

THE

PROBE

REPORT



A DIFFERENCE OF INTERPRETATION.....

NUTS & BOLTS AND THE NEW AGE

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UFO RESEARCH ORGANISATION

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A WASTE OF RESOURCES

A topic that has received attention over the past couple of years, and is still a current feature in various UFO publications, is the setting up of Resource Centres. To a layman, a resource centre is a library, containing books, magazines, newspaper cuttings, photographs and hopefully an adequate indexing system for immediate access. The concept in itself is a splendid one in theory, and it really ought to end there. Peter Hill, in MAPIT SKYWATCH No 41, suggests the setting up of several resource centres around the UK, namely in Stockport (where the basis of a resource centre exists already), Nottingham (HQ of NUFOS which houses UFOIN and NUFON files), London, and one each in Scotland and Wales.

As an investigatory group, PROBE can not agree with this idea for several reasons. Firstly, much of the information we require for investigation does not come from books or periodicals (UFO or otherwise), but from authorities such as airports, police, weather bureaus and other such establishments as deemed necessary by the nature of a particular case. Secondly, the people who could use a centre, a researching body, should be adequately provided for - if they supposedly do carry out research. If PROBE intended to research only, and not investigate UFO sightings, our own financial input would be pooled into buying books and magazines - and bus fares to the lending library for those books we could not obtain for various reasons. For specialised research, involving topics not connected normally with ufology, we would attempt to contact the relevant bodies, institutes and associations who could possibly help us. It is fair to say that the MAPIT resource centre (now OSEAP - see news) would not have such material anyway, despite being well stocked.

So who would use such a centre? PROBE wouldn't because we do not carry out research (despite our page heading!). A research group conducting various projects would most likely need to refer to specialised publications and papers, and therefore not need the basic general books and magazines that the resource centre is composed of. Does this make the resource centre a redundant feature? Possibly so, placing the idea of several such centres somewhat off the beam. Peter Hill also suggested computer hardware of various sorts to maintain a current index and communication system, including wordprocessors and mini-computers - all to be financed by encouraging new UFO group members to part with their money. This principle in itself is wrong, as new members should be taken on to assist with investigation and/or research in an active way - although I stress that this is PROBE's opinion and may not reflect other groups' policies.

This then leaves us with a vast collection of books and magazines etc, partly acquired by donations (I've read enough appeals) and group funds. People have contributed to the OSEAP Centre and I can only see this as contributing to a private collection, much in the same way as a person collects stamps or postcards. I would not part with any books that I have managed to obtain over the years (as I too like to collect old and rare UFO books) because I sometimes use them for reference (much easier than writing off for the information), and also that they cost money - and you just don't give things like that away.

I hope OSEAP achieve what they want with their centre, but it will not receive support in the material sense from PROBE until it can be practically shown that ufology can benefit from this interesting concept.

NEWS ROUND UP

UFO groups and societies are the main feature in the news this time, with several changes taking place right across the country. Probably most important is the news that FUFOR and MAPIT no longer exist, and with their departure go their regular publications UFO INSIGHT and SKYWATCH. Instead, a new body has been formed under the name of OSEAP (Organisation for Scientific Evaluation of Aerial Phenomena) which will absorb FUFOR and MAPIT staff and facilities plus Anthony Pace. The OSEAP publications will be OSEAP JOURNAL and CENTRE UPDATE, each appearing twice yearly, and available for an annual subscription of £5. As both UFO INSIGHT and SKYWATCH were respected publications, and very well worth the small sums asked, readers ought to be able to expect something extra special when these two publications become available.

Another new magazine has just been started by PUFOIC (Plymouth UFO Investigation Centre). Issue one is still available at the very reasonable price of 30p including postage, or an annual subscription for four issues is even better value at £1.00, just write to PUFOIC, 17 Wilkinson Road, St.Budeaux, Plymouth, Devon. PL5 1DF.

MIGAP have just announced that MERSEY NEWS No 23 is to be the last for the time being, until they can get over their current financial difficulties. Editor Brian Fishwick still requests that articles still be sent to him in readiness for when they hopefully start up again with No. 24. In a similar situation are the remaining members of Britain's oldest UFO group, the British Flying Saucer Bureau (BFSB). Established in 1953, they have always maintained a steady membership, but recently they have gone through a bad patch. On top of that, longstanding I & R Officer and Chairman Pat O'Brien has had to resign due to personal reasons, and the members are now in a state of transit - not knowing whether to continue under the old structure, adopt a new structure or close up shop completely. Whatever they do, their publication UFO NEWS BULLETIN has not appeared for at least a year, and doesn't look like doing so again. Meanwhile, they are still operating to some degree and all correspondence relating to investigation and research should be sent to R.Richings, 15 Gledemoor Drive, Frampton Cotterell, Bristol. The address for magazine exchanges has also changed to Ground Floor Flat, 97 Coronation Rd, Southville, Bristol. BS3 1AX.

On a happier note, the newly-vamped British UFO Society (BUFOS), under the guidance of Brian Everton and his committee are carrying out a responsible investigation into a photographic case with the possibility of a computer analysis being carried out. Please note that the new BUFOS address is 85 Chelford Crescent, High Acres, Kingswinford, Brierly Hill, West Midlands. DY6 8PA.

The special one-off supplement mentioned last issue is well under way, with several of the contributions already received and others promised. Entitled "UFO/IFO: A PROCESS OF ELIMINATION", it will examine the many areas where expertise beyond the ufologist's scope is required on investigations, and point out the various situations where their knowledge of the relevant field of study has helped identify otherwise unexplained cases. The supplement, a joint production by both SCUFORI and PROBE, will also feature reports of recent cases illustrating the need to co-operate with other organisations and societies in order to arrive at a more complete case report. (See back cover for further details).

Over the last two issues we have carried advertisements offering free quantities of old UFO INFO Data Sheets, and I am now extremely pleased to say that we are shot of the lot. So please don't write in asking for any more..... however we do have old UFO INFO mags. going cheap at 40p including postage.....

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SIGNALS

Letters to the editor

Dear Ian,

Reading your latest PROBE REPORT, I cannot agree with your findings on the UFO nest case. I feel in my own mind that the circles in the corn are too symmetrical to each other and perfectly round to have been caused by a funnel wind or whirlwind. I am sure that if these had been caused by wind, the Met. Office would have produced many photographs of the same results from all around the world. As it is, the only photos I have seen have been those printed in The PROBE REPORT, both places rich in UFO reports of the past two decades. The coincidence of the two site areas, Warminster and Winchester, is too strong to be ignored. My own conclusions are that the circles were made by a solid object hovering just off the ground. The walls and edges are too straight to have been caused by wind.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Franklin, Emsworth, Hants.

(I'm not going to enter into the physics of whether or not a whirlwind can cut clean edges in a cornfield as it is not my field of study. But I am going to suggest that perhaps because Warminster and Winchester are "rich in UFO reports", these circles gathered much attention. Maybe they do occur elsewhere, but do not attract the UFO-hunting press media so much? - Ed)

Dear Ian,

I have just re-read your report on the Hampshire circles (& Westbury ones) and I wonder if there are in existence anywhere any photographs of circles in corn caused by whirlwinds which had been seen to be definitely whirlwinds? Surely somebody somewhere must have photographed damage done by whirlwinds and a comparison can be made between those and the photos in The PROBE REPORT?

Crystal Hogben, (Editor MAGIC SAUCER), Worcs.

(The best I can do for photographs are the ones published in this issue, and it is unfortunate that the field had previously been stubble-burned. Your request is common; indeed we ourselves have been looking for such photographs since August 1980 when the first circles came to our notice, but maybe they are as elusive as concrete photographic evidence of UFOs themselves?! After all, whirlwinds are also a phenomenon, although a meteorological nature. -Ed)

(Also from Crystal, commenting on last issue's Editorial feature....)

About your query about what 'New Agers' might be, I share your concern that it doesn't mean "automatic acceptance of claims or beliefs", as the meaning of the New Age is that nobody believes blindly, but either knows or doesn't know; the knowledge being tacit knowledge rather than explicit knowledge - in other words knowledge that comes from within and not other people's opinions, viewpoints, discoveries etc. learned from books. I appreciate that this makes things complicated for all of us as there are some who are concerned with investigating UFO cases objectively and others who find they are impressed with a certain inner awareness which of course nobody else can see but which is none-the-less real. The fact that New Agers who read about IFOs feel "dejected" as I put it, is not that they (most of them, (though I speak for myself)) don't believe the IFOs are IFOs, but that they feel they don't want to read about IFOs all the time, but want to move on to reading what goes on in people's minds concerning the 'things' they see. Between you and me I reckon this is what Arthur (Shuttlewood) feels and is the reason he says PROBE is "too scientific". He means for himself personally, of course. Between you and me (again) I wonder if he has any positive inner feelings that makes him think the Westbury Circles were UFO circles. If so, or if he has heard from others who have inner feelings or who are psychic or clairvoyant and have eg seen lights in the White Horse area, I think it would be helpful if he told us all about it. That'll be the day-when what psychics come up with concerning a UFO case tallies with what 'scientific' investigators find out about it.

Best Wishes,

Crystal Hogben.

(Whatever these "inner feelings" may be, I still think they are more 'inner beliefs

and hopes' rather than a kind of knowledge; much akin to the various religions that are taught throughout the world. These tutors all preach the 'truth' as they believe it, yet each of them could be far from the real truth. If someone insists, or believes the Westbury Circles were caused by UFOs, it is because they wish it to be so, and not based on actual supporting evidence. We would have loved to have found evidence on the sites that would have ruled out natural or earthbound causes, but sadly there was nothing of the kind to be found. Therefore we are left with harsh realities: realities that some people object to because it goes against the grain of their beliefs. These people are also 'afraid' of IFOs, as IFOs tend to bring people 'down to earth' with a bump. I say 'afraid' because these people no longer wish to read The PROBE REPORT, and it is fair to say that we have lost several subscribers because of our attitude. It is also essential to continue to publish IFO accounts, as they form an important part of the UFO phenomenon, so we will always feature a CASE CLOSED item whenever possible. However, Geoff Bird, who understands the 'New Age' better than I ever will, (and who also doesn't believe the whirlwind theory) has something to say on this subject elsewhere in this issue - so I leave it to him. -Ed)

Dear Editor,

Ian Ridpath's article 'Exposé' in The PROBE REPORT of December 1981 reminded me of the strange book 'Someone else is on our Moon' by George H. Leonard (W.H.Allen, London 1977). The Moon, with its low gravity and lack of atmosphere, seems an excellent place for robotic machines or members of an advanced civilisation, skilled in engineering. If shafts are excavated, gravitational force would decline even more with depth and it is feasible that comfortable accommodation could be established well below the extremes of temperature change on the surface. Perhaps a largely iron core of the Moon could have been mined and completely removed in a few hundred years, explaining the anomalous low average density of the Moon. This is no more fantastic than the idea of radio and television communication would have been in 1687, when Newton's Principia was published. Of course, I am not claiming this makes Leonard's views true, but they seem to me well worth investigating by professional scientists. Leonard describes many features in lunar photographs which he claims indicate non-natural processes and some of these are also described by P. Kolosimo in 'Not of this World' (Sphere, London, 1970). In K.Kopal's book of coffee table magnificence 'A New Photographic Atlas of the Moon' (R.Hale, London, 1971) Plate 64 clearly shows a rectangular feature at the top left hand corner, although this is less evident in the close-up on Plate 202, which is, of course, typical of some terrestrial archaeological photographic traces. Compare these photographs with the marked copies in Plates 16 and 17 of Kolosimo's book. Perhaps Ian Ridpath, with his journalistic access to NASA data will see if Leonard's and Kolosimo's ideas can be demolished as easily as those of Azhaza and Bozhich? I have briefly mentioned only one example of the apparent artifices on the Moon, but many more are described by Leonard, including evidence of activity, based on the observations of many astronomers. It is generally necessary to examine the photographs for some time to be able to see these features, and this is perhaps because they are like imaginary 'pictures in the fire' or, more probably in my view, it is because the surface of the Moon may have been disturbed by natural events only a few thousand years ago. This also applies to the surface features of Mars, where there have also been many past reports of canals and more recently of other strange features, such as the pyramids and 'sphinx' face in the Elysium Quadrangle. The face, resembling a youthful Claudette Colbert, is said to be a natural mesa formation, according to D.L.Chandler, in his book 'Life on Mars' (Dutton, New York, 1979) but the creation of this impression is just what one would expect from an extra-terrestrial intelligence with a sense of humour and a liking for Hollywood films and Egyptian scenery. There is a danger that when a serious scientist or journalist writes an article debunking a rather weak case for an unorthodox idea, readers may be led to believe the idea itself has been successfully debunked. It is easy to ridicule obvious cranks, but when a writer does this and then goes on to criticise work by

Others of a much more rational character, unsophisticated readers can be completely misled. This technique was used by Dr. Carl Sagan (anagram of 'A Grand Rascal!') in his most entertaining and misleading book 'Broca's Brain' (Coronet, 1980) when he wastes his and his readers' time in writing at length about the crazy Norman Bloom and includes in the same book a chapter on the work of Velikovsky, in which he makes use of all kinds of dubious apparently scientific arguments in the attempt to demolish his views on cosmic catastrophes. It is not so long ago that scientists refused to believe stones could fall to Earth from space, until the weight of observational evidence compelled them to think otherwise. On the other hand, once they accept a theory they will cling to it long after its shortcomings have been made obvious. Are there doubts about the theory that huge tectonic plates drift about the surface zone of the Earth? For an alternative view read 'Subdue the Earth' by R.F. Walworth and G.W. Sjostrom (Panther, 1980). Is it certain that there are black holes in astronomy? Read 'Black Hole Blues' by Professor Jayant Narliker in New Scientist, 14 January 1982, p103. I sent Ian Ridpath a reprint of my paper 'Lightning in Astronomy' (Nature, 13 December 1974) on 9 March 1975, which describes an alternative to the theory of black holes, based on the very orthodox astrophysical ideas of the late Dr. C.E.R. Bruce concerning atmospheric electrical discharges. I would be most interested to know of his views on that subject, especially as International Astronomy * Circular 3149 states that even the so-called 'best candidate' for a stellar black hole, Cygnus X-1, is unlikely to have a black hole in its system. Perhaps Ian Ridpath or another reader could also find out why the New Scientist has refused to publish a statement about this point, although I have written to the Editor about it several times? Yours sincerely, Eric W. Crew (FRAS) 26 St. David's Drive, Broxbourne, Herts. EN10 7LS.

Dear Ian,

In reply to the letter by Eric Westley of UFOCIS, published in the last issue of The PROBE REPORT (Vol 2, No 3) I would like to take this opportunity to give SCUFORI's viewpoint on the question of MAUFOG. At the time of its instigation in 1978, MAUFOG was a very positive, and indeed necessary, step forward. Without that affiliation, its constituent groups in the south of England would probably still be as ignorant of each other and as naive as I am sure we would all agree we were when MAUFOG was first conceived. As an overall concept MAUFOG was quite sound, and it did provide a gateway for communication with other groups. However, because of its inherently loose nature it encompassed too many groups, of too diverse an outlook in ufology. A similar situation apparently exists in NUFON, except in that case there seems to be a status quo, with the active groups happy to do the legwork, and the less active groups equally happy to sit back and enjoy the benefits. Within MAUFOG, the active groups such as PROBE, UFO International and ourselves (SCUFORI), in continually campaigning for improvement in standards, were becoming further and further removed from groups such as the North Devon UFO Study Group and BFSE, who had little ability or desire to investigate reports thoroughly. That, added to the almost total lack of response from many groups to the proposals or ideas put forward by the active groups, meant that MAUFOG as a forum for co-operation and communication between groups was rapidly becoming obsolete. Eric stated in his letter that one cause of action which could have been taken to minimise this situation was to expel unco-operative groups. However, these 'unco-operative', or to be more accurate, apathetic groups were in the majority, and as all such decisions theoretically had to be voted on by all groups, this course of action was technically impracticable (there was nobody in charge of MAUFOG, and the role of chairman, which changed every three months, was purely administrative and held no power). After all, how do you persuade a group to vote itself out of the affiliation, especially when that group isn't present at the meeting to vote in the first place? In fact, proposals were put forward at various times, by PROBE and SCUFORI, for radical changes in the structure of MAUFOG, to tighten up the organisation and improve all round standards, only for these proposals to be rejected by groups who it seems didn't want to improve their (in some cases appallingly low) standards. PROBE therefore resigned, more or less on the grounds that MAUFOG had begun to move backwards rather than forwards and had become a burden. UFO Int. resigned for the same reasons, and BFSE, not wanting to be left out, followed suit (although, I fear, not necessarily for the same reasons). Remembering of course that SCUFORI had no more status or authority than any other group, it would have been improper, and perhaps even provocative, for us to have said to all of the other groups "Look, you either follow us now, or else!". Instead, we decided to test the

Contd. on inside back cover....

A LAST WORD ON WHIRLWINDS by Ian Mrzyglod

Last issue contained a report of further mystery circles appearing in cornfields, coupled with references to similar circles which appeared a year earlier. This report diagrammatically explained how whirlwinds are formed in localities such as these, and how they could, perhaps, have caused the crop damage.

No doubt this is a controversial topic, as some people quite rightly voiced opposition to the theories put forward, and refused to accept that whirlwinds could have been responsible for such precise damage. Others have questioned as to why, considering whirlwinds seem to be creating mystery circles so regularly, nobody actually sees one doing such things to cornfields. Many people are in the bracket of: "OK, I'll accept that whirlwinds did it, if you can show me one doing it."

So I think maybe this is as good a time as any to emphasise PROBE's position and to make it clear what we are trying to do. The PROBE REPORT is a reporting journal - it deals with facts only, and tries to avoid wild speculation. Speculation itself is necessary in such a field, as we are always on the scene after the crime has been committed, or in other words, the UFO incident is history when we start investigating. Needless to say, we have to speculate on the final conclusion of the report, basing our answer on the facts that we have obtained. In many cases, the solution is clear-cut 100% certain, where it is known that a particular helicopter was flying exactly where a UFO was reported that displayed identical light patterns and flight characteristics. That is a rare example, as much needed information is hard to come by, so on the majority of cases we can only surmise what the witness saw. Of course, the investigations are gone into quite thoroughly so it isn't really a guessing game: it is just that we weren't there at the time and have to piece together the snippets of data to arrive at a plausible answer. This is where the speculation comes in, but it is only constructive speculation, and does not attempt to create new theories which can neither be proven or disproven. The speculation stays within the realms of known criteria and is always (barring one or two exceptions) left with the proviso that should any further information become available, then this would be taken into full consideration and may alter the conclusion.

Looking at the circles in the cornfields, we can produce the following. Fact: Crop damage did occur in near-perfect circular patterns. Fact: The flattened crop lay in a clockwise direction. Fact: The circles measured between 25 feet and 60 feet in diameter. Fact: The circles were discovered when conditions were ideal for whirlwinds. Fact: Whirlwinds range from as little as a couple of feet in diameter to well over a hundred feet. Fact: Whirlwinds do exist, have been seen, photographed, and have been responsible for damage to crops in the past.

No-one is saying that whirlwinds undoubtedly caused the circles, but on the other hand there are no traces of evidence to support the appearance of a UFO. So to ever suggest that the flattened circles were UFO landing nests is wildly speculative wishful thinking, without any foundation. No matter how many people would like to believe that UFOs were responsible, including members of the group, any beliefs are unsupported and cannot be considered of value at present. At least until someone can come forward with evidence to perhaps suggest otherwise.

Therefore, the position is that we have a seemingly strange occurrence with no immediate answer. But we do have a plausible theory with known factors that fits. It is not a final statement on the mystery circle saga, after all - we did place a question mark on last issue's cover.... namely "WHIRLWINDS AT WORK?".

Finally, in response to some remarks made in this issue's SIGNALS letter column, Dr. G.T. Meaden has kindly lent PROBE some excellent photographs and supplied the following information.

The sequence of photographs reproduced here was taken by Mr. Roy Williamson at 1225 GMT on Wednesday 18th August 1976 at a field between Braintree and Halstead in Essex (grid reference TL 757262). They show a whirlwind at various stages in its lifetime of about three minutes in full and dramatic action while crossing a harvested field. The start-up began at a point about 6 metres from where Mr. Williamson was standing, and finished, three minutes later, about 100 metres away.

Mr. Williamson described the event:- "Weather conditions were quiet at the time, with a hazy sun and perhaps a force 2 wind. First there occurred a very small gust of wind which picked up some earth and straw and started a small whirl; this petered out, having lasted about 5 seconds. Then about 15 seconds later a slightly larger gust started the whirl going again, and this time it kept gaining in intensity. Slowly it travelled along the edge of the field (consisting of burnt stubble from some days previously), following the line of stubble and ploughed-edge firebreak (figure 1). The intensity was such that I stepped back into the road-side hedge as far as I could to avoid the spiralling dirt as the whirlwind went by about three metres from me. The whirl travelled along the line of the plough for about 50 metres and then started to cross the field, gathering in intensity all the while (figures 2 - 5)."

"Finally its dispersal began by its breaking away at its base, shortly after the fifth photograph was taken. Its diameter was then about 30 metres, and its height considerably more than that. This can be judged in the last photograph by comparison with the line of trees on the horizon (it was close to these trees at the finish). The general direction of travel was from the southwest, changing to west approximately."

It is quite evident that stationary whirlwinds of this sort of intensity could damage cereal-fields in the manner discussed in recent issues of The PROBE REPORT and Journal of Meteorology.



Figure 1.

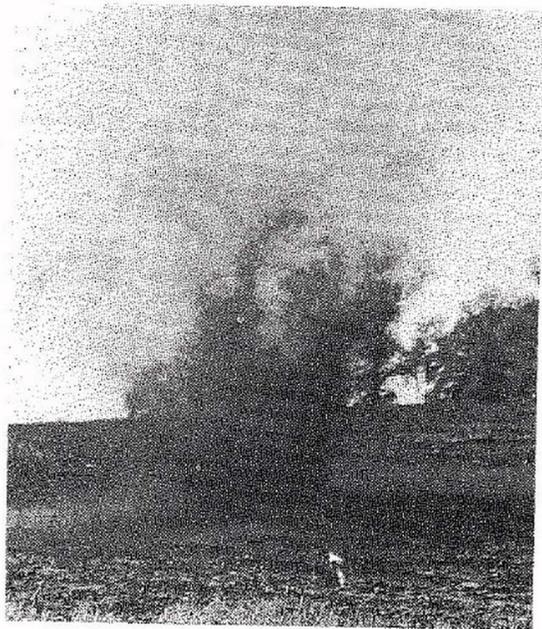


Figure 2.

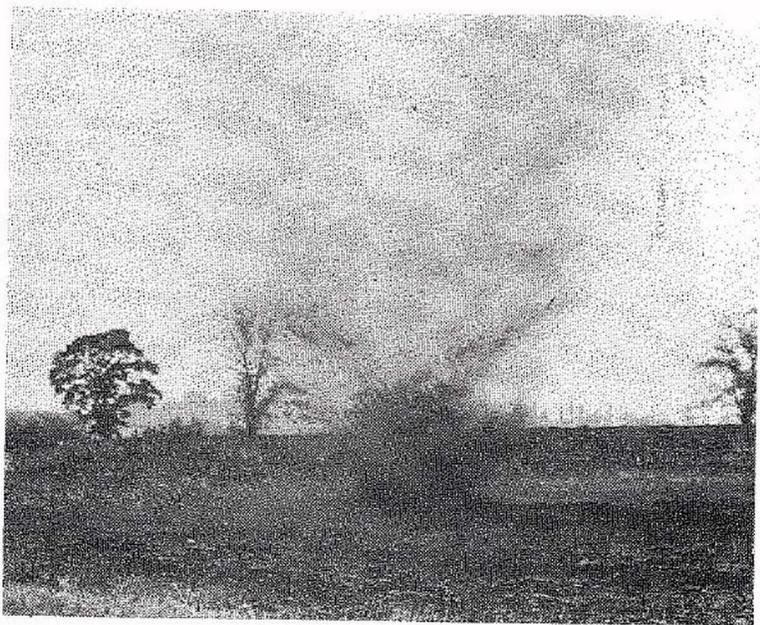


Figure 3.

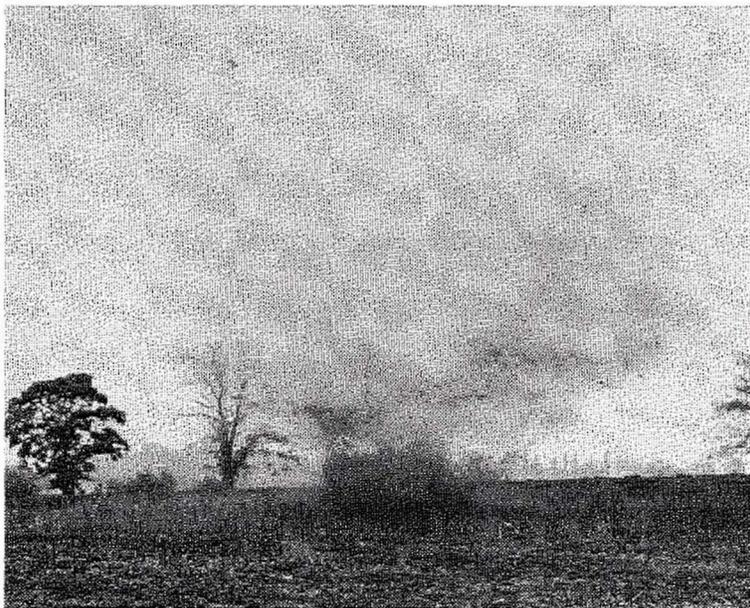


Figure 4.

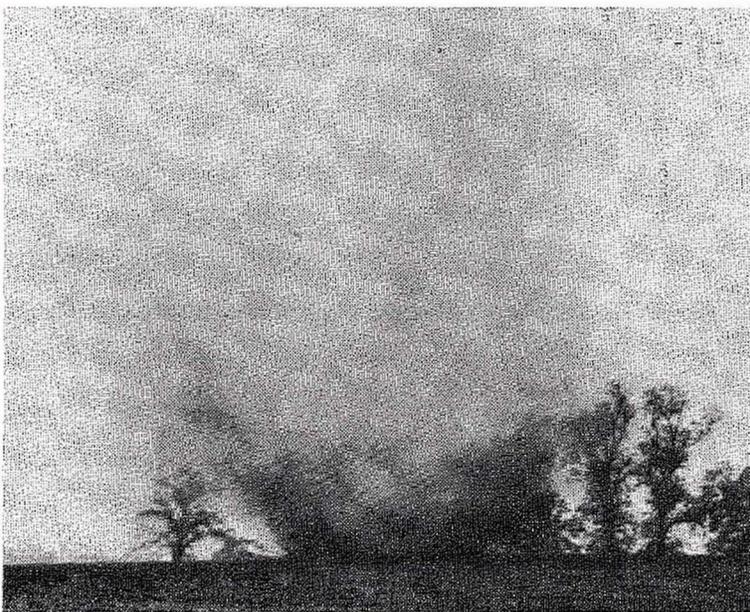


Figure 5.

BOOKS

ALIEN CONTACT. by Jenny Randles & Paul Whetnall. Neville Spearman. 207pp, illustrated. £5.25. ALIEN CONTACT details the fascinating story of the experiences of alleged contact with aliens by the Sunderland family of Oakenholt, North Wales. The story itself is one of many such contacts, trips to other worlds, and ordinary 'mundane' UFO sightings by the parents and children which spanned a period from July 1976 until the present day, as the series of events is perpetuated by the occasional sighting and visitation even now. Of course, such stories are nowadays regarded by many as utter garbage, and the authors are well aware of this, but they have tackled this case in a different manner than is often adopted. Part 1 of the book tells the whole story in chronological order, and little is added in comment from the authors. Part 2 gives a history of how the case came to light and the procedures carried out in the investigation, and part 3 is the most interesting and important of all. It takes all the testimonies and applies all existing theories in an effort to establish what really happened to the Sunderlands. No-one honestly believes that the children visited other planets, or even that they were visited by aliens at all, but something must have initiated these dreams or hallucinations. And that is what the authors have tried to establish. Accepting that the UFOs and aliens did not actually exist in our terms of reality does not exclude this case from being of ufological importance - on the contrary, because the stimulus that causes such effects, whether external or internal, is as much a part of ufology as the resultant effects themselves. To be of scientific value, the whole story had to be detailed, and by the end of part 1, this becomes slightly tiresome when by then it is apparent that the events are more of a psychological nature, but that is an unfortunate necessity. It is difficult to believe that the transcripts are accurate, and the authors explain this in the preliminary note, but even so, I cannot attempt to see how Gaynor could have remembered the names of all the zoo creatures and their home planets as recounted on page 77. (I had forgotten them by the time I'd turned the page). On top of that, who decided upon the spelling of such names as Go'Bo? The proof reader was caught napping on a few occasions as Dr. Carl Jung becomes 'Cal' on page 151, and allowing a 'had'nt' and a 'hav'nt to slip in on pages 31 and 32. The Neville Spearman editor constantly adds annoying little remarks throughout the book, notably on pages 156, 166 and 173, where he disagrees with the authors or offers his own opinions. This is wrong, as the book should not be contaminated by outside comment even if it is that of the publishers. However, part 3 of the book is most stimulating, albeit complicated, but it makes ALIEN CONTACT a very worthwhile addition to the respected literature available. I.M.

POLTERGEIST! by Colin Wilson. New English Library. 382pp, £7.95. This book does not appear here out of context: although not by any means a common feature of ufology, poltergeist activity nevertheless does crop up from time to time. The above case illustrates this well, as does a case that PROBE have been working on for 16 months since it first became known in late 1980. POLTERGEIST! recounts many examples of poltergeist hauntings, possessions and even tales of fairy sightings (which is claimed on page 201 are just as commonplace as UFO sightings...). There is also a rather gruesome account of how Guy Lyon Playfair underwent an operation on his stomach by a Brazilian Spiritist healer. POLTERGEIST! is a lengthy study of the phenomenon, and is fascinating to read in that it touches on witchcraft, multiple personality, stone circles and ley lines, to name just a few of the topics that some UFO buffs follow. Chapter 4, which examines the Black Monk of Pontefract is the most interesting, and it is here that Colin Wilson presents his theory on how poltergeists get their energy, and that they are not creations or extensions of the subconscious mind. An excellent reference book. J.M.

BEYOND THE LIGHT BARRIER by Elizabeth Klarer. Published by Howard Timmins (Pty) Ltd, Sanso Centre, 8 Adderley Street, P.O. Box 94, Cape Town 8000, S.A. Cover-priced at R9.90, we are informed it is available at £4.95, although first check on the postage details. However, BEYOND THE LIGHT BARRIER (illustrated 191pp) is the story of how the author first saw a UFO over the family farm in South Africa when she was a child, then later progressed after other visual sightings and telepathic contacts with the UFO denizens, to eventually

mother a child after an exceptionally close encounter with Akon, an astro-physicist from the planet Meton in the Proxima Centauri system. Barbara Cartland couldn't have done a better job in describing the moment as the author does on page 98. In fact, the whole text has a flowery romantic air to it, and unless one appreciates poetic licence, it is mushy trash. Of the story itself; the trip to Meton, taking her car as well, and all the other events, seem as ridiculous as other contact stories, perhaps even more so because of the manner in which it is written. There are also present the pseudo-scientific revelations and philosophical messages that are customary with such tales, and really the whole thing can be treated as a fantasy. To be fair though, if a harder line had been taken at the time these things allegedly took place, perhaps more could have been learned as with the Sunderland case. The two cases may well have links and similarities that could have been explored, but to wait for over 20 years before releasing the details has probably clouded over the truth. If one can push aside the trimmings, there may be interesting points in the tale that could be of use, such as claiming contact from another star system in a day and age when others talked of aliens from Venus and Saturn. Also the beam teleporting her car into the UFO was fairly new in those days. Of course, you have to assume that these events were recorded when they happened in the late 1950s, otherwise these points become invalid. The photographs of Akon's spaceship are embarrassing and look nothing more than six-inch plates photographed at three feet, showing no background detail. Still, Mrs. Klarer has been welcomed at UFO conferences, namely in Wiesbaden in 1975, so perhaps I have missed something. Don't take my word for it - find out for yourself.

I.M.

(Geoff Bird will be further analysing BEYOND THE LIGHT BARRIER in an article scheduled for next issue).

VANISHINGS by Michael Harrison. New English Library, paperback. £1.25.

I enjoyed this book, 'though not because I learned anything of value from it, but because I like reading novels. Having recently read Paul Begg's INTO THIN AIR (Sphere) (reviewed Vol 2, No 2), I was given to understand that many old favourite mysterious disappearances tales were nothing more than tales with no factual foundation. Michael Harrison attempts to paint a different picture by informing us of the authenticity of these events. Reading this book I find that the David Lang disappearance is now fact, after just accepting via Begg that it isn't: I think I'll stay with the former. The book is interesting, but it must be taken with a sackful of salt. With that in mind VANISHINGS can be reasonably enjoyed.

J.M.

JUDGEMENT OF JUPITER by Richard A. Tilms. New English Library, paperback. £1.25.

Will the next decade be disastrous for mankind with floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters caused by the by-now famous Grand Planetary Alignment which began in 1976 and will not abate until 1993? Mr. Tilms certainly believes so, and quotes various sources of information as diverse as NASA and Nostradamus. However reliable or unreliable the information, we can check up as we live through the next ten years, so buy the book, read the pages and watch the telly. Of course, Patrick Moore says that there is no alignment of planets, so we needn't worry, need we?

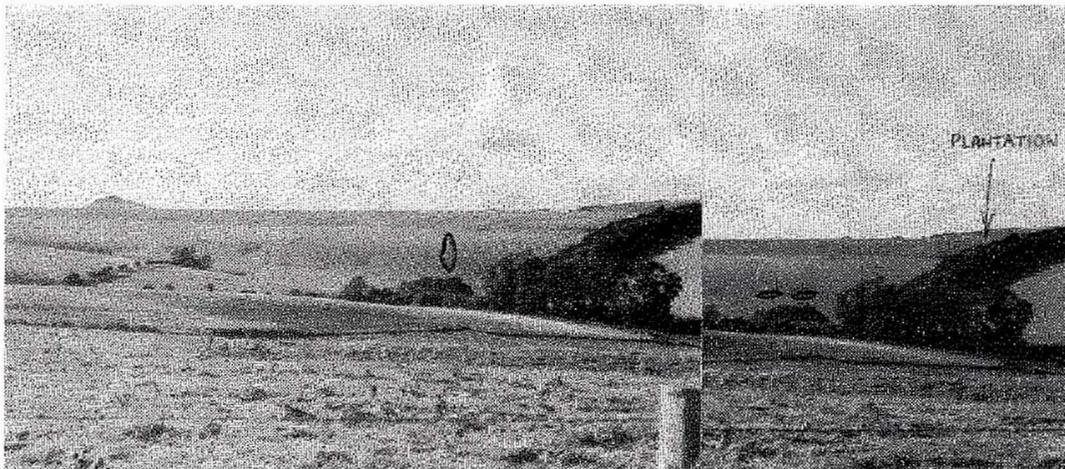
ROUND-UP: Granada have published THE ROSWELL INCIDENT in paperback format, making it much better value. £1.25 buys you the story of a crashed UFO (reviewed Vol 1, No 4), yet they still print the April Fool's joke 'alien' photograph despite all that has been said. Science Fiction fans will appreciate Granada's on-going Brian Aldiss promotion by grabbing THE DARK LIGHT YEARS, HOTHOUSE, GALAXIES LIKE GRAINS OF SAND and STARSWARM. The first tells of a hippo-like intelligent race who are transported to Earth (or at least two of them) when it becomes apparent that they are intelligent despite communication problems. STARSWARM is another Aldiss short story collection, with Sector Vermilion outstanding. Granada also publish GOD'S WORLD by Ian Watson, and STARWORLD by Harry Harrison. The former tells how 'messengers of God' appear in the year 1997, appealing to all races to come to God's World. A multi-national spaceship is launched in search of the Heavenly World. STARWORLD is the third story in the TO THE STARS trilogy, and is a fast-moving tale of how Earth's Commonwealth of planets rebel against Earth for their independence. With little depth, this book makes light reading.

CATS EYE UFOs WITH POSSIBLE EM EFFECTS

Note: For the purpose of this report, in compliance with the Code of Practice for UFO Investigators, the identity of the witness in this case has been withheld at her own request, and will be referred to as Elizabeth Edwards. Consequently, her husband will now be referred to as Richard. All other details such as date, time and location remain unaltered.

Introduction. This case first came to light in March 1981 through a letter to PRCEB from Warminster-based UFO author Arthur Shuttlewood, who supplied us with the basic story of the events plus the witness' name and address. After writing to Mrs. Edwards, she willingly agreed to assist us with an investigation into her sighting, which has taken almost a year due to the age of the case (the event occurred in August 1980) making information difficult to obtain, and also because this is the first time that we encountered a possible Electromagnetic (EM) effects.

The Sighting. This took place at 2245 BST (10.45pm) as the witness was returning home to Warminster travelling along the B3095 Mere to Warminster road. Mrs. Edwards describes the event; "I was travelling alone by car, along the Mere to Warminster road. I noticed a strange noise and I immediately thought that my car was going to break down. My thought was to accelerate and get to a telephone at Kingston Deverill as it was 10.45pm. The noise became deafening and I felt that the car was surrounded and that a breakdown was imminent. After about 1½ miles the noise faded to my left. I glanced across to that direction, and suspended against the hillside I saw an enormous, brilliant white, long light. Almost immediately it 'went' out, similarly to switching off an electric light. Then two yellow lights, apparently lower, appeared with increasing intensity and then faded. The time taken was a few seconds. Involuntarily I said aloud, 'What the hell was that?'. I then proceeded without further incident to my home at Warminster." Mrs. Edwards added, "The two yellow lights were oblong and took the shape of cats' eyes."



Two overlapping photos, annotated by the witness, to show the positions where the vertical light and then the two 'cats' eyes' appeared. Note that the second photo was taken from a position a few yards to the right of the first one, in line with the motion of the car.

The Location. The B3095 Mere to Warminster road is a very bleak deserted road, running at approx. 730 feet above sea level, overlooking the Danes' Bottom valley across to

Court Hill (Northwest direction). The noise was first heard when Mrs. Edwards' car was at map reference OS 344 825 and vanished when she was approximately at point 362 843. The distance travelled was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The objects were sighted against (or suspended in front of) Court Hill, immediately west of the Plantation at map reference 365 824, placing them just over $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away. There are two access roads to Court Hill; one at the bottom of the valley and one coming from a farm at Kingston Deverill up to the plantation. Both of these are private. There are no buildings in the immediate vicinity of the sighting area. Weather conditions were excellent that evening with a clear sky and 11 km visibility.

The Witness. Mrs. Edwards is aged 39, and is company secretary to a firm in Warminster. She is extremely sure of what she saw and her account of the events remained unchanged throughout the several interviews. The experience unnerved her to some degree and will not travel that road alone at night. Because of her position in the firm, Mrs. Edwards preferred to keep her identity withheld.

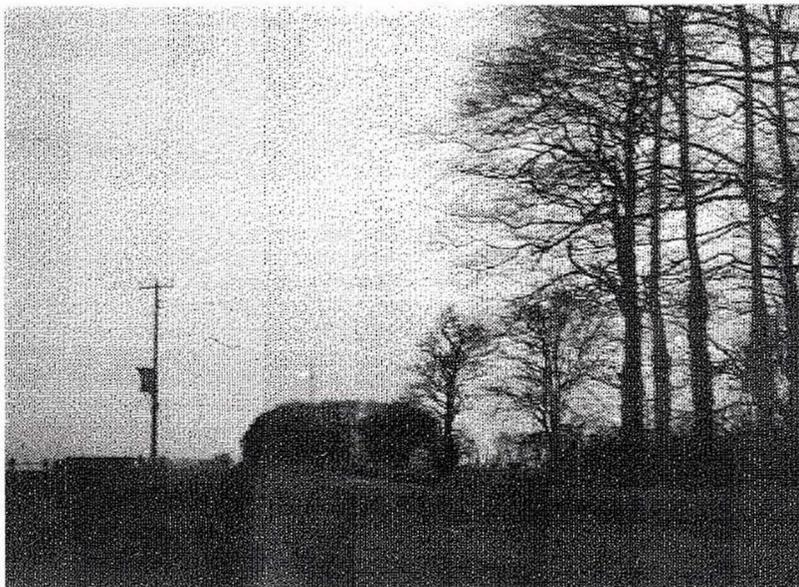
The Investigation. a) The noise. PROBE investigators Terry Chivers, and Julie & Ian Mrzyglod visited Mrs. Edwards on 30th March 1981 and enacted a re-run of the event, timing the whole incident to about 2 minutes (a time confirmed by Richard Edwards when he was asked to go back for a look when Mrs. Edwards arrived home). At the precise point where the noise (described as a buzzing or whirring) first enveloped the car, a low voltage line (240 volts) crosses the road, and a hundred or so yards along the road an 11,000 volts line crosses overhead. This information was verified by Southern Electricity Board. The spokesman for SEB confirmed that the latter power line could cause a 'noise' in the car via a car radio if it was switched on, but only whilst in the immediate vicinity of the cable, ie underneath it. The car would have to be stationary for a continued noise. The car (a 1974 Ford Cortina Mk III estate) is equipped with a radio and the aerial is constantly extended - however Mrs. Edwards could not remember whether or not the radio was switched on. Since the event, the car has performed perfectly well and has not produced any similar noises.

b) Light sources. The first light was seen as Mrs. Edwards glanced to her left, and remained visible for approximately 6 seconds. The two cats' eye lights were seen for about 3 seconds. (It should be noted that the first light may have been in existence for a longer period - Mrs. Edwards only saw it for 6 seconds.) A site survey plus use of size test frame No 2 established the size of the light as somewhere in the region of between 50 and 100 feet, allowing for witness error. There was nothing on Court Hill that could have caused the light sources, so other avenues had to be examined.

Astronomical: FUFOR kindly obtained astronomical information for us, detailing that the Moon at 2245 hrs BST was at an elevation of 22° , and at azimuth 153° (SSE). This would have placed it behind and to the right of Mrs. Edwards, and not visible as she was looking WNW, travelling NE. Reflection of the Moon in the side windows was also ruled out due to the angle of the glass. Such a reflection (if possible) would have made the objects appear at an elevation of about 30° , whereas they actually were at minus $5 - 10^{\circ}$. The Moon, although clearly visible was considered not to be responsible for the lights.

Coronal Discharges: For a full explanation on coronal discharge, it is recommended that 'Encyclopedia of UFOs' by Ronald Story (NEL) or 'The UFO Encyclopedia' by Margaret Sachs (Gorgi) be referred to under "Ball Lightning", as adequate information is forwarded. In brief, 'coronal discharge' is caused where unusual conditions allow positively-charged particles (ions) to 'collect' and form a small cloud, illuminated by the agitated motion of the particles. If this occurs on or near power lines, it sometimes becomes detached and moves independently. Remarkable photos can be seen in Allan Hendry's 'The UFO Handbook' (Sphere) p79 and in 'The House of Lords UFO Debate' (Open Head Press/Pentacle Books) p14. Our enquiries were assisted by the SEB again, the District Engineer saying, "There is no possibility that the white light you refer to at 365 824 could be caused by the overhead line. Coronal discharge, where it does occur on extra high voltage lines, can not become detached and move as you suggest". (It had been asked if C/D could have been as far as 900 yards from the power cable.)

Other Light Sources: There were no sources of light that could have reflected in the windscreen to give the effect of an external object.



The 11,000 volt power lines crossing the B3095 at map reference 346 837. The whirring noise had started when the car was approximately 100 yards back up the road.

Evaluation & Conclusion. Although this report is only a summary of the full report consisting of over 30 pages, it does contain the basis of the whole sighting and follow-up investigation. The two elements in this case, the noise and subsequent light sources, are each in their own context unexplained. The whirring noise was described by Mrs. Edwards as enveloping the car, then completely leaving the car and moving off to the left. This gave the impression that the noise was not emanating from the car itself, but independent of it. The 'motion' of the noise to the left caused Mrs. Edwards to follow it with her gaze - therefore seeing the first object.

It could be speculated that the noise and light sources were connected, and PROBE feel that such speculation may not be unfounded. Both noise and light sources thus far remain unidentified and any new evidence or theories will be examined to the best of our abilities. The possibility of Piezoelectricity has been advanced by one or two people as a possible explanation for the lights, but we can not place too much emphasis on it for two reasons: a) it would not account for the noise, and b) too little is known about Piezoelectricity to make it a valid explanation. Therefore PROBE have ceased investigation into this case and are treating the elements of this sighting as unidentified, given the proviso that should any further information be forthcoming, it will be taken into full consideration and may alter the current conclusion.

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TERRY'S SKYWATCH PAGE

A LOOK AT THE SKYWATCH SCENE

In spite of last issue's efforts to get rid of me and my page, I am back with yet another instalment of the many happenings that take place on the lonely hilltops of Warminster. There are two reasons why this page has been revived for this issue, the first being a few shouts of protest over the scrapping of the SKYWATCH PAGE, and the second being a real daft thing that happened to me just before Christmas. It was just after the last magazine was sent out, after the decision had been taken to 'sack me', but it was so daft that I had to write about it.

Picture the scene: a freezing cold December 5th night, perched on top of Cradle Hill all alone in my car. The sky is cloudy and dull, and the clouds are moving across the sky quickly because of the strong wind, just allowing the moon to peep through every now and then. The wind is whipping through the car making a howling noise, and I'm here beginning to wish that I hadn't arrived to damn early. I was due to meet Ian, Julie, Steve Parker and members of UFO INTERNATIONAL from Bristol, and Bill from Shrewton, for a social skywatch at about 8 o'clock. But I was there twenty minutes early. There wasn't a soul around and all was quiet.... except for that perishing howling wind.

So, for a little comfort I switched on the radio.... and I couldn't believe my spidery-looking ears! There was a programme about ghosts on, and that was the last thing I wanted to hear. I looked towards the bottom of the hill but there was no sign of any other cars; just me, the howling wind, the dark fast-moving clouds and this flamin' ghost programme. Just sat there, not moving, I was seriously thinking of starting the car and coming back later when a few of the others would be there, and that was when it happened.

Something thumped the roof of my car, causing a loud bang which made me jump out of my skin. I let out a shriek and panicked, waving my arms about, trying to find the keys to start the car and get away. I succeeded! The car started and I switched the headlights on, then got the car going. It was then that I lit up with my headlights one of the Army soldiers jogging down the track in front of me, looking back at me laughing his socks off. He had thumped the roof with his fist as he ran past.

When the others finally arrived, (some of them at 9 o'clock, mind you), we decided to continue any skywatching from the Old Bell where the log fire and beer amply soothed my shattered nerves, and was easy substitute for a cold, cloudy hilltop.

The only other recent visit to that fateful hill was on Saturday 23rd January, a good couple of weeks after the thaw, so there was no snow left on the ground.... that is except on Cradle Hill. In Ian's battered Escort, we drove up the road leading to the skywatch point, rounded the final bend near the top, and ran smack bang into a four-foot snow drift. The car was wedged into the snow and we were lucky to be able to slowly reverse back down the hill without scraping the bottom off the car. Needless to say, I don't think anybody else was up there that night so we didn't offend them by leaving without saying hello.

That basically sums up the skywatch scene, as this SKYWATCH PAGE is finishing with this issue, but not completely. Every now and again, maybe once a year, when something interesting or funny happens, the skywatch page will be brought back. Cradle Hill and the other hills of Warminster are very rarely visited by anybody, let alone us; and skywatching (despite my earlier optimistic days) is really no longer seen as essential or beneficial to us. It doesn't serve any purpose other than learning about the stars and planets, but nevertheless I will still make the odd trip up there every now and then. Until the next time..... cheers!

**CASE
CLOSED**

SCUFORI report No. 80/005

by Marty Moffatt

A UFO PHOTO THAT WASN'T

Abstract

This case involves the alleged observation of a cream coloured disc shaped object from a hill near Axminster during February 1980. The object was reported to have moved quickly across the field of view of the single witness, eventually disappearing behind the hills in the distance. During the sighting one photo was taken with an SLR camera. However, the results of the investigation indicate that the event did not happen entirely as it was originally reported.

Date of sighting: 10th February 1980
Time of sighting: Noon (1200 GMT) approx.
Location of sighting: Trinity Hill, Ottervale, nr Axminster,
Devon. OS reference SY 305955; Bearing 50°45'N 2°59'W.
Conclusion: Hoax.

For obvious reasons, in view of the conclusion reached in this case, and in accordance with the ufologists' Code of Practice, all identifying features of the witness in this report have been omitted or changed. However, SCUFORI feels it would be doing ufology a disservice if it were to avoid publishing this report altogether.

The Event (as told by the witness)

On the morning of 10th February 1980, 13 year old Robert Hargreaves, with his mother and brother left their home in Devizes, Wilts. to go to Axminster for the motorcycle trials being held there that weekend. Robert's brother was taking part in the trials and his mother was helping with the marshalling. Shortly before noon, with the trials well under way, Robert went off on his own to take some photos of the surrounding area. He came out of the wood in which the trials were being held into a field bordered by hedges on the hill, from which the view was excellent. Robert took one photo and then, looking to his left, he noticed an object come into his line of sight from the west at an elevation of about 30°. Without moving, he took one photo of the object as it passed him, and then he stood and watched it travel into the distance behind some hills. The duration of the sighting, Robert said was about two minutes. He described the object as disc shaped, creamy white in colour, with red dots on top, which appeared about 50 feet in diameter. As soon as he lost sight of the object, Robert ran back to tell his mother what had happened.

Robert's mother took the photo to a local newspaper, who were naturally interested. The picture, together with a small account of the sighting, appeared in the newspaper during April 1980.

The Investigation

SCUFORI saw the photo in the newspaper and decided to follow the report up. Martin Shipp (MS) rang the newspaper the next day and spoke to their photographer, who had examined the photo prior to it's being printed. The photographer was extremely helpful, and even arranged the initial interview between SCUFORI and the witness. On 25th April 1980 MS and Charles Affleck (CA) visited the witness to interview him, and also bought the negative of the photo, as it would be required for any analysis undertaken. As the sighting itself took place in Devon, quite some distance from either SCUFORI's base (Swindon) or the witness' home, it was decided to ask a more local group to help out with on-site enquiries. Marty Moffatt (MM) wrote to the Exeter UFO Study Group, who replied a few days later stating their willingness to help. Details of the sighting were sent to them, along with a series of points which needed clarifying about the area.

The Exeter group replied on 27th May 1980, and also sent two photos of the area which they had taken themselves.

**CASE
CLOSED**

On 12th May 1980, MS telephoned Anthony Pace of BUFORA to ask if he knew of anybody who would undertake an analysis of the photo on behalf of SCUFORI. Mr. Pace suggested Ground Saucer Watch in America, as they specialised in computer analysis of UFO photographs. The photo, along with an international money order for 25 dollars was sent to GSW on 13th June 1980, and they replied a month later, sending a two page analysis of the photo, and eight photographs illustrating the computer enhancement techniques they had employed in the analysis.

GSW's ultimate conclusion was that the photo was a fake. SCUFORI discussed this conclusion at length, and decided to present GSW's findings to the witness. MS, CA and MM therefore visited the witness again and reinterviewed him, both on his own and with his mother present. However, neither he nor his mother would accept the GSW evaluation, and so the three investigators decided to obtain a second opinion.

After unsuccessfully trying to get the photo analysed by Kodak Ltd via Peter Warrington, over a period of several months, SCUFORI decided to contact Kodak direct. By this time it was March 1981. However, Kodak did examine the photo for SCUFORI, and concluded that the 'object' was a piece of debris which became attached to the negative during processing - a direct contradiction of the GSW evaluation.

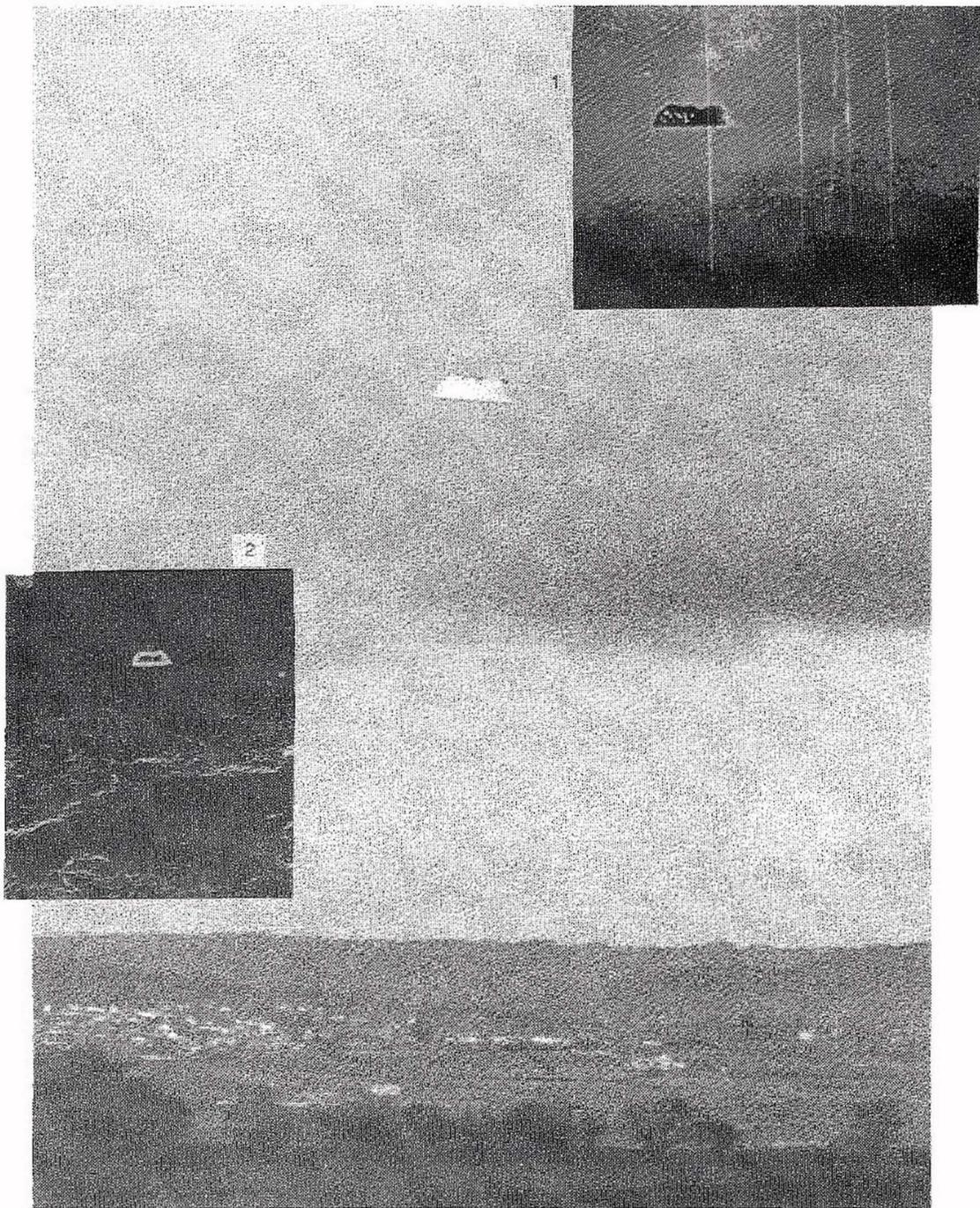
Further attempts were made to get the photo analysed by a third party (including Middlesex and Hatfield polytechnics, and the Science Research Council) but with limited success. Finally, in November 1981, Dr. Vernon Harrison, Chairman of the Royal Photographic Society and head of ASSAP's research department, offered to look at the photo. However, his findings were decidedly inconclusive and added little to the investigation. At this point it was decided that to continue with the investigation would be an unnecessary waste of time and money. To break the apparent stalemate over the evaluation of the photo, the report itself was once again looked at in detail by the SCUFORI team and concluded accordingly.

Analysis of the Photo by Ground Saucer Watch

GSW is a very large UFO organisation based in Arizona, USA, which concentrates on obtaining quantitative data concerning UFOs through the use of various hardware. In fact, computer analysis of photographs is only one aspect of GSW's work, but as they do appear to hold the monopoly on this particular technique of photo analysis, it was to them that SCUFORI had to turn. GSW charged a fee of 25 dollars for the use of their computer, and for this they employed a number of methods of artificially enhancing the photo to yield a great deal of information about it.

There are four basic techniques involved, but there are an infinite number of subtle variations in the extent to which the techniques are applied, thus enabling more and more information to be obtained. A very brief description of each of the methods is given below. For a more accurate and detailed description, you should refer to Flying Saucer Review Vol. 22 No. 1, which contains an article by William Spaulding, Director of GSW, or to Allan Hendry's 'The UFO Handbook' (Sphere), which gives a simple and easily understood explanation.

Edge Enhancement: This is a process whereby any changes in density or shade on the photo, however subtle, are magnified and intensified, and made either very bright or very dark. All other areas are reduced to a neutral shade of grey. This technique will purportedly show up any supporting devices (eg string or wire) and will clarify any obtrusions or appendages on the object photographed.



Detail From the Axminster Photograph.

- Inserts: 1. GSW Analysis - Colour Contour
and Profile Cursor.
2. GSW Analysis - Digitising.

**CASE
CLOSED**

Digitising: Here, the picture is divided into over 245,000 parts, each of which is assigned a grey value between 0 (black) and 255 (white), according to the amount of light or shade in that particular area. An examination of these subtle variations in tone should enable a comparative distance of any point in the photo to be calculated. High or low grey values are indicative of foreground features (which have not been affected much by atmospheric veiling glare) while mid-range values indicate features which are some distance away.

Colour Contouring: Here, the computer, working with up to 32 colours, maps out areas of different image densities. This yields a great deal of information on the exact shape, relation of true size to distant objects, and reflectivity, of any object.

Profile Cursor: A series of vertical lines superimposed on the image, tracing the specific densities of different parts of the photo. This can show, in profile, what the shape of the object is in depth.

After applying all of these techniques, GSW concluded that the object was some 6 to 8 inches in diameter, and less than 21 feet from the camera. In other words, it was not a photograph of a UFO.

Analysis of the Photo by Kodak Ltd

After examining the negative, a spokesman from Kodak stated that the image could well have been formed by a small piece of debris (possibly emulsion) which remained on the film during and after processing, although they couldn't actually see such a particle, even under high magnification.

With respect, SCUFORI were not convinced with Kodak's explanation. One major point which seems to have been missed by them, although it was noted by GSW, is that there is a definite impression of shadow on the image, which compares favourably with other shadows on the photo, indicating that it was an object subject to the same lighting conditions. The chances of this impression being created by coincidence are a little too high to be reasonably acceptable.

Evaluation and Conclusion

This case produced a number of unique problems for SCUFORI. It took 18 months to complete the report, and although much of this time was taken up waiting for replies from various individuals and organisations, there is still a lot of information which could have been obtained but wasn't due to inherent difficulties in following up the sighting to the extent to which SCUFORI normally would. The distances of the witness and the location of the sighting, the extreme shyness of the witness, and the novelty of having a photographic case, all contributed to the fact that SCUFORI pooled most of their resources into analysing the photo, giving the report itself only a cursory examination. Having said that, there is sufficient information contained in the report (which covers some 90 pages) to enable a conclusion to be reached. Of the two main analyses of the photo, it is felt that by far the most plausible explanation was that provided by GSW. It does somewhat support the feelings of the investigators concerned, and the image does indeed give the impression of being a small object close to the camera. There were large discrepancies in the report given by the witness, all of which gave the impression that he was not telling the whole truth. However, beyond this one can only speculate. The witness may have fabricated the sighting, throwing a small object into the air and photographing it. On the other hand he may simply have distorted consciously or unconsciously, an observation of an event in which he took no part, except as an observer.

SCUFORI's aim in the investigation of this case, rightly or wrongly, was to discover whether or not the photo depicted an unusual aerial phenomenon. Sadly, the answer to that question is no.

NUTS & BOLTS AND THE NEW AGE

by Geoff Bird.

Various people have voiced the criticism that PROBE dwells almost exclusively on the 'nuts and bolts' aspect of ufology, with scant regard to what I will term the 'Aquarian aspect' of our subject. We are known and (hopefully) respected by ufologists at home and abroad and endeavour to earn continuing respect by conducting our investigations and producing our magazine to the highest possible standards. This, however, does not preclude intelligent speculation and comment on matters which some might shy away from. Indeed, as I have said publicly before now, a UFO group is in a way an intelligence service, and intelligence services read and digest as much relevant or semi-relevant material as they can lay their hands on. Furthermore, since we live in such a changing world, and since the subject of our study is very much an unknown quantity and tends to touch on other subjects as diverse as comparative religion and psychology, we are surely duty bound to examine every concept going, however bizarre and outlandish.

At the moment I am conducting an investigation for ASSAP (for which I am prospective Area Co-ordinator for the South West, as well as Investigations Co-ordinator for PROBE), which embraces ufology, psychic phenomena, psychology and Earth Mysteries research. Such an investigation requires skepticism but also an open mind on my part, since it is clear to me that something of an unusual nature has happened, and is continuing to happen, to the witness concerned.

Should I find that there is an underground water course running under the property concerned, and that the building is situated on a probably ley, then that will be very exciting and provide evidence to support the theories of Earth Mysteries researchers, and also excite the 'new ufologists'. However, the evidence will have to be conclusive and the case will be a long-term study. No good is done by half-measures resulting in some half-baked hypothesis. The same attitude should apply when one is confronted with Joe Bloggs claiming to have received telepathic messages from some exalted being on Alpha Centauri or somewhere else light-years distant. Most of these messages will be similar to others 'received' by various people over a period of years, and will tell us what should be obvious to us anyway; namely that we are poisoning our environment, allowing millions to starve, and spending millions on weapons of mass destruction instead of making our planet a pleasant place to live on, and that if we don't change our ways we are doomed.

'This' says the song 'is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius'. No new age can come about unless there is a fundamental change in the hearts and minds of men. Unfortunately, the hearts and minds of men are heavily influenced by the opinions of the scientific establishment and those gentlemen will not accept anything less than scientific evidence for the existence of UFOs, and unfortunately we do not as yet have any real clues as to what UFOs may be. Physical evidence is elusive and often suspect, and the all-powerful media unhelpful at best - damaging at worst.

These problems might not trouble certain 'New Age' groups who operate according to established belief systems, but for groups such as PROBE there is only one way forward and that is through diligent investigation, always seeking to improve our methodology, and making sure that our reports are of the highest quality. Having said that, does that mean that I am against all 'New Age' groups and belief systems? Certainly not. I know of several very good ones and know members of one such group personally, and help them in any way I can. There is room for more than one type of group and room for more than one level of research, and I see the basic problem as being one of standards. Readers will be aware that serious ufologists have seen the need to draw up a Code of Practice. This, we hope, will isolate the negative elements within ufology and considerably enhance the credibility of serious researchers. Many 'New Age' groups are of dubious standards, and some, particularly in the USA, quite sinister. One has only to remember Guyana, and the Synanon cult with its armed militia. Many 'encounter' groups use methods which one would think more appropriate for the KGB. It is, of course, not easy to try and elaborate on what would be an acceptable code of practice for 'New

Age' groups, however, there is one guide which can be applied. Whether one is a Christian or not, the simple morality taught by Jesus Christ (whoever he was) would seem an appropriate guide.

It is very simple, therefore, to sort out the wheat from the chaff, and dubious morality and/or ludicrous behaviour enables one to tell the cranks from those with honest beliefs and honourable intentions. Certainly, it has been alleged that there are instances where psychic phenomena are produced by certain 'New Age' groups, and this merits the attention of serious investigators, since we can no more be certain that an alleged psychic will have no religious beliefs than we can that an alleged witness to a UFO event will have read nothing concerning ufology.

My philosophy is that both schools of thought, scientific and 'New Age', should do their own thing and pursue the truth in their own way. Who knows what results may be achieved? Our universe is a very strange place, and as Schopenhauer said, 'The more unintelligent a man is, the less mysterious existence seems to him'.

Letters - contd. from page 5

commitment and co-operative spirit of other groups via the minutes of the last MAUFOG meeting, held in Bristol on 8th August 1981. In those minutes, which were produced by UFO Int., we (SCUFORI) asked all groups who wished to continue with the organisation to contact us within 14 days of the date of those minutes. Not one group replied, confirming all allegations of apathy etc., and as far as SCUFORI was concerned, MAUFOG had ceased to be from that time. We did not resign as we felt there was no organisation to resign from. I do sympathise with many of Eric's comments, but the simple fact is that MAUFOG is no longer necessary in any event. The lines of communication between groups have been opened and it is up to individual groups to continue those communications. In addition to this, a favourable outcome of discussions already taking place between BUFORA, UFOIN, NUFON and many of the now independant groups such as ourselves and PROBE may well eliminate the need for any individual networks.

Yours sincerely, Marty Moffatt, (SCUFORI) Swindon, Wiltshire.

* Should be 'International Astronomical Union Circular 3149 (1977)'.

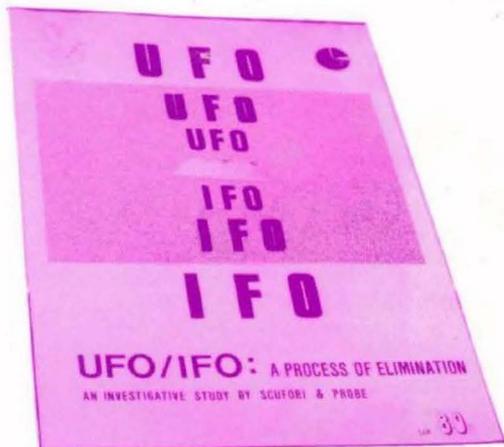
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