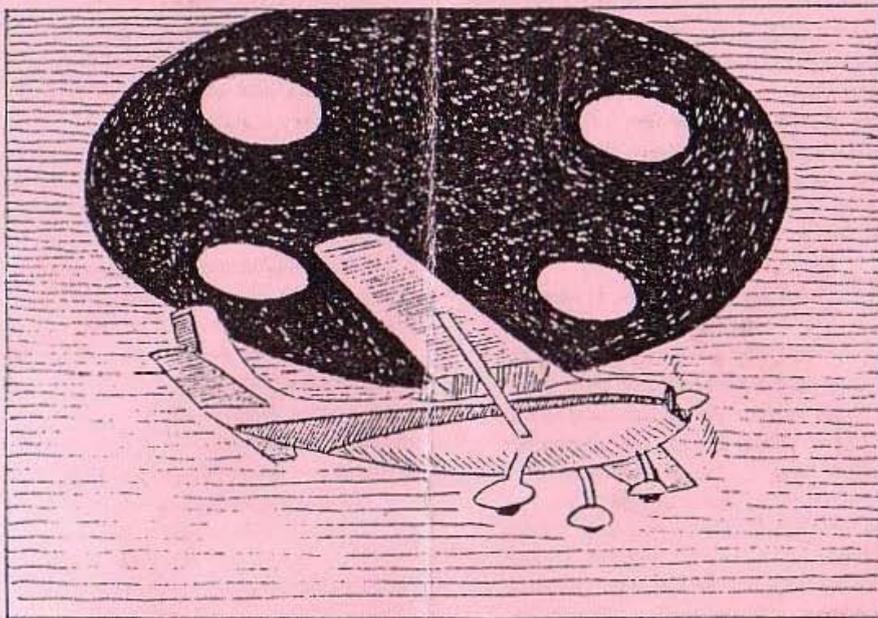


NORTHERN NEWS

UFO

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EDITOR: JENNY RANGLES

COVER DESIGN: ROY SANDBACH

Address: 11 Pike Court Fleetwood Lancashire FY7 8QF

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J.R. Comments...

Last summer I was approached out of the blue by a BBC producer and asked did I want to make a serious documentary about UFOs - no strings - a prime time TV slot. Just one catch. There would be virtually no money to make it with... What do you think I said!

Britain's Secret UFO Files is the outcome of this nine month long project and it will be on your screens on *Thursday 11 April 1996 (8pm, BBC-2)*. It is part of a new series entitled 'Secrets of the Supernatural', which will also include films made by Uri Geller, Matthew Manning and other paranormal researchers about their areas of work.

Obviously this was a fantastic opportunity. It isn't every day that UFOlogists are offered half an hour of nationwide air time to make a programme of their choice - especially not for one of the best known TV companies in the world. So it had to be planned very carefully.

The limitations of what I was up against only really became apparent as things progressed. I was given a lightweight camera, asked to take it everywhere and film what happened. This was just to get me used to the medium. But it produces a home camcorder feel to the proceedings. That is unsurprising as the six-week series is made by the same arm of the BBC in London which produces 'Video Diaries' - where folk wander around filming their day to day lives on Hi 8 format and then try to make a watchable film out of all this.

Some of those taking part in the series must have been tempted to go for a 'day in the life' format - especially as the BBC budget was minute and the pay they were offering to make the programme barely more than any of us would get for just a 10 minute appearance on a TV chat show! It is hard to commit yourself to months of solid work for that return - and so money certainly isn't a factor in the decision to say yes.

However, I believed it would have been a waste of this opportunity just to make a programme looking at me and what I got up to as a UFOlogist. It would have been very self indulgent when here was a chance to make a real programme. So - within the restraints placed on us by the fact that I had a crew of just one BBC person to help me day to day and a budget that might keep the Sooty Show going for maybe 30 seconds - I asked to make a proper documentary about an aspect of UFOlogy that needed serious media treatment.

Luckily the idea was approved and weeks of planning, research, filming, interviews and the like were set in motion. I had some great help from the UFO community and it was an intriguing experience to see television from this side of the camera lens.

Very early on I realised that in 29 minutes there is a limit to what you can achieve. So I decided to be very selective as to the purpose of the programme. Rather than attempt to prove that UFOs are real or to argue that they are this, that or the other, it was agreed that we should effectively sidestep such issues. Instead we ask what the British government know about UFOs behind their closed doors and try to hunt out those secret files which would imply that the powers-that-be still take UFOs very seriously indeed.

This inevitably leads to the conclusion that something is going on, without having to rely on sightings of lights in the sky or dubious photographs. Viewers would, hopefully, conclude that if the British government continued to expend taxpayers money on UFO investigation 40 years after first tackling the mystery then that clearly implied they do not consider them to be a waste of time. This might make the point to some people better than a dozen UFOlogists pleading for their case to be heard or a hundred witnesses seeing bright lights on the way home from the Dog and Duck.

Whether the plan works or not, time will tell. I have no idea what the finished product is like from any objective standpoint because I am too embroiled within it. I know there are mistakes and things that could have been done better - with more time, money, back-up from media personnel who know what they are doing, etc. But it has been an honest attempt to make a UFO programme unlike any other - one that treats the viewer as an intelligent observer able to decide for themselves what the facts seem to imply.

The purpose of the programme is to assess what the MoD did, still does and how it uses its UFO material. This meant trawling through the official archives, hunting files, looking for other locations where secret stores may be - and the like. But we illustrate our quest with two specific cases which are relatively new to TV and yet researchable through the official record.

These are the Lakenheath radar visual of August 1956 and the famous photograph on Burgh Marshes near Carlisle in May 1964. Both were theoretically accessible thanks to the 30 year rule releasing UFO data.

I can tell you that we made intriguing progress on both stories during the filming and the aspects of the programme that cover each case add new knowledge to UFOlogy, I believe. I will have more to say on that in the next issue as my BBC contract limits what I can say until after the programme is aired.

It is possible that the series will be screened in other countries as the BBC are to market it for that purpose. A later repeat, perhaps on BBC-1, is also possible. But meantime, if you can, tune in or set your video (watching TV listings mags in case there is any last minute change to the schedules - as there may well be if something earth-shattering - like a football match - crops up).

Then let me know what you think. No whitewash, please. Don't be afraid of hurting my feelings. I would really like to know what I did right (if anything) and, more importantly, what I did wrong. This could benefit any future TV projects - so here is your chance to play TV critic. A selection of your comments in the next issue - good and bad!

MoD do not rule out extraterrestrials!

Yes, you read the headline correctly. As part of my filming I tried to persuade the MoD to grant an interview on current policy, but their present occupant at Air Staff 2A was not willing to face the cameras and explain to taxpayers what they were doing. An intensive 'discussion' between myself and the MoD was filmed (but not used in the final edit). However, we did squeeze an on-the-record written statement out of them.

This had the usual spiel about investigating only for defence implications but added an intriguing new phrase. I was told that the MoD had no '*direct interest, expertise or role in respect of UFO/flying saucer matters, or those relating to the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain totally open-minded.*'

I had to do a double-take as well. Extraterrestrials had never been mentioned by me in conversation with the MoD. Yet they seem to want to stress for the first time how open minded they are - inferring that they could be out there - or even down here!

What next? A channeled statement via the cabinet that - 'we cannot yet tell where UFOs come from. Our friends on zeta reticuli are still asking the neighbours?'

News Round-Up:

:: More TV goodies to watch out for include the world's first series about UFOs. Being filmed across the world right now for the Discovery satellite network it has a huge budget and will run for four hours. Whilst it will have a US flavour, because of the funding, it is being put together by a British company and there is planned to be a good global spread to the research. Certainly, what I have seen from my involvement to date augers very well indeed. Don't rule out a terrestrial channel in the UK picking up the rights, given the very tiny audience for Discovery here. More next issue on this great series, I hope.

:: *Strange but True?* is also coming back for a third 10 week series in the autumn and I am promised there will be more UFO coverage this time, as the two UFO segments (Rendlesham & Pilot Encounters) have gathered the best ratings to date. Any great ideas for stories on any aspect of the supernatural would be welcome. Filming should start in April; although there are plans to alter the title slightly this time around.

:: As if these were not enough, the TV fascination with the paranormal seems never ending. More '*Paranormal World of Paul McKenna*' discussion and show-me type programmes are planned for 1997. The BBC pilot two years ago of a studio/film based rival to *Strange but True?* (called *Out of this world*) has belatedly been commissioned as a series and is in pre-production right now. The three part BBC series on why people believe in the paranormal has been delayed until June, but will follow *Secrets of the Supernatural* on BBC-2. There is bound to be more to come.

:: A really great idea for a TV pilot has been commissioned by a network and already filmed by the same company who created the challenging cerebral game shows 'Treasure Hunt' and 'Crystal Maze'. This time they take a paranormal mystery, gather together a bunch of disparate experts and sceptics, unite them at the focus of the event for a few days and ask them to investigate the case - using whatever methods they think will work best. Both a ghost and a UFO encounter were treated in this fashion for the pilot. Amidst a glut of similar series this sounds like a real winner to me. If there's any justice it will be on your screens very soon.

A response to the debate in issue 171 follows:

Down the Commercial Road

by Mike Wootten

The format and content of BUFORA's recent International Congress has raised serious questions as to where the Association is leading itself as an objective research organisation. Jenny Randles has certainly opened a very important debate (editorial NUN 171) with regard to the use of marketing techniques and by asking if commercialism damages the traditional role of BUFORA and ufology in general. A line has to be drawn, but where?

As a marketing professional working within the telecommunications industry, I often find that some of the views expressed within the UFO community rather naive when it comes to raising money in a free market. It is my view that ufology (especially in the UK) is bereft of proper finance to conduct meaningful research. So allow me to put the case for commercialism and show the possible benefits it will bring.

The UFO subject gets more complex as time goes by and it is usually being investigated by a group of people who are quite frankly out of their depth. In this age of abductions it is no longer acceptable for an individual to turn up at the witness' door step with a GCSE in psychology, clutching a copy of *Intruders* and expect to find any worthwhile answers. We need professionals to support our work and guide us amateurs through the murky depths of the mind and perception.

It is also important that we take control of our hard earned evidence and use it. Generally we are horders of information, closely guarding our case files like a stamp collection. To advance investigation and research to more professional levels takes finance. Finance to pay for analysis and consultancy. Finance to pay for the technology to bring the data together for all to assess.

What has gone wrong? There is money to be earned out of UFOs. Since Kenneth Arnold that is one thing that hasn't changed within the subject in nearly 50 years. So where has it all gone?

It certainly hasn't gone to UFO research organisations, but to authors of books, writers of documentaries, TV companies, film producers and directors. Anybody and everybody bar those who actually need the money.

As a ufologist who has been active for some 16 years, I want to see a change in our fortunes. Over a year ago I was asked to prepare a report to see where BUFORA could improve its effectiveness in all its departments. In that report I suggested that to reach any of our goals, the Association had to be placed on a firm financial footing and also be supported by a stronger membership base.

In the past we all thought that if we were good, objective and critical, the scientific community would let us join their club. Well, although it has worked in one or two instances, we are still out in the cold. Scorned, probably for an eternity, in the wastelands of scientific endeavour. The way to change this is to be able to pay for the work needed to be done. You know the saying, "Money talks, bull**** walks."

So, how should we make our fortune and how far can we go? A very good case study is the BUFORA Congress itself that your editor so eloquently reduced to the worst congress ever staged in the UK. I could not disagree more. It was a triumph not only for BUFORA but for all ufologists in the UK.

I will not put you through a long diatribe to explain why, only a few bulletpoints will suffice.

- A professional university venue with excellent facilities
- 13 keynote speakers - 11 from overseas - 4 from the scientific community with PhD's
- The first presentations in the UK by a Russian delegation
- Value for money - £18.00 for two full days (£1.38 per presentation)
- A properly presented, research based proceedings
- Wide media coverage
- And a profit for BUFORA

The calibre of lectures were very high indeed with the vast majority presenting serious objective topics.

The difference with this Congress was that we included the Santilli film as an exclusive viewing and arranged sponsorship with Sony Music/Columbia Records who paid for the travelling expenses of the Russian delegation. The sponsorship was very important. In the early planning stages it was vital that BUFORA did not lose money at this event (as it has at almost every previous Congress). Sony gave us a cushion to ensure we succeeded.

There was obvious synergy with the congress and the launch of Jeff Waynes digital remix of *War of the Worlds*. Sony had NO control over the content or any other facet of the congress. It was a good deal.

It is naive to suggest that the sponsorship caused any credibility problems for the congress. Indeed, the opposite was true. None of the Sony publicity intruded (as your editor suggests) in any way shape or form. In my view as a marketing professional, the sponsorship was low key and did not tie our hands in any way.

We also charged stall holders for their pitches in the exhibition area and advertising in 'delegate bags', etc. We wanted to ensure that we gained the maximum benefit from this event. And we did.

You may be saying, "So what." Well, the profit from the congress did not go into any individual's pocket, which makes a welcome change. A democratic, research orientated association finally made a profit from the subject and now the fun begins. Once we realised that the congress was to be a sell out, we immediately agreed that the money raised would go directly to research & investigation and to serve ufology in the UK.

Specific proposals are already in the pipeline. BUFORA has invested some money to launch the first British World Wide Web site on the Internet. *BUFORA On-Line** will house all, yes all, our 6000 case reports for unlimited access (no witness details though) along with research reports, analysis and general articles. We will also include a listing of all the local groups in the UK and give them the opportunity to add their own information on the site for free. This will serve all of ufology - in the UK and abroad.

We also want to tackle the problems of photographic analysis in the UK. Usually, this kind of work is sent abroad. We want to change that and give us all (not just BUFORA) the opportunity to have analysis work completed in this country financed by BUFORA.

Finally, I would like some of the money to be set aside and made available for local groups via a grant system. This would help to support local R&I initiatives.

So from a bit of marketing and commercial awareness, BUFORA has been able to organise a professional congress. We have also made a profit, which will support many projects in the future that reflect the Association's original aims and objectives. The very same aims your editor holds so dear.

BUFORA will continue in this same vein with no apology. However, it is vital that we do not run away with the idea. There are obvious dangers and a line has to be drawn somewhere. There will not be a situation where a future congress will be sponsored by 'Daz' or UFOCall sponsored by 'Tesco'.

Synergy is the important by-word and content control is the maxim. Whatever commercial projects BUFORA will embark on, objectivity and critical analysis will always be evident. However, we will not shy away from controversial areas. As Jenny, Quest and others in touch with the commercial world should understand, controversy pays.

* *BUFORA is already On-Line*
<http://www.citadel.co.uk/citadel/eclipse/futura/bufora/bufora.htm>

mwootten@dial.pipex.com © M.Wootten

Editors response: I found this an excellent and stimulating reply from someone in BUFORA's hierarchy whom I have always respected. I should add, for those who care to check issue 171, that I did not regard the Sheffield conference as the worst ever. I said it was a huge financial success but expressed my grave reservations about the sponsorship aspect. Whilst the Sony deal led to placards on stage, BUFORA staff wandering around with 'War of the World' T-shirts and logos from the album adorning the conference proceedings (which you may term low-key - as Mike does - or think rather less so, as I fear) - my real concern was over the issue that Mike virtually ignores - the Roswell film footage and the way BUFORA sold itself to that crock to cram in the punters. My question must be - is it justifiable that BUFORA should make big money from what to me is the highly suspect practice of giving that film a platform and thus provoking the impression that UFOlogy took it seriously enough to make it the focal point of its key conference? It is good news that BUFORA intends to use money earned for causes that may benefit others. I applaud that move. But then UFO Call, which I write and record for BUFORA each week, has earned several thousand pounds per annum in bonus profit for a few years now. I don't get paid a fee for this job - and some might ask how BUFORA has spent its fair sized windfall? Is magnanimity in the wake of Sheffield at least in part to calm criticism from the UFO world? And do these highly admirable ends justify some doubtful means?

FOR YOUR PERUSAL

Major articles elsewhere

Enigmas Feb 96 £11.50 for 5

41 The Braes Tullibody Scotland FK10 2TT
Reviews the January Falkirk conference - over 500 there, plus a look at problems with Scottish video footage of UFOs.

UFO Times Dec 95 With sub

BM BUFORA London WC1N 3XX

A special effects expert who worked on Batman gives an opinion on the infamous film

Awareness 20/4 £9 for 4 Contact UK

11 Ouseley Close Oxford OX3 0JS

Like everyone else this dissects the Roswell film. But the real bonus is its annual UFO REGISTER, this one covering 1981, which is a statistical catalogue of all UFO reports in the UK in that year. This is a superb service that Bernard Delair and CONTACT have long provided but one too few have recognised.

Pegasus £8 for 4 from SIGAP

126 Grange Rd Guildford Surrey GU2 6QP

Thirty years old this year and a good issue to celebrate. A look at Bob Lazar and the CIA and an old SIGAP case from 25 years back. Plus an annotated booklist of 'top reads'

OVNI Dec 95/Feb 96 £12 for 12 via PRA

94 The Circle Sinfyn Derby DE24 9HR

Reviews 1995 and looks at recent triangles - that UFO type that seems to be taking over!

UFO Network 6 £8 for 4 from UFON UK

88 Whincover Drive Leeds LS12 5JT

I had the pleasure of meeting Peter Cliffe and his family (along with Nigel Mortimer) recently. They reflect everything that is good about grassroots UFOlogy - chasing cases in their spare time, informing the public via local newssheets like this. If you're in Yorkshire do give your support.

EMUFORA Winter 96 £5 for 4

8 Roosa Close Bulwell Notts NG6 7BL

This has become a lively little magazine with lots of variety. Here - how to interest folk in UFOs. A visit to Rudloe Manor, the top secret base. Plus an update of things going on in Gulf Breeze, Florida (where I bet it isn't snowing)

World UFO Journal 10 No price given

16 Newton Grn Gt Dunmow Essex CM6 1DU

Another long look at the infamous autopsy. Plus reports from around the world.

IUR Winter 95 (CUFOS) \$30 US for 6

2457 W Peterson Ave Chicago IL 60659

Updates events (other than the film!) regarding Roswell. The famed Cisco Grove CE3 appraised. Plus the USAF and its UFO investigation methods reviewed.

MUFON Journal Nov 95 \$30 US for 12

103 Oldtowne Rd Seguin TX 78155-4099

A Wright Patterson air force base historian reviews the Roswell case evidence.

Fortean Times 84 & 85 £2.20 in shops

Freepost SW6096 Frome Somerset BA11 1YA

Last two issues before it goes monthly in April. Number 84 has strange sonic booms in Italy under the spotlight, plus the Morgana hoax of the Roswell hoax (!) 85 is first with a new design and lots more colour. Has an episode guide to the Fortean in the X-Files TV series plus Peter Brookesmith succinctly ripping to bits the alien baby legends.

Dead of Night 7 No price given

156 Bolton Rd E New Ferry L62 4RY

Rather like FT - in that it covers a bit of everything. Strong UFO content is typical - here lots on Roswell, of course, plus a dubious video from Norfolk where the 'shape' is a video lens effect - not of the UFO. Sorry chaps

Annals 26 £7 for 4 to G Lovell

4G Preston Manor Glastonbury BA6 8JQ

Similar in some ways to the above but it is very well designed and the items are brilliantly edited and packaged. Spots on UFOs, crop circles, alien animals and the like most issues. Its a darned good quarterly read.

PSI Researcher Feb 96 £7.95 for 4 via SPR

49 Marloes Rd Kensington London W8 6LA

The SPRs better journal - always full of paranormal cases and discussions. This features a debate between Kevin McClure and yours truly on the nature of abductions.

The Ley Hunter 124 £5.80 for 3

PO Box 258 Cheltenham GL53 0HR

Paul Devereux shocks by quitting as editor (although he stays in another capacity) He will focus on book other writing and research projects. Danny Sullivan from GEM takes over and will undoubtedly do a splendid job, but Paul should be recognised by UFOlogy for his quite superb work in boosting serious research during the past 20 years. His TLH editorship will be sadly missed as an antidote to our excesses. I am glad his own research goes on.

Journal of Meteorology £28 for 10

54 Frome Rd Bradford on Avon BA15 1LD
Those who thought Dr Terence Meaden had disappeared, think again. J Met may not have much on crop circles these days but often covers ball lightning events and research - perhaps even more UFO relevant.

Aura Z Vol 2-1 50 Swiss F for 4 via AESV

Case Postale 25 CH1800 Vevey Switzerland
Always fascinating Russian mag (in English) with plenty of UFO cases and articles based on decades of secret Soviet research. Here light effects and statistics create two main papers.

Phenomena 168 French F for 6

SOS Ovni BP 324 13611 Aix Cedex 1 France
An excellent French language journal with 4pp English summary. Detailed look at how that autopsy film was presented by TF1 - the French TV station that bought rights. Some dramatic negative evidence is alleged, eg that the microphone seen in shot was not made before 1955. TF 1 seem to have done a far better job than Channel 4 did at its study.

CIRCULAR LOGIC

It is always a quiet time during the winter as new crops prepare to appear. But the two major circle mags do not hibernate.

The Circular 23 (£15 for 4 and CCCS membership via Hillview Abbots [Ann Andover SP11 7BA]) continues its glossy photo catalogues of circles - even if most of them are surely hoaxes. This seems to be filtering through to consciousness with articles in this issue on public awareness, where do we go now? and circles as art forms. However, the CCCS bravely continues its investigations of individual cases. There is a report here of the 1995 crop in Lancashire (more than I expected there to be) and discussions of the Scorpion pattern (believers should watch out for its sting), dowsing experiments and a photo of a UFO (or bird, or speck of dust, or whatever) taken above a circle. An enjoyable and sensible read.

The Crop Watcher 26 (£6 for 4 from 3 Selbourne Ct Tavistock Close Romsey SO51 7TY) maintains Paul Fullers totally objective stance over these matters. There's a circle in reeds on water, rings on a Welsh mountain in 1976 and other historical data - eg a full analysis of a 1906 horror story with circle motifs embedded. Fascinating stuff.

EM Update

Albert Budden has had a few things to say about my review of his recent Cassell book (*UFOs: The electromagnetic indictment*) proposing an EM theory in connection with the hypersensitivity of certain witnesses. The result being hallucinatory 'alien contacts' triggered by these physical processes.

As I thought I made clear in that review (NUN 171) I have always regarded this as important research - and, as with the many steps upon which it is built (eg those by Lagarde, Devereux and Persinger) Albert's research is illuminating one key explanation for the UFO mystery. I do not think it is the answer to everything and am sure there is a way to go yet to develop this theory, but it a prospect that I believe UFOlogy should support and all researchers should keep an eye on Budden's ongoing investigations.

So, if you did not understand me to have said as much from my review of his book, I trust that you do understand me now.

In his irregular review *The Steady Signal* Albert is continuing to update events in this field. I warmly recommend this at £9 for 6 via *Discovery Times Press (17 Brook Rd South Brentford TW8 0NN)*

Issue 4 has an interesting discussion of a witness in Wales whom was diagnosed as suffering from temporal lobe epilepsy as a result of her visionary experiences. Albert suggests these may be tied in with her earlier proximity to an overhead power line.

In my research I have come across several cases of CE4s where the witness saw a doctor because of their episodes of strange phenomena (including alien abduction). The diagnosis of temporal lobe epilepsy was mooted more than once. Clinical psychologist Dr Moisha Kalman - who has worked with Peter Hough and I on a recent book about near death vision and who is presently writing a book with Peter on alien abductions tells me this is a valid hypothesis in some instances.

A couple of these cases are discussed in my book *Star Children* and I am sure there are others out there. Of course, the question is whether the epilepsy diagnosis (known to provoke temporary losses of consciousness, or time lapses, and incite bizarre but vivid hallucinations) is the true answer to various other CE4s or whether cases assumed to be triggered by this illness, usually without strong medical evidence to support that opinion, are really something else.

One witness told me that she even underwent shock treatment which simply made her time lapse blackouts worse and provoked migraines (another common symptom of *star children*). She only came to terms with what was happening when she found a framework into which to slot her visionary experiences (both Spiritualism and alien abductions worked for her). Here, at least, the medical diagnosis - right or wrong - did nothing to help the patient, whereas a UFO construction did.

However, obviously there is a crucial clue to be gained from our knowledge about the shared characteristics of witnesses to the most intense CE4s (those I call *star children* - even if my book has been ridiculed and termed 'Jenny Randles Mein Kampf' by one reviewer!)

Aside from the epilepsy/migraine clue (which I first discussed in *Abduction* in 1988) there are other significant factors. These include the very early life recall, the balls of light in the bedroom seen as a young child (what I call *psychic toys*) and the humming/buzzing noise/sensation that many report - eg in the bedroom late at night.

Albert Budden would certainly regard this as evidence of what he terms an *electroform* at work. Persinger might say it is an invisible *transient* operating in the bedroom. Either way it must be very closely linked to the (seemingly unrelated) phenomenon of the humadruzz.

Now this environmental humming from out of nowhere has been around for longer than UFOs have. I first investigated a case in Manchester 30 years ago (see *Mysteries of the Mersey Valley*) and there was even a government investigation in the 1960's (see chapter in *The Encyclopedia of the Unexplained* by Peter Hough and I). I suspect that this is another clue that ties the humming/buzzing sound frequently reported with UFO encounters into electromagnetic theories such as those proposed by Persinger and Budden. It shows that UFO cases do not always have to involve UFOs to be important.

Here is a new report that could be relevant.

The hills are humming

Maurice Giffin from Gwynedd has read *Crop Circles* (by Paul Fuller and myself) - in which we discuss a number of EM cases and cite the humming/buzzing sound in connection with them.

As an electrical engineer in the Barmouth area he wanted to report the puzzle of 'several sites, where on warm, sunny afternoons when the wind is light a humming sound emanates from the ground'. He adds that 'at its peak there is an accompanying aerial sussuration like the wingbeats of myriad insects.'

UFOlogists are long familiar with this sound, of course. Indeed, Mr Giffin, who has collected reports from this part of Wales says that witnesses most commonly liken the noise to a 'swarm of bees' - which is probably the most frequent expression of any UFO sound that has been offered over the years.

The events began one sunny afternoon in June 1992 (a year during which humadruzz phenomena were active worldwide - see my book *The Paranormal Year*). MG first heard the sound as he walked down Llawlech Ridge near Talybont. He searched for the bee swarm he believed to be responsible but found nothing. However, following trained procedures he moved out in a spiral and discovered that at a radius of about 100 feet the sound almost totally disappeared. Two walkers passed by and confirmed that they could hear the sound as well. There were no objects which could have been resonating in the wind. The buzzing appeared to come from the ground itself. MG's compass was not effected and the sound faded as the afternoon wore on. Between 4 pm and 4.30 pm it tailed off to almost nothing. By the evening there was no sound at all.

Some days later MG returned and using a low noise amplifier managed to record the hum. His meters also read emissions even pointing upwards.

Further investigations during the summers of 1993 and 1994 showed that the sound was at its most intense on very warm, dry days - when a radius of almost 1000 feet was detected.

In 1994 MG discovered two further humming spots - these at Cors y Gedol and Cell Fawr. All three sites were linked by the same contour and the passage of a geological fault - none of which would be any surprise to UFOlogists knowledgeable about the EM school of thought. GM believes that the relevance of contour (it is the 270 metre mark) is that here 'lies the region of steepest change in the gravitational force in the area.'

Without apparently knowing it this engineer was discovering in the field the very phenomena that UFOlogists have long debated to explain earthlights.

In 1995 new sites were reported to MG by other witnesses. These all follow the pattern. The most northerly is at Portmeirion - famed, of course, as the village featured in the TV series *The Prisoner*. What neat irony that it should now sport this new mystery.

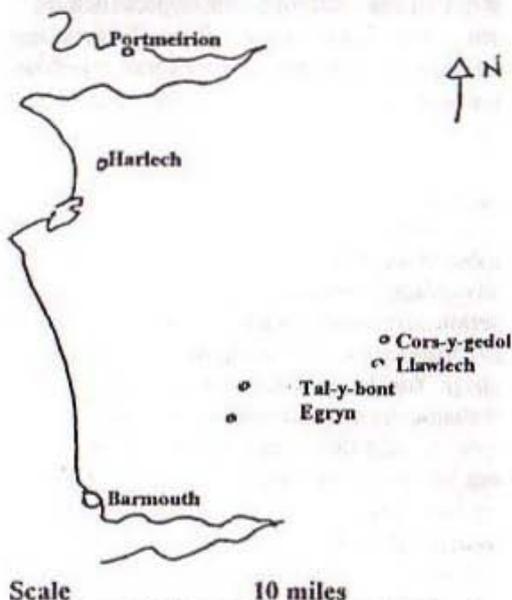
MG has some fascinating ideas about what is happening. He notes how the hum only occurs between mid May and mid September (the same as the crop circle season) and during sunny, stable weather with a light on-shore breeze. He suspects that an 'airborne charge is carried to the heights, giving rise to a counter current flowing downhill seawards - probably encountering a geological interface.'

Of course, MG seems unaware of the earthlight links, the UFO episodes or the greater phenomenon of the humadruzz itself. All these things may well be inter-related.

Astute readers will have already spotted the fact that this area around Barmouth was the home of the famous Egryn lights earlier in this century - around which the Welsh religious revival developed (see Kevin McClure's excellent study - *Stars and rumours of stars* - or the summary in Paul Devereux's *Earthlights Revelation*). There have also been reports of a sea monster off the coast at Barmouth. So this very rural, almost uninhabited spot is a bit of a window area.

Together here we seem to have the key to an important clue about the UFO mystery - and one which has come via a case without any obvious UFO links at all.

This a great testament to how we need to think laterally around problems and seek our evidence far and wide.



Manchester Mid-Air - Case Solved?

Readers of NUN last year will recall our report on the British Airways jet in-bound to Manchester Airport on 6 January 1995. The two-man crew had a brief sighting of a UFO as they descended above the Pennines on final approach to the airport.

Of all the recent mid-air encounters (there have been perhaps a dozen in the UK since 1991) this is one of the weakest for several reasons. Yet it has generated a phenomenal level of media interest, partly fuelled by Philip Mantle of BUFORA going on about 'silent Vulcans' and the 'Pennine Corridor'. This surfaced in early February 1996 when the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) released their incident report to the media.

To recap - the aircraft was a British Airways Boeing 737 on flight BA 5061 from Milan to Manchester. It was 18.48 on 6 January last when the jet was descending through 4000 feet east south east of Ringway around the Derbyshire/Cheshire border (eg roughly over Whalley Bridge/New Mills). The 737 flew north ready to make its final turn over Stockport and head into runway 24.

It was dark with a good visibility and the jet was just above thick cloud. This is very important as it explains why nobody on the ground could possibly have seen the UFO.

Suddenly the pilot and first officer (who have refused all requests for interviews) saw an 'object' come towards them (from the north west) and pass to their right. The first officer ducked out of the way fearing a collision. Neither witness saw the object for more than 2 seconds, making estimates about its shape at best rather dubious. The object was clearly travelling at phenomenal speed.

The shape was said to be like a wedge and light in colour, but possibly with a dark stripe. Despite being certain this was a real craft in very close proximity to the aircraft no wake or turbulence was reported. Also none of the passengers reported anything - and - given the publicity for the story when it first happened last year and the even more extensive coverage in 1996 - it is virtually certain that had one of them been a witness we would know it by now.

The CAA investigated the incident by phoning the crew. The pilot was adamant that the object was lit 'like a Christmas tree'. The first officer differed, thinking it reflected their landing lights. Neither knew how close it was but they felt danger of a collision was present.

All CAA investigations assumed that the object was an aircraft and examined options such as microlites (absurd under the circumstances) and stealth military jets. Interestingly, the pilot had seen stealth and was adamant this was not it.

It is very apparent from their full report that the CAA never even considered what I believe to be far and away the most likely explanation for this sighting. That is that it was a fireball meteor.

Why do I say this? Because the object was not on radar alongside the jet. If it was a real aircraft at a similar height then it should have been. Yet a meteor would have been travelling too fast and at too great a height to be on radar. If it was miles high in the atmosphere and heading toward them it is perfectly understandable how the crew would have reported exactly what they did.

Indeed, there is considerable similarity between this case and the Montgomery, Alabama episode from 1948 when an Eastern Airlines crew had a head-on encounter with what was also very probably a fireball meteor. On that occasion skies were clear and the meteor was seen from the ground by another witness. In the Manchester case no ground observers could have seen this bolide because of the cloud cover.

Other clues to note are the speed, shape and motion (all consistent with a meteor) - and the fact that between mid December and mid January there had been several other reports of bright fireballs suggesting that the earth was passing through a debris field (related perhaps to the break-up of the Shoemaker-Levy comet some months before).

At the very least the meteor hypothesis is a valid theory to work with in this case and - in my view - more likely than a secret aircraft cavorting at 4000 feet over one of the most densely trafficked flight corridors in Europe. The CAA presumably just never thought of it or assumed that their pilots described exactly what was present and worked from that. But we know from all previous studies of such events (eg the infamous Cosmos 1068 episode on New Years Eve 1978) that most witnesses under those circumstances describe such phenomena as aircraft and interpret behind the lights a shape that is simply not present. This in no way belittles the credibility of the witnesses nor diminishes their perceptual abilities. It is a fact of life and a lesson that experienced UFO investigators learn as they go along.

So then why was there such a fuss about this case? It is certainly intriguing that the CAA in their report mention '*extra-terrestrial activity*' as an explanation and refer to UFOlogists - adding '*fascinating though it may be, (this possibility) is not within the (Air Miss) Groups remit and must be left to those whose interest lies in that field.*' But this is just speculation - not informed judgement. The fact is that the most probable explanation was never given consideration by the CAA or the media. They rushed to judge this a UFO!

What of Philip Mantle's 'Silent Vulcan' and 'Pennine Corridor'? The Silent Vulcan was a name coined in 1978 for sightings in Leicestershire of triangular UFOs which, retrospectively, were probably early stealth tests. It was used widely by NUN at the time, but I have not heard it mentioned in many years and seems an anachronism. Similarly, whilst there is a window area in the Pennines, it is curious to turn this into a corridor stretching south towards Birmingham (as one map did). A window by definition has to be a narrow area of space. One that covers half of England is worthless and risks the Bermuda Triangle factor - where, of course, you are going to find lots of strange disappearances if you extend its boundaries far enough so that it covers most of the Atlantic Ocean. The same caveat must apply here.

The massive publicity about this case has been extraordinary. BBC and ITV national news. Front page serious newspaper stories. Considering the witnesses have never been interviewed this is amazing. Instead we have seen UFOlogists trying to push this dubious case as if it were good evidence of something truly strange. UFOlogists including some whom I feel should know better - eg Eric Morris (who appeared several times on TV discussing the case). Even Nick Pope from the MoD seems to back it, perhaps by default, in a major *Daily Mail* story that is also plugging his forthcoming book.

It is not that the media were unaware of the facts. Both BBC television and the *Daily Mail* knowingly ignored the meteor solution to this case and, thus, in my view, misled the British public. I just hope that UFOlogists around the world think about this case more carefully before judging.

I add that I am not trying to shoot down all cases of mid-air encounters. There have been many in the past five years more important than this. I am certain something worrying is going on. But this case is, I fear, simply not worth such levels of concern.

BOOKS OF THE MOMENT

Unidentified Aerial Object photographed near Zweischbergen, Switzerland

Wim Van Utrecht and Frits Van der Veldt

Illus 226 pp published by Caelestia, 1995

£15 or 780 Belgian F (Cash or international money order only) via Wim Van Utrecht Kronenburgstraat 110 B-2000 Antwerpen

Wow! That is the word which best comes to mind to describe this fantastic new book from Belgium. It is worth every penny, if you can afford it, and it is not very often you can say that about a UFO book.

Produced privately - not that you would know it given its superb quality - this lavish book has mountains of transcripts, maps, lucid text, numerous illustrations and your own postcard sized sharp colour print of the photo under discussion. There is even an index - and despite the fact that the book is from a Belgian investigation into a case that occurred in Switzerland (in July 1976) it is written in very good English.

The project that has allowed the funding of this case history (meant to be the first in a series) is to be warmly applauded and must be supported by all serious UFOlogists. This is a detailed study of one case investigation, minus the commercial touches that would be necessary if a publishing house brought it forth. Not that any publisher would dream of devoting a full book to a single case which - whilst interesting to UFOlogists - is not the most dramatic event on the face of the earth and would not sell bundles in a shop.

This is no abduction or invasion of a secret air base. It is just a clear daylight disc photograph - of the unusual sort (like McMinnville, Oregon) which is either important evidence of an exotic craft or an outright hoax. It is one Dr J Allen Hynek was reportedly very impressed by. This first-rate case investigation lets you be the judge and provides all the information you might need.

There is little more to say except that if UFOlogy stopped bickering and playing its never-ending ego games, suspended pointless conferences and media one-upmanship for a year and instead concentrated on turning its best evidence into more case history books like this then we would go a long, long way towards raising the scientific credibility of the subject.

This is my candidate for UFO book of the year - by miles.

Fortean Studies Volume 2

Edited by Steve Moore 320pp £19.99 John Brown Publishing

The second annual edition from the Fortean Times book publishing arm is like an extended version of the magazine. Imagine a book chock full of the best research articles you might find in that monthly journal covering a huge range of mysterious phenomena. But this is no reprint. Every article in here is original and newly compiled. Its like Christmas come early for FT fans.

Highlights, UFO wise, are a large analysis of aerial lightwheel cases by Michael Shoemaker, complete with statistics and facts and figures and a brilliant in-depth look at UFOs and the media by Neil Nixon (if you read his recent *New UFOlogist* article you will know the high standard to expect). There is also a review of Magonia legends.

When you add in the non-UFO material on things like fish falls, alien big cats and Nazi archaeology you can justify the £20 price tag easily as a present to yourself.

If that wasn't all you get a barrage of Fortean indexes - of people, places, subjects et al - even a complete index of all FT issues in 1994.

Rob the family bank account and treat yourself to this. You won't regret it.

One Dream by CE IV

Tape costs £8 to CE IV Music via

81 Ryeside Rd Glasgow Scotland G21 3LG

Those who recall the Scottish rock bands incredible concept album - *Abduction* - recapturing the emotion of an alien abduction case in musical terms - will be pleased to know they have a brand new set of tracks.

One Dream is a little different. The music remains inspired by CE IVs UFO interests, but there is no single theme running through this batch. It's a collection of diverse tunes, with a slightly more commercial tone at times, at least to my ears. However, it maintains the unique CE IV style and those who like their music will not be disappointed.

There is the short almost folksy 'Mac's Ranch' about you know which big case and the title track 'One dream' - one of the best ever from CE IV and very memorable.

Of course, CE IVs music is packaged on tape for the home market, not aimed at Top of the Pops or record stores. But for UFO enthusiasts its Undoubtedly Fabulous - Okay?.

MORE WELSH WONDERS

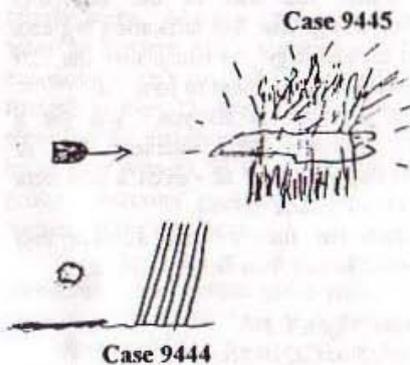
Investigations by Margaret Fry

Case 9444 occurred at around midnight on 12 May 1994 at Ruthin, Clwyd. Mr J - a retired soldier - was the witness.

Closing the gate to ensure that his guard dog did not escape for the night he was attracted by three parallel beams of white light coming from the sky and striking the open ground behind his house.

To the left was an artificial lake and above this was an oval patch of misty light that seemed to be hovering over the water.

He felt it would be unsafe to go and investigate the events by walking down the dirt track towards the lake in the dark. None of his neighbours appeared to be awake, so he went back indoors leaving the lights still there. He terms these things 'eerie and unexplainable'.



Case 9445 was on 17 July 1994 at around 23.45. It occurred near a site known as the Devil's Punch Bowl at Llanaron-yn-Ial in Clwyd.

The house was some distance from the village in a remote spot near a disused quarry. The woman - whom we will call Mrs Z - was awoken by a bright light shining through her window which she took to be the moon. Getting out of bed to close the curtains she discovered that it was not the moon at all.

Instead a bright white glow was coming near ground level from behind a clump of trees near the quarry. As this had been unused for some time she was baffled by the glow and continued to watch. Then a brilliant green heel shaped object appeared from the left and travelled close to ground level heading straight towards the white glow. When the two met they merged and disappeared.

Mrs Z was rather upset by this incident and woke her husband. He had recently watched a TV programme about abduction cases and half jokingly told her that she should feel privileged that they should want to abduct her. This hardly helped her mood and, in fact, she was in great concern about this possibility when she later called Margaret Fry. Margaret had to reassure her that the odds were most unlikely.

The following morning Mr Z went to work very early and Mrs Z went outside in daylight to inspect the courtyard of their home. Here she found some curious marks near where the UFO had been. There were six, straight parallel lines which seemed to be comprised of finely grated material. It looked like sieved mud or chocolate and had that texture when run through the fingers. Unfortunately no samples were collected, even though Mrs Z examined the deposits into that afternoon - by which point they had completely vanished.

The investigator notes that the family had a very fierce alsatian and this made no sound at all, even though it was sleeping just the other side of a plate glass window from the courtyard and the spot where the UFOs were seen.

Does anyone have any comments about this fascinating case?

A 1942 abduction and miracle cure?

Mrs E from Halifax, West Yorkshire was witness to this event when aged 9 in autumn 1942. As it was wartime blackouts were in force and Mrs E was alone, ill with jaundice, in her bedroom. She thinks it was early evening.

As the house was built into the side of a hill Mrs E's window was three storeys up with a good view over the surrounding countryside. It was dark outside and only a dim fireglow illuminated the room.

Suddenly a sense of absolute silence descended upon the room. The classic Oz Factor state took hold. A brilliant blue glow then lit the window directly in front of Mrs E's bed. From out of the light stepped three figures and they seemed to enter the bedroom one after the other.

She says that they were a little over five feet tall and dressed in a one piece silvery coverall. Their heads appeared to be encased in what her childish mind interpreted as goldfish bowls.

After seeming to inspect the end of the bed, the three figures went one after the other through the bedroom wall as if it were not there and disappeared. The light then vanished as well.

Mrs E was completely unfrightened by this episode. In fact she felt strangely elated. She is mindful of the possibility that it might have been an hallucination or dream but says that it has remained vivid across more than 50 years and she finds it hard to assume that it was just imagination.

Besides which, years later, when she first saw stories about astronauts she realised the similarity in the clothing. How could her mind have invented this years early? Her reading was never science fiction. She read school stories and tales of hill women. Her parents would not allow comic books into the house because they believed they were a bad influence.

Mrs E also notes that her illness, which had been quite severe, cleared up immediately after that night. Everyone was surprised by the way in which she recovered virtually overnight.

UFO rescues sinking ship!

Margaret Fry has investigated one of the most remarkable close encounters that I have heard in recent years. She has met the witness several times and is convinced by him.

In 1964 Mr A was serving as a radio officer aboard an Israeli ship called the M.V. Atzmaut owned by the Atid Shipping line of Haifa. At the time of the incident they were anchored half a mile offshore at the port of Jaffa offloading their cargo into smaller ships to take on the final short distance to port.

The weather forecast deteriorated and with a storm imminent the smaller ships fled for harbour. The Atzmaut did not, choosing to stay at anchor and ride out the storm.

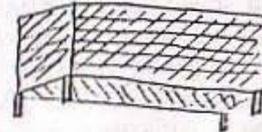
They were lashed by high seas and heavy winds throughout the night before at dawn the cable broke and the ship was set adrift. Within minutes they were smashed against the coastal shallows just under a mile south of Jaffa's main harbour.

By now the skeleton crew of Israelis had gone ashore leaving Mr A aboard with instructions to send out an SOS. He says that he did not waste time writing this on paper before transmitting. He composed it and repeated it over and over in his head in

preparation for sending. He thinks this may explain what happened next.

Going back on deck the ship was hard aground and not budging an inch. But his SOS had been picked up - not by the expected salvage vessels but by something from somewhere very strange indeed. He wonders if it responded to him by ESP.

The hatches had filled with water and the ship was completely waterlogged and in deep trouble. It was bedded into the ground under the keel. But then, as if by magic, as Mr A sat to await rescue or destruction, the sea suddenly went dead calm and blue skies opened up all around. Looking up into the cloudless sky he was staggered to confront an object just sitting there about a mile away and at the height of a wartime barrage balloon.



It was shaped like a box and reflecting the bright sunlight. Four legs were at its corners. It appeared to be solid and was criss-crossed by trellising or panels. Its size was not great - he likens it to a survey vessel. But it hung absolutely stationary in the clear sky as if watching over the Atzmaut.

Then something even more incredible followed. The deadweight ship sodden with water started to move - inch by inch along the coast. He felt it gently cross the sea bed at a speed of about four knots and ease its way into the concrete jetty of Jaffa harbour.

'It was placed there, yes placed,' Mr A is adamant. The UFO - still sat in the sky out to sea - and had somehow tugged the Atzmaut along the shore into the sanctuary of Jaffa harbour.

'When we gathered our wits,' Mr A says, 'We ran a short plank ashore as a gangway.. While the ship had been bumping along I was sitting watching the object in the sky. When we reached our destination I got to my feet to get the ships binoculars from the chart room. As I stood up and turned around for another look the craft had disappeared.' It had vanished into the clear blue sky.

Mr A says he cannot offer any logical explanation but he knows this amazing experience did happen. Officially the Atzmaut is listed by Lloyds as 'ship wrecked'.

Astronomer over the moon

Mr J is an amateur astronomer who specialises in taking measurements of the sun, moon and planets from his home near Warrington, Cheshire. On 11 June 1969 at 05.20 hours UT he had a very unusual encounter.

He was observing the sun by projecting its image from his 4 inch reflector telescope. The sun's disk was six inches in diameter on the projection card.

Suddenly a circular object appeared and crossed the sun at around the equator taking 10 seconds to move from east to west. It was completely dark but with a light grey and very thin ring surrounding the centre.

Mr J was practised in measuring sunspot activity and immediately knew that this was something very peculiar indeed. He says that it resembled the transit of Venus across the face of the sun but the last was in 1882 and there will not be another until 2004. It could also not have been Mercury - which transits the sun more often - as this object was far too big for that tiny planet. He measured these on later occurrences (in 1970 and 1973) and so is certain of that fact.

Mr J says: 'I have seen many things pass over the sun's disk - such as aircraft, birds and so on.' But he has no idea what he saw on that day 27 years ago.

The silver man

This event occurred some time in the mid 1970's during a wave of UFO reports in the Lymm, Cheshire area. NUN archives suggest that this could have been May 1976, or possibly March 1978. The latter is more interesting as a possibility because of the famous 'Risley' spaceman encounter at that time just a few miles to the north of here. There are definite similarities between that event and the story that follows.

Mrs S was living in nearby High Legh and recalls how one dark night a figure appeared in the back garden standing near a tree. It appeared very bright and silvery in colour but cast no shadow or reflection on the ground.

The following night the figure appeared again, only this time it came right up to the French Windows and stared in at the house. This really spooked Mrs S and her family.

The man was illuminated by a very intense light and this actually lit up the entire living room. The only thing that was visible behind the glow were two large round eyes that seemed to be emitting beams of light. This is very much what was described in the Risley case.

Mr S ran out of the house to confront what he assumed to be a very unusual burglar. But nobody was in the garden at all. He is certain that no normal person could have escaped that quickly.

However, they did hear a splash from the vicinity of their swimming pool. The pool was under construction at the time and very deep. When checked nothing was amiss but it was clear that had anyone fallen in they could not possibly have got out - especially in the dark - without assistance and a ladder.

Another curious thing was the behaviour of the family Alsatian. He was a fierce guard dog and - as they lived close to the M6 motorway in an isolated spot - they did from time to time get total strangers approaching from the back. The dog always reacted to their presence in a violent manner. Yet on both nights they were visited by the silver man the dog never flexed a muscle or uttered a bark.

AERIAL CONTACTS OVER SCOTLAND

Reports by James Sneddon

These three cases have been forwarded by reader James Sneddon of Falkirk - to whom many thanks are offered. He came across them during his frequent monitors of the civil and military air-band frequencies covering Scotland. They seem to offer further evidence of the continuing trend towards mid-air encounters.

Case 9539 occurred between 23.45 on 28 July 1995 and 00.15 the following morning. Two different aircraft were involved, both operating a nightly mail run.

Midland 8802 was a Boeing 737 from London heading for Edinburgh. Foxtrot Alpha was a Piper Aztec that had just left Glasgow. The Boeing was at 7000 feet heading north. The Piper was climbing from 5000 to 7000 feet and heading south. The 737 was then about 40 miles south of Edinburgh and the Piper a little to the west.

James Sneddon gives a complete transcript of the two aircrafts communications with Scottish radar regarding what happened next.

Firstly Fox Alpha called to say 'A flash just came from the left hand side and just missed me.'

Midland 8802 (henceforth 8802) confirmed: 'We just got a flash of lights as well.' When asked to elaborate 8802 reported: '(It was) all around the front actually - so just looked like, well, just looked like a strobe going off all the way around the aeroplane.' They added they were not in cloud.

Fox Alpha then responded to calls by saying the light was bright white. 8802 said it *it was just a flash - just for a couple of seconds* and Fox Alpha that *'it just came straight through the clouds and faded back into the clouds again.'*

8802 was switched to another frequency at this point but Fox Alpha continued to discuss options. An emergency flare was mooted but the height seemed improbable. Then Scottish radar said: *'we think it might well have been a firework in the vicinity of the Brox firework factory which is down near Sanquhar. They are actually sending the police to investigate because the factory isn't open at this time of night.'*

Fox Alpha was evidently not that impressed, noting *'Good firework'* - perhaps a little sarcastically. It is not clear if the light was seen from the ground to cause the police response or whether this was purely because of Scottish radar's call to them. Radar added, to close the matter: *'We don't quite know what the Midland saw though.'*

A reasonable surmise here, other than a flare or firework, is that this could have been a meteor. Does anyone have any record of such a report elsewhere in Britain that night?

Case 9540 followed on 12 September 1995 at 21.00. On this occasion the aircraft was a British Airways jet (either a Boeing 757 or Airbus) heading into Aberdeen from London. They were at 9000 feet and around 35 miles south of Aberdeen, whose radar control they were under.

The British Airways pilot reported visual contact with a steady red light which appeared to keep pace with the aircraft.

Unfortunately, Aberdeen radar was too far from James Sneddon for him to pick up the ground side of the conversation, but he heard speculation about a flame from an oil rig - of which there are many in the North Sea off the coast of Aberdeen. However, as James points out, aircrew on any regular flight to the Granite City must be familiar with these rigs.

There were a number of other brief reports that James tuned into over the following weeks. On 22 November 1995 at 08.00 and south of Edinburgh a British Airways ATP going to Aberdeen saw an *'airborne explosion'* some 10 - 20 miles ahead. No answer was found.

At 23.30 on 14 December 1995 Ostend marine reported that green and white flares had been seen by several aircraft off the Belgian coast.

Just over four hours later (at 04.00 on 15 December) a British World Viscount on a mail run at 16,000 feet was heading into Edinburgh when it briefly saw a red flare.

However, Case 9601 is the most recent and occurred on 23 January 1996. The event had begun when James switched radio frequencies and started to record the ground to air transmissions. This was just before 20.00.

Again two aircraft were involved. A UK Air F-27 was heading south at 12,000 feet on a flight from Aberdeen to Humberside and a Knightair Bandeirante was at about 8500 feet travelling south from Aberdeen to Leeds/Bradford. The UK Air flight was some distance ahead of the Bandeirante on a similar flight path and saw the UFO first. The Knightair was about 5 minutes behind but also saw it when it closed on this position.

UK 645 had apparently already been reporting a *'strange aircraft'* and the first message heard notes Scottish radar asking if it is still with them?

Knightair 819 then came in and says: *'we seem to have something parallel in our 3 o'clock at range - beneath us - and probably about - estimate 7 or 8 miles away.'*

Scottish confirmed they had nothing on radar there - implying they had already given a similar message to the UK Air flight. 819 chipped in *'must be bogey night'* and the UK Air captain, more dramatically (but probably none too seriously) said *'martians'*.

Some minutes later Scottish radar returned to state: *'I've spoken to our military colleagues and they are not aware of anything operating in that area either.'*

819 confirmed that the lights (no description of which James ever heard) had now gone but *'it was seemingly paralleling us for quite a long time.'*

Scottish acknowledged but added: *'Certainly nothing appeared on primary or secondary on our radar and I asked the military to look on their radar and nothing was on theirs either.'*

819 thanked Scottish and said: 'It was quite a distance from us anyway - but I can't see it now.' UK Air 645 agreed that they had 'lost it as well'

Scottish radar - not willing to let this go completely - stated in response: 'Right - we will keep an eye on it anyway. The military are looking at it with their air defence radars and we are looking out on these ones. So if we see anything we will let you know.' Does this phraseology imply that the air defence radar were now tracking something - or did they just mean that the air defences were looking out for it?

Just before the flights were transferred to Newcastle radar some 5 minutes or so later - Scottish came in to say: 'UK 645 I am getting a primary return in your 12 o'clock now - but its static. I believe it's probably weather returns.' 645 confirmed they could see nothing.

These events occurred somewhere to the east of Leuchars. James Sneddon does note that an air to air refuelling exercise with a tanker and fighter planes later took place further south over the North Sea. But the military control would surely have known about this and yet clearly stated they knew of no traffic in the Leuchars area.

So this case remains a mystery. I hope that James keeps up the good work and reports any further mysteries from the Scottish skies. Are there any intrepid English aviation enthusiasts who could maintain a similar monitor of the airwaves further south (or indeed Welsh and Irish equivalents)? We certainly seem to be amidst a real spate of activity up there!

STOP PRESS

** A wave of triangular UFOs have hit the north-west in early 1996. A video film was taken of one over Morecambe Bay in January and a power cut hit Cleveleys and Fleetwood, allegedly as another triangle was over the bay (must admit I was more concerned with the loss of the TV and was not out looking for UFOs in the pitch dark!) Then in early March the triangles were seen in the Southport area by various witnesses. Speculation is linking these reports with the HALO - a prototype British Stealth jet based on a modified Harrier reputedly being built at BAE Warton on the Ribble Estuary. The sites of this triangle activity are just north and south of here and fit this possibility well....but. More next issue.

** NARO have launched their magazine - *Naro Minded* - covering all strange things in the NW. Issue 1 reports on angels in Stockport, a Wirral UFO and a Rochdale polt. *Naro Minded* will appear quarterly - 4 issues for £8 (payable NARO) via:- 3 Paignton Dr Ashton on Mersey Sale M33 5HJ

SPRING EVENTS

BUFORA stage a one-day abduction conference on 20 April 1996 at Hallam University, Sheffield. 10.00 to 18.00. Lectures from Whitley Strieber and BUFORA members. £15 via BUFORA (£12.50 members)

The Fortean Times Unconvention 96 runs that weekend too 20 & 21 April 1996 at the Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London starts 10.30. Main debate Saturday is UFOs and government (inc Nick Pope). Sunday - the Santilli footage (Philip Mantle vs Jenny Randles!) Other lecturers include Dennis Stacy on a 1950 UFO crash, Terence Meaden, Tony Cornell, Dr Karl Shuker, Roy Stemman and many others on a range of paranormal topics. Tickets £15 per day, £25 for both days c/o Box 146 Glasgow G1 5RN or Tel orders via credit card on 0171-470-2407

BUFORA Merseyside host a one day event on 18 May 1996 at the Haigh Building Maryland St, Liverpool. 13.30 to 17.15 Lecturers John Spencer, Tony Eccles and Jenny Randles on all aspects of UFOs. Tickets £2.50. Tel 0151-486-6087 or 0151-476-0356

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 Longhirst Drive Newcastle NE13 6JV
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
(*NUFON files with NARO- for access call 01942-604265)

North Midlands

PRA 94 The Circle Sinfm 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 0LB

Wales

FEDERATION Box 43 Rhyl Clwyd LL18 1YW