the energy of a few thousand levitating yogi could ripple back through time to, say, 27 December 1980, would some sort of incredible psychic projection appear momentarily in the woodland to baffle and intrigue the befuddled US Air Force?

A case of UFGMs - *Unidentified Flying Maharishi?* Who said there were no new theories about the Rendlesham Forest affair!

Roswell: The real movie

Unless you have been the guests of greys aboard their deluxe model spaceship for a few weeks, you can hardly have missed the big UFO story of the past months. The claim that real film footage has surfaced that was taken in July 1947 and actually depicts the Roswell crash retrieval, the alien bodies found there, an autopsy of the same and even the arrival of US President Harry Truman on site.

Philip Mantle, BUFORAs director of investigation, conference organiser (and spokesman for most things) was in the thick of the media blitz with news about BUFORAs exclusive deal struck with the man who bought the film and will now show this at the August conference. As a result of the widespread coverage interest in tickets went crazy. One hopes that purchasers are not in for a disappointment as there are a few months before August and a lot could happen to this footage during that time.

It is not widely realised that this saga is pretty old. I first heard of the attempts to buy film in autumn 1993 and there have been tales that Steven Spielberg was offered the film before then. Media showbiz gossip columns in late 1993 carried a few stories about real footage of aliens coming into his possession and being used as the basis for a Roswell movie to be released to tie in with its 50th anniversary - in July 1997.

Spielberg's office issued denials of all this, but the rumours were so similar to those about the footage circulating in UFOlogy that a coincidence seems unlikely. Even if Spielberg's team had not purchased anything, as appears to be the case, there was surely something behind the press accounts.

I am not aware if anyone has asked Spielberg if he was *offered* this footage and, if so, why his film company decided not to buy it. But this point needs clearing up, one way or the other, as the sums being bandied about would be peanuts to a man of his wealth and proven ability to use money to make money. The origin of the rumours, even if false, needs tracking down at the very least.

In 1993 I had been told that someone in the USA was trying to sell film of Roswell aliens and wreckage, but that British UFOlogists could not afford to buy, especially sight unseen. I recall Philip Mantle telling me a few weeks later as we met at Heathrow airport that he was trying to arrange to see the footage, but his plan had been put on hold.

Frankly, I forget about all this until rock singer turned UFOlogist and croppie, Reg Presley, fresh from his new found wealth after the huge success of his song - *Love is all around* in last years hit movie *Four Weddings and a Funeral* - made a BBC-1 daytime TV appearance. This was an interview in February 1995 on 'Good Morning with Anne and Nick' and saw him briefly refer to the story of the Roswell footage and how it was discovered in the USA by businessman Ray Santilli whilst seeking material for a rock music film about Elvis Presley (no relation)!

Is Reg the benefactor who allowed Ray Santilli to buy a film that he appears to have been seeking for 18 months? This is uncertain. But several people who have seen the footage say they had Reg Presley's help in doing so.

The first press reference to the story came soon after this TV slot in *The People* on 5 March. This half page story was headed *Aliens are captured - on film*. It claimed the footage was 'about to be released' and carried 'exclusive drawings' but no extracted stills.

The entities drawn were frankly only vaguely 'right' with proper noses and mouths, not unduly large eyes and polo neck jumpers! The tabloid did describe them as around 4 feet tall, grey skinned and with almond eyes. The UFO was shown as an upside down disc in a steep sided gulley surrounded by half a dozen personnel and probably being about 25/30 feet in diameter.

The press story related how Santilli and Presley were joining forces to make a video to release the footage to the world. Philip Mantle featured in this article quite a bit. Indeed the bulk of the quotes within are attributed to him and neither Santilli nor Presley are quoted at all. The background to this initial press report is thus rather uncertain.

Mantle is quoted saying how the film shows some of the bodies badly decomposed, as these were found a week after the crash. He said the aliens *have flesh and blood... They are very human-looking*. Aside from calling the film 'unique', he sensibly makes no comment about its possible authenticity.

Surprisingly, there was no media follow up to this story. Perhaps Ray Santilli preferred to keep the film on hold until he was ready to release his video and could promote sales of that. *The People* alleged that he had paid £100,000 for the film to the US military man who had held copies since 1947. If so his video would have to sell big simply to break even.

On Sunday 26 March, around lunchtime, I had a fax from Philip Mantle (copies of which also went to various BUFORA officers, Walt Andrus at MUFON, Kevin Randle & Don Schmitt at CUFOS, plus a couple of others in the USA. This report was headed as **private and confidential and not for publication**, but such restrictions were very short lived - because just a few hours later Mantle himself was cited in the UK media confirming most of the things that had featured in his fax.

Mantle's fax described how he had seen a segment of film which showed a dead alien being examined in a 'field hut or cabin-type construction'; although it could have been the back of a truck. The head, arms and feet of the alien are visible, the rest being covered, and two men in white coats were taking samples.

This is part of a total of 98 minutes of film on 14 cannisters depicting all aspects of the recovery operation. It is 16mm, black & white, grainy, dark, without sound and in the sequences seen by everyone I have spoken with there are no close-ups to allow absolute certainty of alien origins to be determined.

Philip Mantle gives the name of the photographer and his location in the USA. This has not been made public so I will not repeat it (although I have now seen it in one UFO magazine!) Senior figures in the Roswell investigation, like Randle & Schmitt, could now track him down and check his story out. Early whispers are not overtly positive, but nothing has appeared in print on such work as yet, so it is unwise to prejudge the outcome.

In his fax to me Mantle calls the footage '*interesting and nothing more*'. Bill Chalker (calling from Australia, where the story made the news) told me he was given a similar non committal response by Mantle when they spoke on the phone around 1 April, the BUFORA man suggesting that what he saw was not of great quality. He was reasonably waiting to view the other 90 minutes before comment.

After initial press accounts on 27 March, the *Daily Mail* was the first to do a full feature the very next day. It was headed '*Little green men or big green dollars?*' - a title which suggests the stance this paper took.

In a full page article it reports how the film was '*uncovered by UFO believers*' (?) and refers to its exclusive appearance at the Sheffield conference (see page 16). Reporter George Gordon adds, rather in contradiction to other quotes, that '*Philip Mantle... is convinced*' and it carries a much more detailed description by the UFOlogist of what he saw in film. His account of the entity (*no visible*

protruberances - no earlobes or nose') does not match the quote in *The People* three weeks before. Here Mantle referred to the figures as human-like and was cited as saying; 'their noses, lips and ears were small'.

Philip also wrote a letter entitled 'Dear UFO Disbeliever' which seems to have been published in papers that same week. It implies an apparent hardening belief in the footage, at the same time as plugging the conference strongly - as I guess was his job.

Mantle says of UFO debunkers that the time was rapidly approaching to say 'I told you so' and surprisingly describes the film as a 'Holy Shroud' of the UFO movement since it is the 'closest we have yet come to proving...that aliens have landed on earth. The entity had 'no hair, eyes, nose or ears but it does have large dark eyes' (sic). He further adds that it is of 'average height' (ie not presumably 4 feet tall as in *The People*).

Pulling no punches Mantle says that this film has big implications and is 'the best proof we have yet obtained that an alien spacecraft did crash'.

This is all momentous stuff and it is no wonder the BUFORA conference is selling well. Time will tell if Mantle is justified by seeming impressed and no doubt the contradictions in various press accounts will be cleared up when we have more data. I personally cannot judge without seeing a full investigation of the footage. Consequently, the only thing I can do is to suspend my judgement until we have all the facts.

That said, some UFOlogists who have seen clips, including several staunch supporters of the ETH, have said they were not convinced. I have heard reference to problems with the dating (the autopsy seemingly being several weeks after the crash, when surely the wreckage should not still be in the desert?) and the use of plastic bags when this seems incongruous for 1947 (can anyone check that?)

One circles magazine carries a report from a woman who has seen the film. She says the doctors remove intestines from the entity! Steve Gerrard in his Southampton group newsletter is none too hopeful either - nor of the prospects for BUFORA if this all 'goes pear shaped' as he puts it!

In his irreverent 'Saucer Smear' magazine (15 April) - sent only to non subscribers - American UFOlogist Jim Moseley notes that Colin Andrews broke the news in a lecture in Seattle on 17 March (ten days before it hit news wires after the second

bout of UK coverage). Moseley also spotted the problem with date (cited as 30 July 1947).

Moseley has done a good job collating comments from those who have seen the film in the USA (or rather a short video made from some sections). There are few with good things to say, noting it is so dark and grainy and the 'alien' head is turned to one side. There is also confusion over President Truman's appearance, some saying he is seen walking through wreckage, at the autopsy or steps out of a car! The strangest claim is that some of the reels of film were never developed and sat in the photographers home for years.

And so it goes on. Moseley reports that TV rights in the film have been snapped up by 'Encounters' or Fox TV in the USA (and presumably Sky in the UK) This should appear in August, whether before or after Ray Santilli screens his video extracts at the BUFORA conference is unsure.

As I closed for press Santilli called a press conference in London on 5 May and footage was screened but nothing released to the media. Indeed all 100 or so attending were frisked to prevent cameras and tape recorders being let in to sneak images out! The portion screened was different, and showed a normal height entity being autopsied with its brain taken out and thrown in a pan! I spoke with several journalists, eg one from *Strange but True?* - who were generally unpersuaded.

Although a few UFOlogists and cropies were invited, this was largely a media event. But it seems to have had little publicity save a sceptical piece on BBC radio's *Today*.

I won't apologise for taking up so much space with what is obviously the biggest story of the year, whether it is ultimately of no value in proving the Roswell crash (as some UFOlogists fear) or whether Philip Mantle's more open stance is proven right, as it may be. If this does become the great breakthrough UFOlogy has yearned for then much will change as a result. I suspect BUFORA council will be delighted in any case at how they seized the opportunity to sell the conference.

It is too early to be sure of the outcome - especially with memories of the Hitler Diaries at hand. Having delved into the Roswell case in depth for my chapter in *UFO Retrievals* (a book examining the pros and cons of the 33 known crash retrieval cases) my real concern is that this film reflects the legends about Roswell rather better than it depicts what we know of the reality. I've been wrong in such cynicism before, but caution is now more vital than ever

Circular Logic:

As the new seasons gets underway and all eyes turn to the crop fields seeking the first hoax (oops,sorry,circle) of the season.Paul Fuller has kicked off with quite an eye opening issue of his magazine *The Crop Watcher*.

He reports in a detailed article on his intensive search through the National Monuments Records Archive in Swindon. This houses tens of thousands of aerial photographs taken earlier this century above fields where circles now appear with alarming frequency.

Some suspect images have turned up,even though he has been unable to do more than an introductory scan of likely dates and places.However,none of these are proven crop circles pre Doug & Dave. It is a shame that Arthur C Clarke's TV series expressed interest in filming this important,brave research to include in their 'Mysterious Universe' series on *Discovery*,but when Paul found nothing conclusive from it they did not proceed.

Paul deserved better than that and this kind of work - which is a lot more scientific than conjuring up ever dafter theories - should have been recognised by super sceptic Arthur.Paul has been doing some of the only serious circle research for a decade now - with precious little credit either,even from supposedly inciteful writers like Jim Schnabel.

Also in this issue there is a fascinating overview and investigation unto a video film taken in July 1994 at Alton Barnes when Colin Andrews and others were swooped on by two military helicopters whilst filming a crop circle and anomalous lightball. The event itself is not in doubt.Paul does his usual excellent job of probing behind the mystery and,whilst admitting he does not resolve all the questions of this intriguing story,his cool-headed approach needs to be contemplated by all cerealogists.

The Crop Watcher (Winter 1995 issue) is available from 3 Selborne Court Tavistock Close Romsey Hampshire SO51 7TY and costs £6 for 4 (payable 'Paul Fuller')

For Your Perusal

Major articles elsewhere

Two interesting new magazines to record this time.*Dead of Night* (£1.50 from 156 Bolton Road East New Ferry Wirral L62 4RY) is a bulky A 4 with a wide range of

extracted press stories,short articles and news clips.Not only covers UFOs but ghosts and other stuff from Merseyside. The second is from Eileen Fletcher - to whom cheques should be made out (*Trans-UFO* at £3.38 UK,£3.78 Europe and £5 elsewhere - from Derwent Cottage Derwent Dam Bamford Sheffield S30 2AQ). This translates articles from recent non-English language UFO journals to let you read the pick of whats going on,notably (from this first issue anyhow) in Scandinavia. Oodles of interesting cases.A terrific idea worthy of your support.

Strange Days 4 £1 each to DA Newton
9 Broderick Clse Newcastle on Tyne NE3 3SG
Apart from a cover designed to bring on migraine this 26pp photocopied A5 publication has lots of pieces on north-east UFOlogy from this lively local group.

EMUFORA Spring 95 £5 for 4
8 Roosa Clse Bulwell Nottingham NG6 7BL
Another local mag packed with news,comment,etc from the east midlands.

UFO Reporter 4 £7 for 6 to N.Mortimer
5 Stocks Hill Menston Ilkley LS29 6ND
West Yorkshire cases from the tireless Nigel Mortimer,including a 1991 episode from the spot on Ilkley Moor where the infamous little green man was photographed in 1987.

Pegasus Spring 95 £6 for 4 pay SIGAP
126 Grange Rd Guildford GU2 6QP
Under Gordon Millington's editorship this is a very interesting mag with a selection of internet articles on UFOs and abductions that a give a different perspective. Whitley Strieber,for instance,explains why he has written his forthcoming *Beyond Communion* and says some intriguing things about CE4s.

Southampton UFO Newsletter £5 for 12
25 Weston Grove Rd Southampton SO19 9EE
A very cost effective monthly with Steve Gerrards always interesting comments on press stories and TV items.Keeps an ongoing media catalogue of UFO items.

World UFO Journal 8 Large SAE only
16 Newton Green Gt Dunmow Essex CM6 1DU
Ed Harris has been around UFOs longer than I have (and thats saying something!).He still prints a lively collection of press articles photocopied with his commentary.Raw grass roots UFOlogy that many will love.

Fortean Times 80 £2 (shops) £12 sub for 6
Freepost SW6096 Frome BA11 1YA
Has a special section on known alien photos
(bit like the chapter in *Looking for the aliens*
which FT seem to have missed reading!)

Enigmas Mar 95 £10 for 5 to M.Robinson
41 The Braes Tullibody Scotland FK10 2TT
As ever Malcolm packs his A5 publication
with UFO and ghost investigations north of
the border, plus a look at a Bonnybridge UFO
debate on radio and UFOs in a Scottish school

Annals Mar 95 £6 for 4 G Lovell
8 St John St Wells Somerset BA5 1SW
The usual mix of short items on a vast range of
strange topics that makes this a terrific read.

IUR (Center for UFO Studies) \$30 US for 6
2457 W. Peterson Ave Chicago IL 60659
Jan: Bruce Maccabee reappraises the Kenneth
Arnold case, I review the Ros Reynolds CE4
from Suffolk and there are letters from the
likes of Jim Schnabel and Betty Hill. Terrific!

IUFOPRA Jan 95
Box 3070 Whitehill Dublin 9 Ireland
News and reviews from the Irish group
includes a look at the Horizon debate.

Aura Z 4 \$33 US for 4
PO Box 224 Moscow Russia 117463
100 pages packed with Russian UFO cases
and other paranormal research - all in good
English. Where else would you find a Russian
encounter from 1663 or a 1993 Moscow video
film of a UFO reported?

Phenomena Feb 95 150 FF / 6 to SOS OVNI
BP 324 13611 Aix Cedex 1 France
If you read French, don't hesitate. It also has a
4pp English translation summary.
Sightings, latest news from the active French
scene. Reports an amazing ongoing lawsuit
for plagiarism just begun between two French
UFO book writers - one involving the head of
the French government UFO team, SEPRA!

Strange but True? The sequel

It is confirmed that a new 10 part
series of *Strange but True?* will air on the
ITV network this autumn, following its 12
million viewer ratings success last year.
Filming is underway and there should also be
a *Strange but True? - 2* book. The first series
has so far sold to several countries, including
Australia, France, Japan and the USA.

If you have any cases that you would
love to see dramatised on air for series two
and which you think you can justify as
powerful evidence by perhaps appearing
yourself on screen in an interview then do let
me know asap. I can try and use my influence
with the team. Two or three UFO cases are
being assessed as possible candidates. I hope to
have more news on this next issue.

BOOKS OF THE MOMENT

Alien Discussions : The MIT Symposium
Eds: Andrea Pritchard, David Pritchard, John
Mack, Pam Kasey & Claudia Yapp
£50 (airmail) or \$65 US by sea pay to
Proceedings: North Cambridge Press PO Box
241 North Cambridge PO Cambridge MA
02140 USA Tel: (617) 354 - 6007

Once in a very long while a UFO
book like this comes around. Forget anything
previously written about alien abductions -
whoever the author. If you want the definitive
state of the art knowledge and research - look
no further than this classic.

In effect this is the proceedings of
the 5 day symposium in June 1992, funded by a
benevolent millionaire and staged in relative
media-free surrounds at the prestigious MIT
university near Boston. If you doubt the
prestige for science held by MIT in the
USA, remember this is where Sam Beckett in
Quantum Leap supposedly learned the physics
which led to his time-travelling breakthrough!

This conference was unique in UFO
history not only because of where it was held
and its primary organisers (an MIT physicist -
David Pritchard - and the then newly
converted John Mack, the Harvard psychiatrist
now a household name in UFOlogy). More
importantly it had a refreshingly new
approach to putting a conference together.

Firstly, a committee of academics got
together and defined dozens of basic questions
about alien abductions that science needed to
ask - placing them in a sort of logical order
from *how do we discover the stories to how do
we help abductees integrate with society?*
These were then sent to an invited list of
around 200 possible candidates. The selection
criteria for invitees were not only experience
in objective research in this field, but relevant
contributions from outside. So many
psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists,
etc, whose province were areas such as post
traumatic stress, child abuse or false memory
syndrome were invited.

However, being invited was no guarantee to acceptance. If you wanted to be there you then had to submit outlines of papers that you would present within as many of the sub-headings as you wished. The committee vetted these submissions and selected only those that emphasised new material or data-rich research, eg from new experiments specially conducted prior to the symposium.

A very strict time limit was imposed up front for each paper (usually between 5 and 15 minutes) and it was protected by an alarm clock going off next to the speaker when their time was up! This sounds absurd but it ensured that there was almost no waffling and that the papers stuck to presenting real research in a series of awesome sound bites.

Remember this went on for a whole week from not much after dawn to not much before dusk, with ample discussion after each of the 100 plus papers. The debate involved speakers, non paper presenting specialists and a number of invited abductees, many of whose stories were not publicly known.

The result was a truly memorable barrage of information and discussion which left those taking part feeling they had learnt more in a few days than in years of research.

I was very lucky to be the only British participant, presenting five papers. Whilst there were three or four others from outside the USA (eg Keith Basterfield from Australia) there was an unfortunate (if understandable) near total bias towards American research. All the names you will probably be familiar with were there - such as Budd Hopkins, David Jacobs and John Mack, of course.

It has taken nearly 3 years to get this book out, for many reasons. The editing of the discussions, clearing permission with those who attended on the understanding their words would not be used without permission and the sheer task of compiling this book are some. In addition, no commercial publisher would back this mammoth project, so it had to be self-financed and published.

Was it worth the effort? You bet it was. Physically the book is huge (your postman will not thank you one bit for having to carry it!) and at almost 700 pages it is probably the most wordy volume ever released within the UFO literature. But it is also possibly the most important. For anyone unconvinced that alien abductions are a phenomenon in need of deep and serious research then this book is the perfect answer.

Aside from the sheer mass of presentations and facts and figures there are

some post symposium additions. Most significant is Dr Eddie Bullard's huge new statistical analysis of the work of abduction researchers worldwide, assessing mountains of basic data about the subject that will alone take you months to digest.

My one quibble (and it isn't small - given the status this book will rightly achieve) is the list of information sources at the back. Whilst CUFOS gets three separate listings of the same address on this page, there is nothing for Australia to reflect Keith Basterfield's contribution. For Britain readers are directed to contact both Quest and FSR - neither of whom were represented at MIT. As the sole British participant it was pretty darned unfair - I'd even say an outrage - not to include associations like BUFORA. But that's Americans for you - credit where credit isn't due seems to sum up their definition of fair play. No wonder they don't like cricket!

Only a limited print run of this book has been produced. If you want something to hand down to *UFOlogy's - the next generation* - don't consider the money excessive. It's worth every penny to own a book that will go down in UFO history as sure as eggs are oval things.

From time to time I have reviewed music in this section. Chance now decrees another round-up of an ET top of the pops.

Remember *Abduction* that masterpiece concept album about a spacenapping by Scottish band CE4? Well another Scot is in on the act; UFOlogist Ron Halliday. He penned the short title track for Hux & Fox in their *Riddle of the sky at night* tape. Sounds a bit like a morose Simon & Garfunkle with a touch of the Beachboys. A song about Bonnybridge is promised next! There are 14 raw pieces on this first set (none of the others UFOlogical) - all co-produced by the UFO investigator. Write for details of the cassette (about £5 I think) :- 35 Fountain Rd Bridge of Allan Stirling FK9 4AU.

Ex UFOlogist Andy Roberts is also focusing on music these days. Some knew of his association with the Incredible String Band. Now he is behind the singer-songwriting of Malcolm Le Maistre, who has just released a CD of his melodic warblings, *Nothing Strange*. (Available from Unique Gravity at PO Box 114 Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 3YU).

If you haven't heard of any of the previous, you must have heard of Mike Oldfield. Well, he's teamed up with Arthur C Clarke to bring out a musical version of *Songs*

of distant earth. After Oldfield's huge success in 1993 with *Tubular Bells II* this is less immediate in its impact but if you like Oldfield as much as I do its well worth persisting as it turns into an eerie and at times beautiful rendition of human-alien contact. You can share the experience through the mood-soaked music. You won't have a problem finding it on tape or CD in record stores.

Even better news is that a remastered CD of Dave Greenslade's *The Pentateuch of the Cosmogony* has just appeared in shops. Its £13.99 for over an hour of music and a superb 50 page book telling the story in words and with masses of colour artwork. Great value in major shops or via Beat goes on records Box 22 Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP28 6XQ

The Pentateuch first appeared as a double album 15 years ago and its as fresh as ever. Greenslade is perhaps best known for his TV music (eg of the oddball hit series *A very peculiar practice*) but this is his masterwork. To set the scene - its 400 years from now and an incredible UFO has been found floating in orbit near Saturn. The aliens have long vanished but on board is a record of their mythology and history, in music and art - this being the Pentateuch. As it is gradually revealed we learn the strange story of this alien race with some chilling relevance today. Its wonderful as science fiction and music.

MEDIA MATTERS

Talking of Arthur C Clarke (see above) wasn't he given an appalling amount of time to ramble on during the *Esther* programme on BBC-2 in March? I felt terribly sorry for the various sensible UFOlogists who made the trek at the BBCs pleading insistence to 'soberly' discuss alien abductions. And relieved my fathers protracted illness (which has delayed this issue) kept me from wasting two days in London. People like Peter Hough and Philip Mantle were completely edited out and Arthur got half the 30 minute show via a satellite link from Sri Lanka, displaying his lack of knowledge about alien abduction evidence. This was a sheer disgrace, frankly, as the result was a pointless, toothless debate on a vibrant topic.

Also, the way abductee Maria Ward was treated was distasteful, with negative findings on her medical records thrust at her mid show by 'rancid Esther' as if the witness were some time-share villain exposed on 'Thats Life'. She had no chance to fight back.

Arthur, in a full page article he was allotted by the *Daily Mail* (21 March 1995) talks merrily about the idea that life could have existed on Mars thanks to bugs in a meteorite recovered in Antarctica. Then he recalled his hogging of the *Esther* chat show in which he called those present 'apparently sane and sincere' (gee thanks Arthur). But this he found 'sadly depressing' - because 'all their stories showed the same pathetic lack of imagination.' That all aliens would be humanoid was, he said 'too unlikely to believe'

I guess this means, on Arthur's logic, that if the next abductee reports being spacenapped by a ten foot tall gerbil he'll believe them. Surely the point is that nobody is saying that *all* aliens are humanoid, as Clarke infers, merely those involved in earthly abductions. There are any number of possible reasons for that - not least that these humanoids might *be* us (from the future) or have *seeded* us in their image on earth millenia ago or come here just because we look a bit like them and are nothing like those ten foot tall gerbils on Proxima Centauri 7 of which they consequently take little notice.

SF authors should have open minds to figure out possibilities like this.

Another debate, this time on radio, was discussed by participant Stewart Lamont in the *Glasgow Herald* (11 Feb 1995). The debate had been on Radio 5 and had featured a battle between Gloria Dixon of NUFORI and arch debunker Stewart Campbell.

Mr Lamont said he interposed to suggest alternatives to aliens or mirages - ie that there were clear links with other parapsychical phenomena such as NDEs and the true source might be imagery from another dimension. Seemingly he's read up on the subject well - rather more than Arthur, who after all has only presented two TV shows about the topic and then had his name stuck on a plaque at the Livingston landing site. What reason did he have to learn about UFOs?

Lamont spoke great sense in his article, requesting a freedom of information act, because it is *absurd that officialdom can seal information about UFO sightings which can have no further military relevance.*

Finally, the Tories were hammered in May's local elections. Just before, according to the *Ruislip Recorder* (2 March 1995), Harrow Conservatives held a joint public meeting with fringe UFO group the Aetherius Society. This allowed a local labour leader to claim of Tory rivals; 'The Aetherius Society are probably more in touch with reality than they are.'

MORE WELSH WONDERS*Investigations by Margaret Fry*

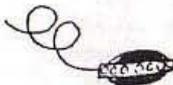
Holyhead mind-meld... This is a curious case (76-184) which involves a woman and her teenage son who were by a bus stop near the sea at Holyhead, Anglesey. It was around 19.30 on a March night in 1976.

Suddenly a metal object appeared which was like two pie dishes atop each other with a line of eight 'portholes' across the middle. This hovered over the pavement, menacingly silent, as they put it, with the sea breeze whipping around them.

However, the most frightening part came with the sensation of telepathic messages being picked up by the woman's mind. She sensed very unhappy and unwilling human captives were on board the UFO. She resisted any thought of joining these abductees but felt her mind cooperating with the alien source aboard the UFO.

Amid great fear the object then glided back a little way and performed an extraordinary loop, before making two further such moves and disappearing.

Margaret Fry hopes to do further work on this intriguing case.



76-184



8347

A world-shattering event... In this case (8347) Mrs K had just collected her children from a school in St Asaph at around 15.00 on a Friday in late October/early November 1983. They were driving on the A 547 Meliden to Prestatyn road.

Suddenly a metallic craft appeared over the rural road ahead, spanning its width but totally silent. The top and bottom reflected red (sunlight?) and there was a kind of fuzzy electrical aura around it which also glowed red. The rest of the object was black but with some portholes on the side. The children yelled that it was a flying saucer, but she told them it had to be from a circus!

Mrs K got out and stood by her car watching the craft. Several cars passed in the opposite direction and drove right underneath the thing. But despite her gesticulating and pointing at the sky, none of them seemed to take notice. The object then drifted out to sea.

Mrs K drove fast to Prestatyn police station and reported the matter but was amazed to find no police out in force pursuing what she regarded as a world-shattering event. For her the universe had just changed forever and nobody else seemed to give a damn. This was what puzzled her more than anything.

Later she was visited by Tony Pace, the BUFORA research officer from the 1960's who then was a village postmaster in UFO retirement nearby. He left some books, but could not explain why the other cars saw nothing. Margaret suggested to her that the UFO was like a prism reflection or rainbow and you only see it if you were in the correct eye alignment to do so - an intriguing theory.

As can be seen from the sketches, there are similarities between the UFO in these two cases.

BRIEF CASES

9434 31 December 1994 Caldicot, Dean Forest

A man was out in his garden at 21.20 waiting for his wife so they could go to a New Years Eve party. Then three dull orange lights appeared and passed overhead, forming the apex points on a dark triangular craft. As it passed silently overhead the stars were blotted out, indicating that there was a solid object present. The only sound heard was a soft rushing like air displacement. He estimates the object was about 500 feet up and visible for 5-7 seconds. Yet another example of the type of UFO now dominating the records worldwide.

9502 1 January 1995 Belper, Derbyshire

A couple on the A6 near Broadhome Cemetery saw a craft hovering overhead at 17.55. It was very low and studded in 'the brightest lights ever seen'. Police confirmed there were no aircraft or helicopters known to be in the area.

9503 11 January 1995 Madeley Heath, Staffs

Mr H was looking out of his bedroom on a frosty night over an expanse of woodland. It was 21.20 and he was looking for aircraft that regularly pass over bound for Manchester Airport. He saw what he first took to be a streetlamp but then realised it was moving. The egg shaped fluorescent light had spikes coming out and very bright lights on the end of these (although that could have been an optical illusion). It flew around the woods for several minutes, then drifted out of sight.

A very similar object (described as a massive opaque light with a red edge) was seen about 20 minutes earlier from the village of Trimpey in the Wyre Forest area of the south midlands.

9504 19 January 1995 West Midlands

On this night there were many reports across the West Midlands of what seems to have been a bright fireball meteor; eg at Sparkbrook. At 18.40 that night a hovering orange object over the Police Training Centre at Tally Ho! also created a fuss; although this seems to have been an airship.

9505 23 January 1995 Higher Ince, Wigan

A number of witnesses this evening observed a bright orange ball of fire falling to earth. It was reported to police as being possibly a crashing light aircraft and a search and rescue operation was mounted. However, no debris was found. From the accounts it seems likely this was yet another bright fireball meteor. Has the cometary collision with Jupiter last summer led to an upsurge in meteoritic debris through which the earth is passing?

UFO escorts plane over Yorkshire

9506 26 - 28 January 1995 Bradford, W. Yorks

Mrs G was out walking her dog on a very windy evening (date not certain but it was at the end of that week). She noticed unusual air traffic around 18.30 heading into Leeds/Bradford airport. Then she spotted a white light heading straight for a plane that was battling through the high winds to land. At first she thought it was another aircraft and that there would be a collision, but the light was clearly too small and 'escorted' the aircraft for a short distance then flew off as the plane headed for a safe landing. She walked on mesmerised by what she had just seen. There is a real possibility that I was actually on the aircraft being buzzed by this UFO! On 28 January I was due to fly home to Blackpool from Belfast after doing an Ulster TV chat show with abductee Ros Reynolds the night before. However, the weather turned very bad that morning and my aircraft suffered major technical problems after takeoff. Forced to make an emergency landing on the Isle of Man we were then left for some hours as Jersey Airlines tried to bring in another plane to replace our damaged machine. When one arrived mid afternoon I and the few other

passengers watched in astonishment as the pilot argued with ground crew about it being too windy for take off! Seeing how the small plane was being rocked from side to side just sat on the tarmac we tended to agree. However, take off we eventually did and after being blown all over the sky across the Irish Sea we had to abandon attempts to land at Squires Gate and fly onto Leeds/Bradford instead, where we arrived around the time of the above sighting amidst gale force winds. Frankly none of the 20 or so passengers (me included) were looking out of the window for UFOs at that stage - just concentrating, like the cabin crew, on getting down in one piece. If our flight was guided in to land safely by a UFO I am very grateful! Ros Reynolds and her husband were on another plane direct to Stanstead and flew uneventfully, I should add.

9507 26 January 1995 Sutton, Notts

Mr E, ex Army man, spotted a dark triangular mass hovering over the village at 20.30. It had red lights on the side. After several minutes it shot away at fantastic speed and the lights turned orange. Despite his background he had never seen anything like it before.

9508 29 January 1995 Forfar, Scotland

Mrs D watched mysterious blue and white lights from her bedroom window at around 23.00. They moved towards each other in smooth flight then disappeared. This sounds a bit like lasers. Was a show operating nearby?

A dawn surprise

9509 30 January 1995 Aberfeldy, Scotland

This sighting achieved some attention because of its unusual nature, but it has an interesting sequel not previously connected. At around 08.00 Mr L - a shepherd working on the Bolfracks Estate - went onto the hills to feed his flock when he was confronted by two strange objects in the weak morning light. One was lower than the other but both were roughly oval with a hollow centre and numerous sparkling lights. Despite spending much time on those hills in all weather conditions and times of day and night he had never seen anything similar before. They hovered over a wood, but after about 5 minutes slowly and silently moved away. Neither RAF Leuchars (who had no aircraft up) nor the Aberdeen Met office could come up with an explanation. The weather was cloud free.



A completely independent report follows.

9510 30 January 1995 Worsley Green, Wigan

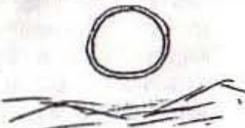
Over 200 miles south of the above remote Scottish-hill farm a Lancashire pensioner, Mr W, awoke at 05.00, as normal, and took a look through his window. In the darkened sky he saw a hovering object which was really odd. It was a bit like a brick with a fuzzy middle and a sparkling edge comprising many little lights. It had a reddish glow at the base. It just hung in the sky for ages and then a second identical object rose from the ground to join it. It reached a similar height to the first and both remained there until just before 06.00 when Mr W left them and went back to bed. At about 07.00 he got up again and the two objects were still there; although they had lost their square shape and seemed further away.

Obviously there seems much similarity between these two reports and the idea of an astronomical phenomenon involving stars and early morning planets (eg via frosty windows and poor eyesight) does occur. However, this would not apply in Scotland where the sun was up when the farmer witnessed his two objects. Equally - how many million people between Wigan and Perthshire were up and about between 05.00 and 08.00 that morning and could (nay, *should*) have seen these things? Over to you!

Hula hoop UFO

9511 8 February 1995 Perth, Scotland

Another sighting in this mini-wave in Perthshire occurred at the village of Stanley at around 16.30 when a man and some friends were driving. They spotted an object a bit like a giant hula-hoop in the sky. It was white and not unlike an aircraft vapour trail in appearance but about twice the size of the full moon. Although this ring shaped UFO is rare it has been reliably reported before (eg cases from Carlisle and Ramsey, Isle of Man, some years ago). I suspect it is an unusual meteorological



phenomenon, possibly unrecorded, but which could be classified if studied by professionals. Hopefully the *Journal of Meteorology* might be able to correlate known data. I intend to ask

9512 9 February 1995 St Cyrus, Scotland

Yet another case in the mini-wave from late January onward involved a woman on the coast at St Cyrus who had just seen her husband off to work at 06.30. Suddenly she heard a noise 'like flights of birds beating their wings' and she was baffled by this unfamiliar and loud sound. Looking out to sea she saw nothing, but the sound appeared to pass over the house, so she ran to the back and was just in time to catch sight of a glowing yellow mass shaped like a frisbee that was streaking at great speed inland. The area is frequented by military jets and helicopters, but this was not like any of those, she added. RAF Leuchars had no answer but admitted to the local press they had received another report and that the MoD would be in touch to get her to fill out a UFO form. With delicious irony that same day a local paper in Sussex quoted an MoD spokesman saying of a LITS seen there that the MoD do not keep any records of sightings!

9513 11 Feb 1995 Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

A man out with his dog at 06.30 watched a satellite fly overhead and then spotted a second one coming from the north and heading south. But it stopped and 'hid' within an arc of three stars, resting there for about 20 seconds before continuing its course. I talked to him about autokinesis and other illusions that satellite flightpaths can induce, but he was adamant this LITS definitely hovered - which, if so, rules out any obvious solution.

9514 13 February 1995 Allenton, Derbyshire

The triangular in the Derbyshire peaks struck again at 18.30 this night when two sisters spotted it hovering over their patio. It was visible for some six minutes with a diamond shaped pattern of lights and made a humming noise. It then sped away.

9515 15 February 1995 Ross on Wye, Hereford

A driver saw a red light at 19.30 flash from side to side across the sky and go to the far horizon in an instant. RAF were very cynical.

9516 16 February 1995 Hereford

Mrs R had just seen her husband leave for work at 00.30 when she spotted some blue flashes over her garage. At the same time, on his drive through open country Mr R saw them as well. I am not clear why this could not just be lightning.

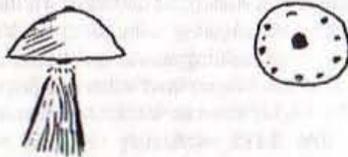
9517 16 February 1995 Huddersfield, W Yks

A man and wife were walking up Castle Hill at 22.00 when they spotted a red light over Farnley Tyas woods. She thought it might be a balloon as it continued to hover for 30 minutes. Then it split into two separate lights and shot into the sky, dispelling that idea. This is typical behaviour for Pennine LITS.

UFO sucks water from Mersey

9518 20 February 1995 Runcorn, Cheshire

This is a fascinating case, which is yet another strange one in that curious window area known as *Wonderland* (named after the Rev Charles Dodgson, aka Lewis Carroll - born amidst this small Cheshire Ufocal). According to *Fortean Times* 'expert' Peter Brookesmith this window is my invention, but the cases keep happening (see another intriguing case from Helsby last issue) - so I'd love to know how I arrange this! No matter, in this instance a 31 year old woman, Mrs C, was walking by the estuary on Ferry View Walk at Castlefields when she spotted what she took to be a street



light in the distance. It glowed orange in the early evening dark but did not seem to move and was too high for a lamp but too low for an aircraft from Speke airport. Several teenagers then passed by and saw what she was looking at. All stopped to stare and a boy of 10 in the group pointed out that a dark tube was coming from the base of the light and seemed to be entering the River as if sucking water up. After about 10 minutes of this the object moved towards Warrington (ie upriver) and then swung around in an arc heading back towards them. At this point they got a much better view of the object, which was oval and had turned so that its base was facing towards

them. On this base were half a dozen reddish lights inset in formation. The object, still completely silent, now moved away towards Helsby Hill and disappeared. It is fascinating to bear in mind that orange glows were crossing the Mersey at this point centuries ago and giving rise to legends about a firey dragon that lived in the woods of *Wonderland*. You can read of this legend in *Mysteries of the Mersey Valley* - a book which even shows a scene on the cover, beautifully painted by Jay Hurst, which by weird chance depicts this part of the Mersey, a glowing object overhead and a beam coming down from it straight into the River. Who said life does not imitate art. In *Wonderland*, seemingly anything is possible!

9520 12 March 1995 Kingsthorpe, Northants

Man spotted a white circular light high in the sky at 13.00. It was seen heading towards Far Cotton and then disappeared. The local Northants group are investigating.

9521 13 March 1995 Wincle, Cheshire

Mr G, a farmer in this isolated village spotted some white lights mid evening to the south over Congleton. He brought the family out and they watched them as well. He also called a neighbouring farm by phone and they went out to see the display. The lights were dancing around the sky and had a red/green colouration when viewed through binoculars. They were visible in the same location for about an hour. Next day he went to market at Chelford and called in at Jodrell Bank on the way home. They had no explanation, but consulted me and I proposed a solution. This was almost certainly a laser light show.

CASE HISTORY*A new twist in the Allingham affair*

The alleged alien contact between Cedric Allingham and a martian spacecraft in Scotland over 40 years ago has been the subject of perennial debate amongst UFOlogists. The book *Flying Saucer from Mars*, which resulted from it, was Britain's first of its type from a home grown 'contactee'.

The book was widely disregarded as a genial hoax but suffered a period of renewed fame a decade ago when claims surfaced that famed TV astronomer and noted UFO sceptic Patrick Moore somehow had a hand in it.

Moore has never publicly backed the hoax story and nobody has ever proven his connection with the tale, of course, but legends abound within UFOlogy. The 'clues' about this intriguing affair have featured in several articles in *Magonia* magazine (eg see my comments in *Old Moore's armour knack*).

However, there is a strange twist to the Allingham affair which has not been detailed before. It could well make one think again about the suggestion that this was a Moore inspired jape, caused by his irritation at US contactees of the day with absurd statements about alien life in our solar system.

I have said nothing about it before, in case independent confirmatory evidence appeared. It has not done as yet and so the time is right to tell you what I learned and let you judge for yourself. But it is important to remember that in October 1983, when I was told this story, there was no interest in the book. UFOlogists had long forgotten the Allingham case and about the only person who wrote of it was Patrick Moore.

At the time Peter Warrington and I had just written an article on UFOs for *New Scientist* (then quite a breakthrough) and I had a regular weekly series of shows with *Radio City* on Merseyside. My contact, Mr G, read the article, respected its sober approach and kept my address. Then he heard me on the radio and got up the courage to write. We corresponded for a short time and he shared his intriguing story.

This helps show that Mr G was no obvious crank. Indeed, a typical quote from him is: - *the whole subject and its research has now been placed on a proper scientific footing thanks to the tireless work of Dr J Allen Hynek and his fellow scientists... We do not need to accept blindly as true all the UFO data relating to their study, but we do need to study the available data, using legitimate scientific methods, in order to find that truth.* I think you can see he comes over as sensible.

Mr G told of his quiet investigations and how he had tracked down and interviewed Stephen Darbishire, the boy who took a photo of an Adamski-like UFO in February 1954 above Coniston, Cumbria. That case is still contentious. In 1991 Peter Hough and Harry Hudson of NARO tracked down and interviewed the now adult witness, who has stayed out of the UFO limelight for decades, and his widely disbelieved photograph took on new meaning as a result (see Peter

Hough's recent book *Supernatural Britain*, Piatkus, pp 6-10 for details).

What Mr G wrote in 1983 of his meeting with Darbishire suggests that he is telling the truth. If so, Andy Collins will be delighted to hear that he seemingly supported the Orgone energy theory and felt that his UFO could have been some kind of living force or creature rather than a type of craft.

Of course, if Mr G was being truthful about this case, what he had to say about the Allingham affair may also be very important. For he claims to be just about the only UFOlogist to have interviewed James Duncan, the mysterious other witness to the Allingham landing, whose apparent 'disappearance' was a key reason why the case was never taken seriously at the time.

This was especially true after Allingham took 'ill', 'left the country' and 'died' (so investigators were told) in the immediate wake of the release of his book.

Mr G refers to two meetings with Duncan, one in 1968 and the other in 1973 - both in a remote part of Scotland. He was helped to find the man by the post office. Duncan was 'a difficult person to communicate with', and reluctant to discuss his sighting.

The point is that, if the Allingham story was a hoax, as many had contended, it was supposed that Duncan was an invention of the book's author. Mr G claims otherwise.

However, interestingly, he had few good things to say about the author. Although a copy of *Flying Saucer from Mars* was in Duncan's local library and he was urged to comment by a local schoolteacher even before Mr G had asked him to read it, the man would not give Allingham's text the time of day.

Furthermore, he insisted that the only time he had seen Allingham after the sighting was when the man brought Duncan a statement to sign before leaving Scotland. Duncan did so to get rid of the man, but appears not to have read it and certainly did not write this text. That account later appeared in Allingham's book as a sworn affidavit, but Duncan's story differs markedly both from its contents and from Allingham's own tale.

According to Mr G this is what Duncan says took place. He *did* see a strange object land and an entity get out and then converse with Allingham. The UFO looked like a bell tent with a flat base and had a door that stayed open and also retractable steps.

However, the UFO was not shaped like Adamski's craft and Duncan saw

Allingham take no photographs of it, such as appear in the later book. Moreover, he insisted that the UFO was a Russian spy plane, just as the Russians used trawlers off the local coast which were actually full of surveillance gear!

The entity, Duncan says, was a normal human wearing a tight fitting one piece divers wetsuit. He was a 'big six footer' but not alien in any way. The conversation Allingham had attempted was spoken - and not made by telepathy, as the book had suggested.

The sighting ended when the entity saw Duncan looking on and scrambled back up the steps, the UFO taking off almost before he was fully through the open door. The UFO climbed up skyward with jets sending a swirl of sand spinning around the ground and causing Allingham to leap out of the way in panic. There were no leisurely goodbyes!

Mr G was puzzled as to why Allingham's book was so different and had concluded - long before the doubts about its authorship surfaced - that it was at fault, not Duncan's more sober story. He concluded that Allingham had submitted his tale to a publisher in London, who had seen its potential but then got someone to ghost write and flesh it out with exaggerations and pseudo-astronomical musings. This then used the current craze for contactee yarns.

This idea has an interesting kind of logic. But if Mr G is correct there really *was* an Allingham, a Duncan and a CE3 did occur at Lossiemouth in 1953 - even if rather less spectacular than the book might have inferred.

We may never know the truth, but it is fascinating trying to unravel this 40 year old mystery.

STOP THE PRESS

John Mack, the Harvard psychiatrist and abduction researcher, faces a possible legal battle to save his university post. A panel has been set up to assess whether his alien research and public appearances compromise the status of this venerable college.

Although not impressed with his abduction research book last year, this witch hunt is a travesty. Dr Mack is a sincere, caring man showing compassion for witnesses who are all too often dumped on by his peers. He deserves praise, not rebuke, for these actions.

Also his association with *Alien Discussions* (see earlier) amply shows scientific commitment and standards and should silence any doubters. I hope he makes fools of some of his pompous critics.

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SUMMER CONFERENCES

19/20 August 1995 Pennine Theatre University of Hallam, Sheffield *BUFORA international UFO congress with Leo Sprinkle, John Carpenter, Peter Robbins etc. Sponsored by SONY who will relaunch a version of Jeff Wayne's War of the Worlds album Details via SAE Congress 95 1 Woodhall Drive Batley W Yorks WF17 7SW*

26/27 August 1995 The Powerhouse Cardiff South Wales paranormal conference inc. John Mack, David Icke, Reg Presley, Busty Taylor, Jenny Randles. £25 for full conference (ticket sales close on 30 June) via K Blower 10 Glaslyn Ct Croesyceiliog Cwmbran Gwent NP44 2JE Tel: 01633 - 874983

Local groups in the north

Scotland

SPI 41 The Braes Tullibody Scotland FK10 2TT
SRUFO 129 Langton Vw East Calder EH53 0RE
SEMR 35 Fountain Rd Bridge of Allan FK9 4AU

North East

NUFORI 14 Loughirst Drive Newcastle NE13 6JW
CONNECT 5 Stocks Hill Menston Ilkley LS29 6ND

North West

NLUFOIG 89 Bare Lane Morecambe LA4 6RN
LAPIS 293 Devonshire Rd Blackpool FY2 0TW
NARO * 2 Grosvenor Rd Congleton CW12 4PG

(*NUFORI files with NARO - for access call 01942-604265)

North Midlands

PRA 94 The Circle Sinfu Derby DE24 9HR
GREEN DRAGON 24 Nab Hill Dr Leek ST13 8EE
EMUFORA 8 Roosa Close Nottingham NG6 7BL

South Midlands

PARASRCH 79 Sandringham Rd Stourbridge DY8 5HL
HURG 20 Ryelands Street Hereford HR4 0LU

Wales

FEDERATION Box 43 Rhyl Clwyd LL18 1YW