

# **YUFOS**

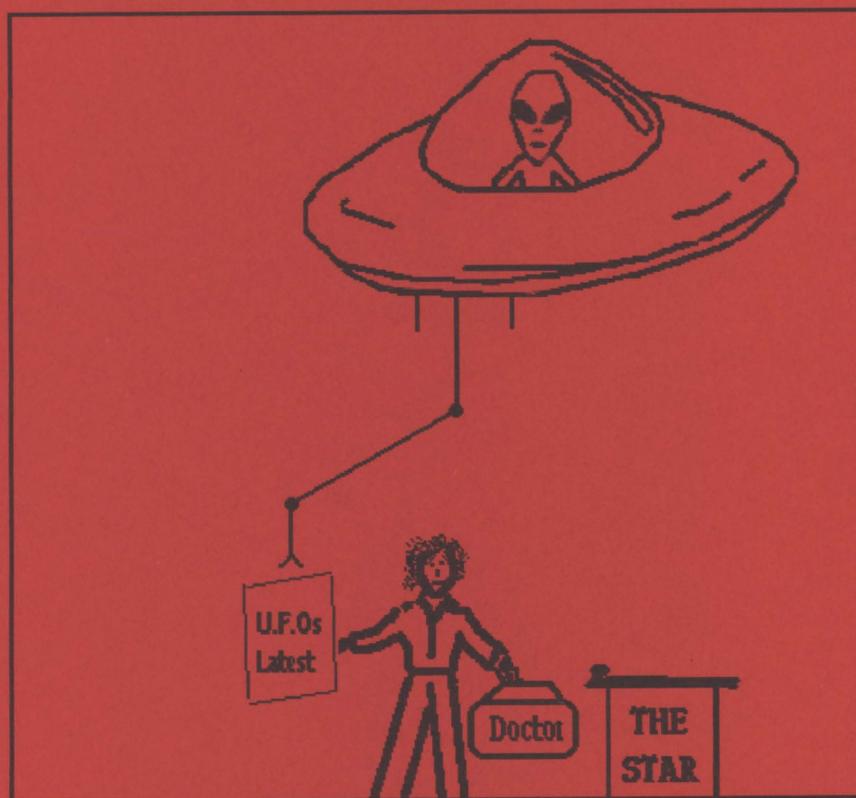
YORKSHIRE UFO SOCIETY

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## PROJECT RED BOOK

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(Vol 3 #10 April 2000)



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inside this document

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. DAVID CLARKE

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# YUFOS



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To re-print articles in this magazine please enquire at the above address- that means me, Dave. I'm sure to say "yes", but it is nice to ask first, y'know?

The articles and views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, YUFOS members, or *The Gentlemen*

"You've gotta be f\*\*\*\*g kidding...!"

## AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. DAVID CLARKE

*David Clarke Ph.d is an award-winning journalist and writer living in Sheffield, South Yorkshire. He is the author of a number of books about UFOs and the paranormal, including 'Phantoms of the Skies' with Andy Roberts. He was a founding member of the Independeant UFO Network (IUN) in 1988, and more recently, the UFO Investigation Network (UFOIN). His articles have appeared in UFO Magazine, Fortean Times and the International UFO Reporter, and he regularly contributes to Project Red Book.*

**Dave Baker:** It's a question I ask most of my interviewees and one you have touched on in a recent article, but just how did you were you introduced to the whacky world of ufology?

**Dr. Dave Clarke:** It wasn't one particular influence or happening, but I'd trace it back to the late 70s when as a kid I was into science fiction in a big way, Star Wars, Dr Who etc and I remember going to see Close Encounters of the Third Kind back in 1978 and it having a big impact on me. I read all I could about the film and the "real life" UFO cases which had influenced Steven Spielberg, and I thought "Hey, this is much more interesting than science fiction." So that was the start of the slippery slope! There are others, however, who will point out that I was drawing pictures of Nessie during a family holiday to Scotland when I was six or seven, but I couldn't possibly comment on that.

**What was the first "meaty" case you got your teeth into?**

The one that sticks in my mind was the "aliens over the chip shop" incident involving the woman who claims she saw a classic Adamski-style saucer over some houses on Gleadless Townend, I think about 1980. She said there were blonde Scandinavian types inside, wearing ski suits, classic sci-fi stuff. It made a change from lights in the sky, and it was one of the first cases of mine which appeared in Jenny Randles' "Northern UFO News."

**How much bearing did your early work as a ufologist have on your decision to be a journalist?**

Very much of a bearing. Being a schoolboy UFOlogist got me in the papers a lot, and I met several journos at that time; plus my big brother had a girlfriend who was a reporter on *The Star* in the mid-80s and I set my sights on getting a job there. Obviously being a hard-

working UFOlogist I ended up interviewing loads of ordinary people who had seen things in the sky, which sharpens up your writing technique no end. So journalism seemed the ideal profession; in reality the job is a bloody nightmare, but it taught me to write and gave me a skeptical cynical edge that most hacks develop and which has served me well in the wacky world of UFOlogy.

**How have your opinions on UFOs changed since your early years?**

In one word: dramatically. Way back when I was as ETH as your average Omar Fowler, but of course this was before all the alien abduction nonsense took off. Back then I was an avid reader of Flying Saucer Review and Budd Hopkins was just writing about your average CE3s; then I read John Keel's *Operation Trojan Horse* and it literally changed my life! (or so I thought). I gradually became more and more into the "ultraterrestrial" idea, ie an occult origin/other dimensional origin for UFOs. But the last ten years have changed my opinions again, as I've seen classic cases shattered, and learned how to investigate and discriminate between real evidence and the bullshit which UFOlogists call "evidence."

I feel this process of altering ones opinions due to life experiences is good and healthy; the dangerous people are those who arrogantly cling to theories and ideas which have been completely discredited. Of course there are other people such as Jerome Clark whose views have progressed in completely the opposite direction to me, but I think he is the exception to the rule!

**As a freelance journalist you have interviewed the whole spectrum of humanity, for all kinds of reasons, and you probably have a shrewd idea of the human condition. How do UFO witnesses compare to say, witnesses to a crime?**

There isn't a lot of difference; both can only report what their senses tell them they have seen. The problem is here that people's perceptions are not hard reality, and cannot be taken at face value. Any solicitor, police officer or judge will tell you the same thing. You only have to sit through Crown Court trials, as I have done on many occasions as a reporter, and you will realise that witnesses to the same incident can give radically different accounts of what they saw. It's the same with road accidents. Everyone is influenced by the vagaries of perception, their background and a whole host of other things.

This is the first mistake UFOlogists make: taking a witness statement at face value. Claims that something was "100 feet above the car" (describing a meteor, thousands of miles away in the upper atmosphere) just show how unreliable such testimony is.

Just where and how did you meet your "other half"? Andy Roberts, that is...

That really is a strange one! I had subscribed, back in 1984 or 85 to a magazine called WUFORG news, which was the journal of the West Yorkshire UFO Research Group, of which Andy was a member (and which later became the much-missed *UFO Brigantia*). There was an article in there by Andy taking to pieces a flap of UFO-type sightings over Yorkshire in 1905, which he trounced as misperceptions of meteors, etc. Being an (almost) true believer at that time, I remember firing off an angry response defending these cases which I thought were earthlights or something.

Anyhow, we got into correspondence and within a few months I was being entertained by Andy and his charming wife at their palatial pad in Brighouse. Since then it's been, as Andy said in his PRB interview, a bit like a Vic and Bob sketch, with me being the one who gets hit over the head in the comedy sketch. Jokes aside, it was Andy's insights into other areas of phenomenology, and his unique take on the subject, which provided a catalyst for a number of my writing projects. So I think it's been a wonderful relationship!

What happened at Quest? You and Andy were both involved at some point. Beware, the lawyers may be listening...

It's no big deal - just the same old thing.

UFOlogists falling out over what constitutes evidence, and what doesn't. But it was quite something at the time, coz I had never seen people react quite so violently before over something which was to me simply a hobby.

The Cracoe Fell and YUFOS (as it was) saga is sketched out in Andy's chapter "Between a Rock and a Hard Place" in *The UFOs that Never Were*, so I'd refer the curious to that. Since the Cracoe saga this kind of falling out has happened so many times I've lost count; most people say they don't like this sort of thing but to me is part and parcel of how the subject progresses and how cases are "solved". Someone has a case which they think is good evidence of UFO reality, and someone comes along and challenges that evidence. It is exactly the same as what happens every day in science, such as the controversy over the "Cold Fusion" experiments a few years back.

It's precisely this kind of debate which has given us TV, radio, computers and all the modern inventions which make life easier. But UFOlogists by and large think all they have to do is proclaim a case is good evidence of ETs, and that is enough - no one has the right to question it or investigate it again, or reach a different conclusion. I'm sorry, but that isn't how things work in the real world!

You recently stated during a UFO Updates debate with Georgina Bruni that you have investigated hundreds of UFO reports, to which she was more than a little sceptical. How many of these remain, at the very least ambiguous, if not entirely unexplained?

Yes Georgina really tied herself in a knot over that one, illustrating just how little some of these London types know about real grass roots UFOlogy.

Georgina and another smart Alec, Sean Jones, thought I was exaggerating when I said on Updates I had investigated "hundreds" of UFO reports. If they'd done their homework, they'd have avoided pursuing that one as they both ended up with egg on their faces. Actually, it's difficult to put a figure on the number but while working on *the Star* newsdesk for five years I was dealing with a half a dozen or so calls a month, which I was able to follow up very quickly through the usual channels (airports, MOD etc) using the resources of the newspaper.

I counted just over 110 reports investigated in one single year (1987-88) which were published by the IUN in a three volume special back in 1990, which was quite a feat back then as I was struggling on a student grant! I'd say about ten percent of the three hundred or so I've had direct dealings with remain unexplained, but only because there was not enough evidence to reach a conclusion.

As I asked another great sceptic, Andy Roberts, if you *\*are\** such a sceptic, what keeps you interested in ufology?

Because UFOlogy is wonderful! Whether or not there are aliens, who cares? I've met loads of interesting people, and been to places I would never have been without UFOlogy, learning a lot about the workings of the world and bizarre doings of the human mind than I would ever have done sat in front of the football with a four-pack.

As for being 'such a skeptic', I don't think I'm as skeptical as some make out; there's a whole host of stuff I find completely baffling. In fact, like the Red Witch Alice in Wonderland, I used to believe six impossible things before breakfast. But I'm feeling much better now, thankyou.

Your recent series of articles on "Sheffield Saucers" have gone down really well with PRB readers. Having a longer history in ufology than YUFOS, just how much of a "hotspot" is Sheffield compared to say, Newport Pagnall?

Well Jenny Randles, using thousands of close encounter cases in a statistical study (to be published as a UFOIN fact sheet) identified Sheffield – and the hills between the city and Leeds/Manchester - as the most active UFO hotspot in the country. Now this is interesting, as if UFO reports were generated purely in relation to population density, then this sparsely populated area of moors*\*should\** not show up in statistics in this way. To me this underlines the fact that there is a real UFO phenomenon which can be studied by scientists, as it relates to topography/geology.

These UFOs, or UAPs, are clearly the product of natural phenomena but there are also other factors at work such as the proximity of Manchester Airport etc. But yes, I think Sheffield is more active than other comparable areas.

You recently became a Doctor, but not everyone knows what you are a doctor of....

I got my PhD in May last year, after nine years of hard work in my spare (!) time at the National Centre for English Cultural Tradition, University of Sheffield. The PhD was in British Folklore, specifically the Celtic Cult of the Head; I had to undergo a two hour examination with a panel of top archaeology professors to get it. So those who pour scorn on people with "Dr" in front of their name should understand that getting a *\*real\** doctorate from a *\*real\** university is bloody hard work - particularly if you are working full time as I was for that nine years.

By the way, Sheffield is in fact the only university in England where you can study folklore to PhD level.

Do you, as others such as Thomas E. Bullard, believe that there are fundamental similarities in both paranormal phenomena and folklore?

Simply, UFOs *\*are\** modern folklore, or as Jacques Vallee put it, "folklore in the making". People habitually think that folklore is something "other people" have -ignorant peasants in the middle ages, etc. But folklore is happening now, we all have it and in the modern era it takes the form of the myth of UFOs and ET visitors. We can't see it - or don't like to see it - because we are literally living in the heart of the myth. But at the next Millennium if there are any of us left we will be discussing flying saucers in the same way we talk about witchcraft hysteria or the fairy other-world today. Of course you'll never get the die-hard, nuts and bolts believers to accept this, but that's all part of the system.

You are known primarily as a ufologist but I know that you are interested in other paranormal phenomena....

You name it I've sampled it; from Nessie to screaming skulls, from Spring-heeled Jack to big cats, I've been interested in it. You have to be to see UFOs in the context they belong; even the Birdsall brothers who at one time dismissed anything but "nuts and bolts" spaceships as anathema are including stuff on other mysteries, ancient archaeology, etc in their magazine.

What other elements of the paranormal have you personally investigated apart from UFOs? You investigated the infamous Stocksbridge Bypass, didn't you?

I've done a lot of fieldwork in the Peak District, particularly into the Longendale Lights and ghost phenomena in general.

The Stocksbridge bypass events are one of the most baffling cases I have ever investigated, and I still cannot find an explanation which satisfies me. Some of the people who have reported this road ghost are actually personal friends of mine, including a girl I was at college with and the police officers whose sightings triggered the mystery I was able to quiz just a few days after the events. Their story has never changed. My latest thoughts on the case will be summarised as a chapter in my new book *"Supernatural Peak District"* published by Robert Hale this Hallowe'en. Prepare to be spine-chilled.

You admit that you hate being referred to as "a ufologist". Why is this?

Because being a UFOlogist is an embarrassment. The subject has become a magnet for lunatics and charlatans of the lowest order (present company excepted!) and any one with half a brain soon gets wise, drops out and gets on with their research privately. That's why of course scientists avoid the subject and its promoters like a barge pole, and even Tim Good has been quoted as saying "if ever a subject needed rescuing from its supporters it is this one." That's probably the truest thing he's ever said.

So I approach the subject publically as a journalist and/or academic folklorist; then people take you seriously. UFOlogists, like it or not, are perceived as "nutcases" by the media and organs of Government, and it is entirely their own fault.

Okay, we had to mention it - the Howden Moor incident...in all seriousness though, it is unfortunate that the entire case became more well-known for your feud with Max Burns. Just how did it all start?

Yes it is unfortunate because as I've maintained all along, this was and is a *\*non-case\**. I had the choice of sitting back and allowing someone to turn something and

nothing into a myth of Roswell proportions or make a stand for common sense. I chose the latter.

While some may say this is a *\*feud\** I've no axe to grind with Max personally, and in fact I think he's quite a witty guy in his more lucid moments. Those who have entered the fray on this case late in the day probably don't appreciate that there was a time when Max and I used to communicate and he used to pop into the newspaper office to show me his etchings. However, things turned sour when he realised I knew more about the Howden case than he did, and he realised I was the only thing which stood between him making a mint out of turning it into a fully-fledged "Roswell in your back yard." That's where the enmity began, but it was purely one sided from my point of view and I'm sure one day he will see the error of his ways.

Do you think that Max's own version of events have *any* shred of truth in them?

Not one wafer-thin slice of truth.

What is the latest on the case?

There is no latest, further than the exchanges with AS (2) at the MOD detailed in the article *"Boom Boom"*. The only mystery that remains is the source of the sonic booms reported that night. The MOD are still vigorously denying responsibility, despite the fact that all the experts (British Geological Survey, aviation experts, etc) say the traces recorded by seismic stations are characteristic of a military jet reaching supersonic speed over land.

The RAF took it seriously enough to launch a military police investigation, but claim they did not pursue the source of the explosions after it was ascertained that no military aircraft were in the area at the time. The best they can come up with is that they concluded there was no evidence of "hostile military activity in UK airspace."

As a journalist and Public Relations Officer, to me this is clear shorthand for "yes it was one of ours (ie not hostile) but we aren't going to admit it." We know there *\*was\** a military exercise that night, and we know the booms are characteristic of what a military jet would produce. That to me is solid evidence which would convince a jury or a scientist.

To claim, as Max continues to do, that that the first bang was a Tornado exploding having been zapped by ET, and the second bang was the UFO escaping from the scene at supersonic speed is laughable. Dr Who had better scripts than that. And what were the aliens doing during the 14 minute interval between the two booms.. popping into Castleton post office for strawberry ice cream?

So the case is closed?

I think the case has been flogged to death. There are no new witnesses, there is not one shred of evidence that anything happened. Max will continue to promise new evidence, the latest being a tape of the ground to air chatter between the pilots chasing the UFOs and the air base. etc. But I predict nothing new will surface, but the believers will continue to believe. And that's the one good thing that this debacle has done - it's identified the real loonies and gullible types which give this subject a bad name to the real world. They know who they are, and now we know who they are too.

In many ways the Howden Moor Incident is a macrocosm for ufology as a whole...

It certainly it. Like most UFO incidents, it is a lot of unconnected events being lumped together under the umbrella of the modern myth, with a strong personality as the driving force in the promotion of that myth.

The same thing happened with Roswell; no one took it seriously back in 1947. It was only in 1980 when Berlitz and Moore wrote the book, and memories had faded sufficiently, that the story was resurrected for a modern audience eager for evidence that aliens had crashed to earth. Roswell was a rumour, and like most rumours it produced eyewitness accounts of events which never took place. Hence the "alien autopsy" and all the people who have come forward to claim they worked at the air base and saw the bodies who were never there. Like I said earlier, folklore in the making.

Along with Andy Roberts and Jenny Randles, you have written "The UFOs That Never Were". What cases have you personally contributed to the book?

I've contributed chapters on the 1897 US airship wave, the Howden Moor incident, the 1987-88 UFO flap in South Yorkshire and the

Midlands, the Isle of Lewis mystery crash of 1996 and with Andy a chapter on the Alex Birch UFO photograph of 1962.

I'm very happy with the way the book has turned out. There has been so much rubbish published on this subject over the credulous last decade, and it was time for an antidote.

Tell us a little about "The Haunted Valley"

The haunted valley is Longdendale, through which the Woodhead pass A628 runs towards Glossop in the High Peak, between Bleaklow and Black Hill.

It's the home of the Longdendale Lights, ghostly lights which have haunted the mountains and moorland for centuries, and a host of other strange phenomena from ghost planes to phantom Roman legions. It's also a very rich area for pagan Celtic survivals, with a background of white witchcraft too. I've done a lot of fieldwork there over the years, some of which has been published in various books and in Fortean Times, and I spend a lot of time there still.

Today, there is also an excellent website devoted just to the mysteries of the valley, run by UFOIN member Debbie Fair who lives in Glossop; she has a live 24 hour webcam running from her house, allowing you to watch the sky for earthlights over the Devil's Elbow! It's well worth a visit to:

[www.hauntedvalley.com](http://www.hauntedvalley.com).

I know that in his PRB interview Andy said that he is not as enthusiastic about the whole Earth-Lights phenomenon as he was a few years ago. Do you agree?

To some extent. I'm not a physical scientist, but looking at the UFOs/mystery light material in overview it is clear that we are dealing with a real phenomena which is linked to certain geographical areas, which to me suggests it is created by natural/electromagnetic forces. OK, so there is no satisfactory process identified as yet which satisfies all the criteria, but that is no big deal.

It has taken many many years for scientists to accept the existence of many other rare natural phenomena such as ball lightning, etc. So I'm confident that Earthlights are real; but as Paul Devereux pointed out it is not sufficient to say

"ah right, that's earthlights, but they are different to real UFOs." Earthlights are seen and \*perceived\* as physical, structured craft - which is all played a part in creating the belief system which surrounds UFOs.

Apart from "TUTNW", which books do you think should be on the shelf of anyone seriously interested in UFOs?

The book I swear by has got to be John Keel's *The Mothman Prophecies* (aka Visitors from Space-ed) Although Keel's theories have taken a hammering, he had some fantastic insights and his writing style was one of the influences that made me want to be a journalist, as he has been all his life. I got the chance to meet him when he came to Sheffield as a guest of the IUN and to show him round the city.

I'd advise anyone who wants to know how the UFO myth is created to read the first few pages of this book; to me it has always encapsulated what he really believes - but you must find out for yourself!

The only other books I would recommend would be Jerome Clark's *UFO Encyclopedia* which is a stunning achievement, even though it is biased towards both the ETH and the American-centred view of UFOlogy which so distorts his interpretation of the evidence. But it is a fantastic resource and highly recommended. Additionally, I would say the Fortean Times edited volume by Dennis Stacy and Hilary Evans, *UFOs: 1947-97* is an excellent summary of the phenomenon by some of the finest minds in the subject today.

Apart from your colleagues Andy and Jenny who else do you admire in ufology?

John Keel, because his Indiana Jones approach to UFOlogy always appealed to me; and I suppose all those like Paul Devereux, Jan Aldrich and Paul Fuller who are quietly getting on with \*real\* research in the background, away from all the nonsense which constitutes \*pop UFOlogy\* as I like to call it.

Like Andy, you are not backward at coming forwards, and your opinions on the ETH fraternity in particular are well known.(If not, see below!) But is there \*anyone\* alive or dead whom you admire even though they were/are staunch supporters of the ETH, or other extreme

beliefs?

I admire Nick Redfern with whom I fundamentally disagree on interpretation of evidence, but his first book was excellent and demonstrated he was capable of serious, in depth research. He's a nice chap too. He's one of the few believers with whom you can agree to differ, and we get along fine.

*Mark Martin, of YUFOS has a couple of questions, Dave:*

Have you ever mapped Ley Lines in this area and if so is there any relationship between the Lines and UFO sightings (or other phenomena).

Yeah in my early, early days I drew all kinds of lines across OS maps and tried to find alignments. It's all part of the psychological drive to fit things together into patterns in order to make sense of them. But honestly, ley lines are utter bull, even the Ley Liners don't believe in them anymore, to the extent that the editor of the Ley Hunter shut down his own magazine!

But at least they encourage people to go out in the countryside and get exercise and fresh air while visiting lots of interesting places, which is no bad thing!

Have you ever investigated 'missing time' cases in this area and if so did the witnesses bear any physical marks (such as in my article "*Missing time on the Yorkshire Moors*").

Just the one, from Rotherham in the early 90s, which I detailed in the last installment of the Sheffield Saucers series. There was no physical traces in that particular instance.

There have been other cases which could possibly have involved "missing time" but that concept is something which has been latched onto by UFOlogists. It's like the witch-finder generals of the past who examined alleged witches looking for the mark of the Devil. UFO investigators will inevitably find evidence of alien intervention in the same way the witch-finders found evidence of the Devil too. In the meantime, what about the poor witness?

What do you think of parapsychological and interdimensional explanations of the UFO question?

As I said in answer to another question, I was once a big believer in this theory, but like the ETH it is fundamentally unprovable. Peter Hough has encapsulated the most extreme version of it in his new book, where he basically says that the aliens are running the world and can come and go as they please, tinker with our minds and genitals etc and there's nothing we can do about it. It's just a modern form of demonology, with aliens in the place of the demons. And it is just as unsatisfying, as it takes power and responsibility for one's own actions away from us and places them in the hands of some nebulous, all-pervading evil force. The sort of thing you associate with the Dark Ages. I think I'll stick with skepticism!

Thanks for taking the time to partake in this entertaining and informative interview, Dave. And don't forget the 1909 British Airship Scare talk you promised us...

## METEOR RESPONSIBLE FOR YORKSHIRE 'UFO' SIGHTINGS.

By Dave Baker

An unusually bright meteor was responsible for a swathe of UFO sightings in Northern England on the night of Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2000, including many throughout Yorkshire.

Dr. Dave Clarke was contacted by a reporter doing a story on a series of "sightings" of a blue UFO over the M62 in West Yorkshire.

"Apparently a driver reported seeing a blue light surrounded by yellow flashing lights travelling swiftly over his car, at an estimated height of 100 foot (unreliable testimony again!)", Dave reported.

"Said witness contacted Contact UK in Oxford for some reason to report this who (I am told) contacted the MOD who admitted there had been six other sightings of the same object over the north of England the same night.

"Subsequently, the witness contacted Leeds/Bradford airport who apparently told him "off the record" that the UFO was in fact

a meteorite which had crashed to earth somewhere in the Sheffield area on Saturday evening.

"Strange to say neither the police or fire service in South Yorkshire were apparently aware of this when contacted by a reporter from the *Sheffield Star*."

I myself saw this meteor. My father and I were driving along Sheffield Lane Top back to my house when we saw it ahead of us framed perfectly in the car windscreen. We couldn't miss it. It was incredibly bright and unusually large, very low in the sky, and it arched through the clear sky for two or three seconds before fading.

It actually looked more like a firework than the 'shooting star' meteors I'm used to from skywatches.

YUFOS member Mark Sorrell also witnessed the meteor from Rotherham, and was also impressed by its striking appearance.

Gloria Dixon of UFOIN and *Strange Daze* magazine reported that BUFORA investigator George Niedzwiedz, saw what he feels was a bright meteor in the Scottish borders on the same night at 7pm and said it looked very low in the southern sky.

### AMMENDUM

In the last issue of Project Red Book, on-the-ball would-be-journalist and reviewer Adam Bradley gave the first part of his excellent review of the *Countdown To the Millenium* conference held in January.

However, he did make one tiny mistake. Like, where it was he went. Lester, Jon and Richard all went to a conference held in Chorley. Adam, however, apparently went to an uncannily similar conference in Cottingly.

See any fairies, Adam?

Part two is elsewhere in this issue.

# PROSAIC EXPLANATIONS: THE FAILURE OF UFO SKEPTICISM(part 4)

by Bruce Maccabee

(brumac@compuserve.com)

c B. Maccabee, 1999

*"In over 30 years of UFO investigation I have not  
studied a single sighting for which I could  
not find a prosaic explanation."*

-Paraphrase of a statement

by Philip J. Klass

## The Fantastic Flight of JAL1628

Klass followed the scientific procedure when he published his analysis of the Val Johnson case discussed in part one of this article. Klass clearly stated that the only prosaic explanation was a hoax by Officer Johnson, all others having been rejected by the testimony and the hard evidence. He then left it up to the reader to decide whether or not he had made a convincing case for it being a hoax. However, he did not follow the scientific method in his attempt to justify the meteor hypothesis for the Arnold sighting, nor in his analysis of the following sighting that occurred in 1986.

Japan Airlines Captain Kenju Terauchi had been mildly interested in UFOs for years, but didn't get to see one close-up until November 16, 1986. He and two other crew members were flying a 747 Jumbo jet (designated JAL1628) that was transporting a load of wine from Paris to Tokyo (and they didn't have one drop to drink...nor one drink to drop!), when suddenly, while over northeastern Alaska, they were confronted with a startling event: the appearance of two objects or "crafts" right in front of their aircraft. These objects suddenly appeared and maintained a fixed distance, estimated at 1,000 feet, ahead of their aircraft for about ten minutes (they were flying at 35,000 feet at about 600 mph).

The captain reported that he felt the sudden occurrence of heat on his face. Each object had two parallel vertical rows of yellowish lights that appeared like exhausts emitting flames. Each object rocked from side to side, and the rocking of the two objects was synchronized. Initially the objects were one above the other, but after several minutes they suddenly moved to a side-by-side orientation. They were not recognized as any known aircraft by the crew, which reported the event to the Anchorage, Alaska, Air Route Traffic

Control Center (ARTCC). The ARTCC tracked the airplane on radar and tried to detect the objects but was unable to do so. About ten minutes after their initial appearance, these "crafts" suddenly disappeared from ahead of the airplane. Within seconds of the disappearance, the captain noticed a strange light, like a long narrow fluorescent glow, at the left side of the airplane, quite a distance away. He turned on his airplane weather radar and noticed a large radar return about eight miles away in the direction of the faint glow.

As the plane flew southward, this light drifted behind the aircraft. Suddenly, a lot more of it became visible (by self-glow or by silhouette) and the captain referred to it as a "gigantic spaceship." This caused the captain to request a decrease in altitude to get away from it. At the same time the ARTCC requested that the plane make a circle to see what was behind it. Nothing was seen, but a radar target was detected momentarily behind the aircraft. Subsequently the aircraft was flying southward toward Anchorage when the captain last saw the "gigantic spaceship" far to his left and behind him, that is, roughly north of the aircraft.

The most complete report of this sighting ever published, along with analysis and a discussion of the proposed explanations, is presented in the article entitled "*The Fantastic Flight of JAL1628*," which appears in the May-June, 1987, issue of the *International UFO Reporter* (IUR), which is published by the Center for UFO Studies ([www.cufos.org](http://www.cufos.org)). An email version (without nice illustrations) is available from the author. The above information above is a very shortened version of the sighting but it contains enough information allow a proper evaluation of the "prosaic explanations" proposed and publicized by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP). The sighting occurred

in November, 1986. The Federal Aviation Administration announced in early January 1987 that it was going to investigate the sighting because of all the press interest. (This is anomalous by itself since, so far as I know, the FAA had never investigated any sighting before.) Less than a month later, and more than a month before the FAA announced the results of its investigation, CSICOP announced that the sighting had been explained ("UFO Mystery Solved," press release by CSICOP on January 22, 1987, Buffalo, NY).

The press release stated that, "according to a leading UFO investigator" (Philip J. Klass) "at least one extraterrestrial object was involved - the planet Jupiter, and possibly another - Mars." The press release asserted that at the time of the sighting Jupiter was "extremely bright" at a -2.6 magnitude and would have been about ten degrees above the horizon on the left side of the aircraft where the pilot first reported seeing the UFO. Mars would have been slightly lower and about twenty degrees to the right of Jupiter. According to the press release, "Although the very bright Jupiter and less bright Mars had to be visible to JAL Capt. Kenjyu Terauchi, the pilot never once reported seeing either - only a UFO that he described as being a 'white and yellow' light in his initial radio report to the Federal Aviation Administration controllers at Anchorage."

The press release could have mentioned, but did not, that Terauchi did report seeing numerous stars in the sky, city lights, and a glow of sunset in the west.

The CSICOP explanation was based mostly on Klass' interpretation of an early version of the transcript of the audio tape made at the Anchorage ARTCC. The radar tracking data were not made available until over a month later, so Klass had no information on the precise locations and flight directions of the plane at the times of the various sighting events. Therefore, he couldn't prove that Jupiter and Mars were in the locations or sighting directions (relative to the airplane) that he stated in the press release. On the other hand, there were rather explicit descriptions and drawings by the captain which had been widely publicized and which certainly were available to Klass but apparently he ignored them.

Klass made a major error in not waiting for the release of the complete information package by the FAA, because, if he had waited, he would have found that the publicized versions

of the sighting were quite close to the descriptions of the "crafts" that were given by the crew during interviews. These descriptions rule out Jupiter and Mars as possible causes of the sighting. Without the FAA data package he did not know that initial drawings were made only about two hours after the event. Nor did he know that the other crew members, in separate interviews, supported the captain's report of the objects that appeared in front of the plane. Nor did he know that at the beginning of the sighting the two crafts were almost directly ahead of the plane and not in the direction of Jupiter and Mars. Nor did he know about the sudden rearrangement of the relative positions of the objects from one above the other to one beside the other, a maneuver that Jupiter and Mars would have difficulty carrying out during the time of the sighting (!). Nor did he know that at the end of the sighting, while the plane was flying southward, nearly toward Jupiter and Mars, that the pilot reported the "gigantic spacecraft" was behind and to the left, in a direction nearly opposite to the direction to the planets.

The CSICOP press release discussed and rejected the FAA and Air Force radar detections. Curiously, however, it completely ignored the claim by the pilot that the airplane radar did detect a radar-reflective object at seven to eight miles in the direction of the UFO. Perhaps Klass rejected this claim, but if he had waited for the data package from the FAA, he would have learned that the other two members of the crew confirmed the pilot's statement about the radar detection.

Thus, the Jupiter-Mars explanation is contradicted by the sighting directions to the UFO at various times, by the descriptions of the crew members, and by the airplane radar detection. (Another "prosaic explanation" bites the dust!) Unfortunately, the "gullible" press did not know that at the time. The explanation was widely publicized. It made the captain look like an idiot, but as far as the press was concerned, that's OK. Only idiots report UFOs. Having done their duty the news media promptly forgot about the sighting.

In retrospect it appears that the CSICOP press release which was marked "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" should have been marked "FOR PREMATURE RELEASE."

The FAA finally did make a public report on the sighting on March 5, 1988 ("FAA Releases Documents on Reported UFO Sighting Last November," by Paul Steucke, Office of Public

Affairs, Alaskan Region, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), U.S. Department of Transportation, March 5, 1987, Anchorage, AK). This report concentrated on the controversy over the radar detections or non-detections by the ARTCC. It did not discuss the airplane radar detection nor did it discuss the visual sightings. It basically said that the ground radar did not support the claim of a sighting. This was not, of course, the same as saying there was no sighting, but the national press presented the FAA investigation results as if they proved there was no sighting.

The most important result of the FAA investigation was a data package which the FAA made available. This included radar data listing the exact airplane locations, headings and speed, the complete transcript of the ARTCC audio tape of the event and all the transcripts of the interviews with the crew members and air traffic controllers. With this data package anyone could have analyzed the sighting and concluded that Mars and Jupiter were not the solution.

Apparently that is exactly what Klass did after my detailed article was published by the Center for UFO Studies, because several months later CSICOP published another explanation (recall Maccabee's First Rule of Debunking mentioned above). This time it was moonlight on clouds! (Klass, P.J., "FAA Data Sheds New Light on JAL Pilot's UFO Report," *The Skeptical Inquirer*, Summer, 1987, Buffalo, NY)). Since the moon was low in the eastern sky Klass argued that the "crafts" were explained as reflections of moonlight from the clouds and "turbulent ice crystals." According to Klass, the turbulent ice crystals "could have generated flame-colored lights" (he didn't explain how) and "this would also explain why the undulating lights would periodically and suddenly disappear and then reappear as cloud conditions ahead changed. When the aircraft finally outflew the ice clouds and the initial 'UFO' disappeared for good (the Captain) would search the sky for it, spot Jupiter further to the left and conclude it was the initial UFO." Klass attributed the airplane radar sighting to "an echo from thin clouds of ice crystals."

Klass's explanation verges on scientific garbage. Although the crew reported there were thin clouds far below the plane there is no reason to suppose that moonlight reflected off ice crystals in these clouds would generate "flame colored lights." Klass' explanation certainly could not account for the heat which

Terauchi felt on his face. Nor would it explain the peculiar parallel arrays of flames or yellowish lights associated with two independently flying objects that appeared ahead of and above the plane, continuously for many minutes. Nor would it explain the sudden rearranging of these arrays of lights. According to Klass, the reflection from crystals could explain the colors of the lights. However, the reflected light would be basically the color of the moonlight. A variation in color would occur only if the moonlight were "broken" into its spectrum by refraction of light in the crystals (similar to what happens with rain and a rainbow). But the spectrum of white light contains more than just the yellow, amber and green which were reported. Blue and red should also have been noted if the air crew were looking at what would essentially be a "rainbow."

The lights ahead of the aircraft were described as bright. The copilot compared them to headlights of oncoming aircraft. A reflection of the moon from thin clouds would cover large areas of cloud and would be dim, diffuse, or "patchy," but not point-like.

Klass' explanation for the airplane radar target is total conjecture on his part since the clouds were reported by the crew to be thin. Would there be any return at all from such clouds? One might ask, if there were so many clouds, why didn't the radar pick up numerous "blobby" returns on the right side and ahead of the aircraft as well as on the left where the "gigantic spaceship" appeared to be. And, of course, Klass' explanation does not account for the appearance of a "gigantic spaceship."

The bottom line is that Klass proposed two prosaic explanations for this sighting but neither explanation was correct. Each one failed for physical reasons when compared with the information in the sighting report. The fact that he was able to propose seemingly reasonable prosaic explanations was valuable from the standpoint of publicity for the skeptical viewpoint and debunking sightings, but it was useless from the point of view of scientific analysis of UFO sightings. This sighting, along with those of officer Johnson, Kenneth Arnold, and A.C. Urie remain unexplained and, in my opinion, will remain unexplained.

*(Continued next issue)*

# FROM AROUND THE WORLD... AND BEYOND!!

*UFOs, conspiracies, paranormal and fortean events compiled by Dave Baker*

## UNITED KINGDOM

### WHITE 'BEAST OF BODMIN'

*(By Nichola Burrell)*

A Bodmin family are the latest to spot what they believe to be one of the area's mysterious big cats - but this time the animal was white.

And chewed bones found in the area where the mysterious animal was spotted are now being looked at by Newquay Zoo.

Derek and Christine Day, and their daughter Lisa who was celebrating her 17th birthday, were amazed to see a large white creature sitting in open land near their home to the south of Bodmin.

The animal was about 200 yards away, so Derek grabbed his binoculars for a closer look.

"It was definitely a cat," said Derek. "It was very big, bigger than a large dog, but the most striking thing was its colour. It was bright white.

"It had small ears and a solid bushy tail that was about 18ins long."

"It sat there for a while, it looked straight at me with its yellowy eyes then skulked off very quickly just like a cat low to the ground towards the railway line."

Christine called out to her parents who were visiting from Manchester. They caught a glimpse from the bedroom window.

Christine's father Charles Sims, 72, said: "We've seen the pictures of the beast of Bodmin and they are always a darker colour. Although this one was white, it is certainly not the kind of thing we expected to see when we visited."

Neighbour Clifford German, 43, was also outside when his attention was drawn to the animal. He saw another big cat six years ago in about the same spot.

"That was one of the first ones spotted. It was a dark one," he said. "This one was a white colour. I looked at Derek and he just stood there completely amazed."

Derek, 41, went over to where he had seen the cat sitting and the grass was flattened. There was no sign of paw prints but a couple of days later he and Cornish Guardian photographer Tim Neale found remains of chewed bones.

Mike Thomas, of Newquay Zoo, said this was the first report he had had of a big cat that is white.

"Albino cats are very rare," he said. "They tend not to live very long as they are so visible. There have only been three albino pumas ever recorded in North America where the cats are commonly found. If there is one around, you would expect more people to see it."

He added: "Cats tend to return to the same place to give birth and in my opinion it is the perfect time of year to do that. They would then be out hunting to feed their young and they would do that at dawn and dusk.

"The timing is right, the location is right, but the colour is very unusual."

Mr Thomas will be having a close look at the bones and should be able to tell from teeth marks what kind of animal had been eating it.

*(This is Cornwall on-line - March 7, 2000)*

### 'MYTH' OF FALSE MEMORY SYNDROME

Victims of childhood trauma who 'recover' memories in later life are unlikely to be suffering from False Memory Syndrome, say psychologists.

A study looks likely to revive the controversy over recovered memories, which some critics argue are fuelled by aggressive techniques used by therapists.

Previous reports have suggested that 'dangerous' methods of persuasion have made troubled adults recall abuse as children even if there is no evidence that it happened.

Families claim these 'false memories' have split them apart because allegations cannot be disproved.

But a study in the British Journal of Clinical Psychology says as many as one-third of adults with recovered memories have already started to remember traumatic events before seeing a therapist. It says memory recovery techniques are far less likely to trigger recall than real-life events involving the victims's own children or having a baby

Dr. Bernice Andrews, senior lecturer in psychology at Royal Holloway University of London, who led the team involved, said there was consistent evidence that False Memory Syndrome could not explain all or even most examples of recovered memories. In many ways recovered memories are similar to those of victims affected by traumas that have never been in doubt such as the Kings Cross fire, she said. The memories were fragmented, but detailed, accompanied by high levels of fear as they relive the event.

Between 40 and 50 per cent of adults, who have recovered memories from events as children have independent corroboration of them, she said.

*(The Mail, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2000)*

#### AUSTRALIA:

### YOWIE HUNTERS HEAD FOR THE HILLS NEAR GYMPIE

AAP -- To some it's just a huge, hairy joke, but 12 deadly serious men plan to search for that large, ape-like and always elusive creature, the yowie.

Dean Harrison of Beenleigh, south of Brisbane, works in a hardware import/export business by day, and as a yowie hunter by night.

Mr Harrison just wants to get the beast on film to prove the sceptics wrong.

He said there were thousands of yowies up and down the eastern seaboard of Australia, and they had terrorised people over the last few years, usually in less densely populated areas.

"It's not a joke," Mr Harrison told AAP. "I've been face to face with five separate yowies and was actually chased through the bush by an angry one at Ormeau (on the Gold Coast hinterland)."

Motorists have also reported seeing a large, upright, ape-like creature charging across a nearby stretch of the Gold Coast motorway during peak hour, he said.

Residents of one street at Springwood in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, had been terrorised by a non-human ape-like creature prowling around their back yards and had gathered one night to drive the creature through the bush and away from their homes, Mr Harrison said.

In October last year, an expedition to Coonabarabran in central-west New South Wales was "yelled and screamed at" by a large unknown creature whose footprints were later found, a discovery which bore out the accounts of a Yowie told by local residents, he said.

But Mr Harrison said some yowies were quite gentle with a fascination for children, and had been known to steal baby clothes from washing lines.

One Yowie was spotted listening to the sound of a crying baby and was observed gently stroking the walls of the house and making crooning sounds, as if to soothe the crying baby, Mr Harrison said.

Mr Harrison, who says he has been tracking yowies for years, will this weekend head the expedition of 12 people in four wheel drive vehicles and a campervan to an undisclosed location in mountainous terrain west of Gympie in south-east Queensland.

There, at three separate sites, the expedition members will stake out the elusive Yowie, using sensor equipment to detect movement, heat-seeking devices, infra-red spotlights and video recorders, night vision scopes and sound recorders.

"The mission is to find any evidence of the yowie or other strange creatures that live in this remote location, and to capture sounds and hopefully footage of ape-man," Mr Harrison said.

The latest expedition of the organisation Australian Hominid / Yowie Research Hunters

follows a report from three motorcyclists who were riding trail bikes in a remote area west of Gympie last year.

The rider who was last on the trail reported being chased on his bike through the bush by a three-metre tall hairy creature.

Mr Harrison said that two years ago, another group in the same area reported seeing a mother, father and baby Yowie beside a creek bed near their camp site.

"They noticed just on dusk a family of three (yowies) had come up from the nearby creek bed and ...there was a large male, a female and juvenile," Mr Harrison said.

*(Ninemsn news on line - AEST March 9 2000)*

#### UNITED KINGDOM

### REVEALED - BRITAIN'S 1950S FLYING SAUCER

*(by Jonathan Leake, Science Editor Sunday Times)*

It is the nearest the RAF got to a UFO. Recently discovered photographs taken at a secret laboratory in the 1950s reveal for the first time how close Britain came to developing a saucer-shaped stealth fighter after the second world war.

The pictures, taken at a research centre in Canada, show a revolutionary ultra-high-speed jet fighter designed by the British engineer John Frost. Aviation experts who studied the pictures last week said the jet incorporated some of the features on America's stealth fighter plane.

Work on the aircraft in the 1950s was codenamed Project Y. Frost and his team initially set out to build a disc-shaped machine with vertical takeoff, but ended with a sleek, arch-shaped aircraft.

"The pictures are a wonderful find," said David Windle, who has researched the history of Project Y. "It is technology that Britain just lost and it is a pity the project was abandoned. Who knows what would have happened if they had pursued it."

The photographs were taken at a laboratory in Malton, near Toronto, where Frost was working with Avro-Canada, a subsidiary of the British firm Avro, to develop a jet fighter for the Canadian government. He wanted to create an aircraft which could

fly at 2,500mph and take off and land on its tail.

The existence of Project Y has been known about for years, but no pictures of the aircraft have ever been found. An aviation researcher accidentally discovered the photographs in a file at the Public Records Office in Kew.

An elongated saucer shape was used because of the revolutionary "radial flow" jets designed to power it. The engines were designed to emit the exhaust gases from several small nozzles, increasing the thrust of the jet.

Aviation experts said last week that the prototype vehicle would have been almost invisible to radar because of its slim cross-section. It would also have been more likely to evade enemy missiles because of the lower heat output through the numerous jet outlets.

It is not known why the revolutionary jet never went into production, but the project was abandoned before the plane had its first test flight.

Alex Raeburn, then assistant superintendent of manufacturing at Avro, described the life of secrecy for those on the base. "The security was very tight," he says. "Armed guards were stationed on the doors and drawings were taken away as soon as we'd made the component. In fact, we never knew exactly what it was we were making."

Verne Morse, one of the team who worked on the secret project, said he was amazed any pictures had survived because of the total secrecy surrounding the project. He described how he saw a subsequent model designed by the team.

"When I saw it [the plane] for the first time I was stunned," he said. "I'd heard rumours we were working on a flying saucer, but I dismissed them. Now, here I was looking at it, and I was speechless."

In 1954, the Canadian government decided to end the development of the aircraft. The American Air Force took over the project and later a scaled-down version of the plane became an "air jeep", which was nicknamed the Avrocar.

Raeburn said he witnessed test pilot Spud Potocki flying the saucer-shaped craft. "I remember him flying up to the hangar windows and looking in like a humming bird

might do. When he flew in cold weather the engines sucked pieces of ice off the puddles. They'd float around in the air, shining in the sunlight."

Professor Michael Graham, professor of aerodynamics at Imperial College, said: "In the 1950s there was a lot of interest in different aircraft shapes. This is built like a kind of flying wing. Its ability to hover is useful for landing in rough places."

While Frost worked on Project Y, American engineers were developing their own ultra-high-speed jets at desert bases in California and Nevada, which led to the development of spy planes such as the U2.

In 1961, however, despite the successful flights of the Avrocar, the American air force halted all funding for the company's researchers. There were no more British-designed flying saucers and Frost left Avro and moved to New Zealand, where he died.

Last week Tony, his son, said: "Dad was a brilliant artist who was always designing things, but he combined that skill with being a very capable mathematician and great lateral thinker."

#### USA

### UFO LAWSUIT DISMISSED BY FEDERAL JUDGE IN PHOENIX

A federal judge in Phoenix has granted the government's request to dismiss a lawsuit brought by a group of UFO activists for information about a very unusual triangular-shaped aerial object.

In *Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS) v. Department of Defense (DoD)*, Chief U.S. District Court Judge Stephen M. McNamee, in an 8-page decision, has ruled that the DoD had conducted a reasonable search even though it did not find any information.

In his decision, Judge McNamee stated "this case is not one over the existence or non-existence of UFOs, but whether the government has conducted a reasonable search regarding information on specific aerial modes of transportation.

A fruitless search is immaterial if Defendant can establish that it conducted a search reasonably calculated to uncover all relevant documents requested for by Plaintiff.

Defendant has met its burden by providing sufficiently detailed affidavits for the Court to conclude that a reasonable search was conducted in responding to Plaintiff's FOIA request for documents. Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate substantial doubt regarding the reasonableness of the search. Therefore, Defendant's Motion for Summary Judgment is granted."

CAUS attorney, Peter A. Gersten, stated he is considering an appeal of the Court's decision. (*Paranorml News Network (P3N)*)

#### UNITED KINGDOM

### MORE METEORS?

Scores of people including on-duty police officers, air traffic controllers and the coastguard called in to report a mysterious sighting.

At around 1am there were many witnesses to a large meteorite hurtling through the sky. It shot from the North West to towards the North East and out over the North Sea.

The Meteorological Office, who chart these events, were not expecting it and had no idea where it came from. (*BBC Ceefax, 6 April 2000*)

### PHONE CALL FROM THE DEAD?

Stephane Nettleton's answering machine recorded a message at 2.23am on Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> November 1999.

Mrs. Nettleton who lives in High Green, Sheffield, was sleeping with her grandchildren only a few feet from the phone but never heard it ring.

There is the sound of galloping horses, then an old lady's voice says, "I am lost. I am not happy". This is followed by a sound like ripping paper and a voice shouts "Can you hear me!"

British Telecom could not find any record of a call. A neighbour thought the voice sounded like a former occupant of the flat, who had died. But the caretaker thought it sounded like a previous tenant who was still alive.

(*Doncaster Star, 16 Dec 1999*)

## THE REVIEW OF THE LECTURE OF THE PROMOTION OF THE BOOK OF THE "UFOs THAT NEVER WERE"

( Chesterfield Library Theatre, Chesterfield, Derbyshire  
Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2000 )

By Dave Baker

This mini-lecture had been organised between Chesterfield's Peak Bookshop and Chesterfield's Central library as part of a promotion for "*The UFOs That Never Were*", the first full literary collaboration between three of the UK's most prominent ufologists, Jenny Randles, Dr. David Clarke and Andy Roberts.

Myself and the YUFOS crew had been invited along so Richard Moss, Jonathan Slater and I climbed into Richard's car on a damp and cold Friday night, and set course for glittering Chesterfield, Jewel of the North!<sup>1</sup>

Having arrived early, we relaxed in the foyer and waited for the festivities to start. Jenny Randles was the first to arrive, and we spent a few moments chatting with her on the pleasantries of British Rail and what there was to do in Rotherham<sup>2</sup>, before the last minute arrival<sup>3</sup> of Messers Clarke and Roberts.

Talking animatedly with the three authors, YUFOS successfully passed ourselves off as part of 'The Entourage', and in true Northern style<sup>4</sup>, breezed past any attempts at paying. Really quite shameful, but it had been Dr. Dave's idea, and I later bought a copy of their book so, hey- fair do's. Anyway I'm a journalist!<sup>5</sup>

The library theatre is an impressive venue, with comfortable tiered seating and a more than adequate sound and lighting system, and we briefly considered photographing it for the web-site and passing it off as the room above the Three Cranes where YUFOS hold it's monthly meetings. But common sense and honesty prevailed, and instead we picked out a good view and sat down to watch the rest of the audience arrive.

It was an impressive turn-out for a city with no UFO group (to my knowledge) and were

immediately targetted by us as potential victims...uh...members. Purely by chance Richard had on him a stack of flyers, and he was to later ambush the audience as they made their way out and offer them a passport to fun, japes and UFOs via YUFOS. We had been told earlier that around a hundred tickets had been sold, and there had to be at least that, with barely an anorak in sight, although there were some quite alarming jumpers.<sup>6</sup>

The event started with a brief introduction of the three speakers, (read directly from the inside jacket notes of the book itself) and after being informed by the organiser that 'ufology' was a new word to her, Jenny Randles took the stage.

This was the third time I had heard Jenny speak, and it is clear that she enjoys her subject immensely and is eager to talk about it and pass her knowledge on to others. I know that she certainly doesn't do it for the money.<sup>7</sup>

"*The UFOs That Never Were*" is, we were told, an attempt to re-address the balance of all the sensationalistic and frankly evidence-free books usually found clotting the shelves of our local Waterstones.

Jenny raised a point which I myself have often thought, that many authors of UFO books appear to pick a hypothesis that no-one else has written about, then carefully choose their evidence to support this theory. Jenny also mentioned that if the three authors had wanted to make serious money in the deal, they could easily have penned such a book themselves. And I don't doubt it.

Whether the book will sell in the same numbers as the next Pope or Good remains to be seen...but since when did publishing and integrity go hand in hand anyway?

Jenny touched on a number of cases which she thought had been explained to her satisfaction. A recent case of an immense UFO covered in

<sup>1</sup> *It's not really. But it DOES have a McDonalds.*

<sup>2</sup> *Nothing.*

<sup>3</sup> *'Fasionably late'*

<sup>4</sup> *"Owt fer nowt!"*

<sup>5</sup> *I write things and drink a lot.*

<sup>6</sup> *'Sweaters' to our U.S. chums. 'Naff' to us.*

<sup>7</sup> *She spoke for YUFOS last year... Thanks Jenny.*

lights which terrified a father and his two daughters near Ringway, Manchester was almost certainly a huge and little-seen cargo plane descending into Manchester Airport. It was revealed as Jenny investigated that the man already had an interest in UFOs, and this desire "to see one" coupled with an unusual aircraft seen from a moving vehicle had created the misidentification.

Then came a classic case of Jenny's, an investigation of completely silent, orange spheres of light which regularly glided low over the Rossendale Valley back in 1979 and 1980.

The Manchester UFO Research Association (MUFORA) of which Jenny was involved, set up a series of sky-watches, and with a little detective work, were able to prove that the eerie, unearthly UFOs were rather more prosaic.

A cargo plane travelling from Scotland to Manchester would indulge in a dangerous and not to mention illegal activity on its final approach to Manchester. As they passed over North Lancashire the pilots would literally put their feet up, switch off all but the tail light-which illuminated the airline company's red logo - and switch off the engines...gliding, in effect, over the low hills.

As they approached Rossendale itself they would re-throttle the engine and land as normal at Manchester. Worryingly, this activity was, and probably still is, widespread.

If the case seems familiar, readers may have seen a dramatised version of it in an episode of ITV's *Heartbeat* programme. To Jenny's chagrin, the programme never credited her or other researchers with the inspiration. Obviously, if Jenny lived in the USA, she would by now be living in the lap of luxury on the proceeds from the litigation fee she could have grabbed from this one.

Jenny then briefed us on the famous 'Peter Day film' of January 1973. It seemed like the perfect case; 23 seconds of 8mm footage showing a flattened, fiery ball of light, and multiple independent witnesses viewing the UFO from separate locations.

It wasn't until 1991, some 18 years later, that the truth came to light after a series of painstaking investigations. And like the Rossendale UFO above, and the Howden Moor

incident, the case was to raise many important questions regarding public safety.

What was it? Well, Jenny devotes a chapter to the events in *The UFOs That Never Were* so, hey, buy the book!

Andy Roberts took the stage next and had the audience in stitches with his wry take on ufology and the people who thrive in it. The thing about Andy is that he is just as likely to poke fun at his friends as his 'enemies', something his detractors never seem to grasp.

Andy concentrated on two cases which will be familiar to PRB readers; the Cracoe case<sup>8</sup> and his acclaimed re-investigation of the Berwyn Mountains 'UFO Crash', both of which have major chapters devoted to them in TUTNW.

Both cases typify the content of TUTNW, being classic UFO reports which have rational, albeit unlikely explanations. They also show just how some UFO researchers are unwilling to admit defeat when an alternative, and more logical explanation is offered by a fresh investigation.

Dr. Dave Clarke spoke last and after a hilarious piece of stand-up comedy in which he pretended he didn't know how to use an overhead projector - (...uh...it was *supposed* to be funny, Dave?) he launched into his, and in my opinion the definitive version of events which some have, and will continue to call 'The British Roswell.'

Like Andy's work, The Howden Moor Incident is well known to readers of PRB<sup>9</sup> and so I will refrain from regurgitating the events of March 24 1997 yet again.

This was the second time I had seen Dave's lecture - although this was a much-truncated version - and I am more than familiar with the details anyway. However, instead of becoming stale and tedious, the facts as Dave presented them only become crisper and clearer, with his logical and clear-headed approach standing out above the more outlandish and frankly ludicrous theories of others.

<sup>8</sup> See the infamous, blasphemous and really quite hilarious 'An Interview with Andy Roberts', PRB vol.3 no2. The only remaining copy of that issue now resides in the Vatican's ultra-secret Black Vaults along with the original copy of the mad Arab Abdul Alhrazed's evil tome, 'The Necronomicon.'

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, this issue.

Finally, the three authors took the stage and prepared for a question and answer session. This is unusual in itself, as - deliberately or not- lecturers rarely leave enough time after a gig for such a grilling, usually having to "rush to catch a train".<sup>10</sup>

One slightly awkward question came from a young man who, possibly trying to impress his girlfriend, questioned why Jenny chooses to write for the sort of glossy, news-stand, ET-obsessed magazines she had earlier criticised.

His question was a valid one, although he did harp on a little, seemingly turning it into a crusade. As Jenny, Andy and Dave explained, writing in such forums is an ideal way to reach the general UFO-interested public, and offer an alternative to the Extra-terrestrial hypothesis. Too often UFO magazines, even those published by local groups such as YUFOS are locked in one mindset, and rarely show both sides of the fence.

And again, it was stressed that written work for such publications is not exactly going to help pay the rent. Although one researcher into the Howden Moor incident claimed, for example that the now-defunct *UFO Reality* offered him £500 for his case-report, I have been assured that even *Fortean Times* only pay around £50 for an article by established writers.<sup>11</sup>

A few other questions were bandied around, but it was clear that some of the audience had been a little put-off by the 'non-believers' up on stage. For a moment, we thought that YUFOS member and contributor Mark Martin had snuck in under heavy disguise, as an elderly man started questioning Jenny about Rendlesham. Alarm bells rang throughout those 'in the know', as this is rather like someone asking Chris Evans about himself...don't get them started, they'll never shut up. We could be here for hours....

However, as TUTNW includes a lengthy chapter by Jenny on the classic piece of UFO lore, she was able to field the question, and the evening was drawn to a close.

All in all, the lecture was hugely enjoyable, even to those familiar with much of the work involved. For the ignorant public though, it

<sup>10</sup> *Those that do, however, usually wind up being corralled into an endless debate about Rendlesham Forest. Which is why they do go for the train, I guess.*

<sup>11</sup> *And YUFOS pay even less. Nowt, in fact.*

was a real bargain, three top-notch and entertaining speakers for less than the price of one. An excellent night out, and something I for one would be more than happy to indulge in again.

## NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 9th May, 2000

7:00pm – 10:00 pm

*THE THREE CRANES,*

QUEEN STREET,

SHEFFIELD CITY CENTRE

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# COUNTDOWN TO THE MILLENIUM (pt 2)

(Conference Review)

By Adam Bradley

Jenny Randes was next up with a talk on reincarnation. She explained that she had traded a tape recorder for a slide projector for reasons that would become obvious and then began.

She went on to explain a time when she had spoken with Roy Hudd, who was having unusual visions of an old house. While out driving one day they came across a house that bore a striking resemblance and went in to investigate. Roy found the house very similar, but there were certain details that didn't fit, Jenny questioned him on these details and found them more similar to the house as it was many years ago.

Jenny conjectured that it could be part of same talent to look into past or possibly part of spiritual journey. Her investigation have led her to believe reincarnation makes more sense than most ideas of the afterlife and it was part of Christianity until sectarian disputes, within Christianity caused it to be abandoned. Jenny stated that she had decided to study the phenomenon from a scientific perspective and went on to play an interview shed had with Dr Shaw, a prominent psychologist, about it. He stated the he believed that self-delusion was behind this and many paranormal phenomenon as it was driven by a basic fear of death.

Another interview with basic fear of death.

Another interview with clinical psychologist Dr John Dale revealed his belief that it was wholly unsubstantiated and claimed it to be a subconscious event displaying itself in symbolic form (I won't refer to my article titled '*psychobabble*' at this point).

An interview with researcher Joe Keating was played next who had done extensive research into this area and believed that among many cases he had investigated a few led him to wonder at the evidence and the possibility of the phenomena. He also asserted that there were levels of hypnosis and the deeper levels ruled out suggestion and imagination.

Jenny explained that she had actually undertaken a form of non-hypnotic regression

where the participant tries to visualise clearly the random images passing through their mind. For Jenny this began to merge with images from her childhood going to a younger and younger age and eventually going through a kind of barrier to a life when she saw herself as a woman selling stew to horse drawn carriages after being ostracised by her husband. She passed this information on to sceptical researcher Ian Wilson who went on to verify many of the names and locations mentioned in Jenny's experience.

Part of her research involved hypnotically regressing adults to a point where scientists insist that there should be no conscious memory due to their young age, and recovered memories do drop off at this point. Children do not withhold much information at this age and their IQ is obviously less than when they are mature, but when regressed adults visits these ages their IQ can match that of the age they are experiencing.

Another element of it is the fact that many of the more convincing accounts of re-incarnation are mostly local to wherever the person they are reincarnated from died. She believed that we could find out more about this area if we supported children if they made a claim like this rather than pass it off as over active imagination.

Another recording this time of some one having undergone regression claimed that he watched his former life as a kind of film. When she played the actual recording of him under hypnosis he sounded distressed and apparently drunk. The tape betrayed her well before this and was playing faster and faster all the time (the Pinky and Perky of the re-incarnation world if you like).

Another tape of a hypnotised subject had a man claiming to be in the Crimean War after being shot in the hand and had a similarly lazy slurred sound along with the distress. A lot of the data he provided was proved right and none proved wrong. Jenny actually met him and believes his sincerity but also added that it is possible that he had stored all his information sub-consciously.

At this point Jenny entered an interesting experience that she had regarding a dream she had recorded many years ago as part of a precognition experiment. She had gone onto to other things since then, but when she began an experiment more recently regarding this area, she drew out her old records and found that a dream she'd had recently was identical.

Generally speaking reports of past lives are dull and the deaths ageing and slow.

She then began to address some of the popular theories of pre-life memories, beginning with genetic memory in which it is theorised that memories are passed down through the genes. This can easily be disproved as many past life claims involved death before the person involved gives birth thus stopping the genetic memory being passed on.

Another was the 'atomic memory' in which the memory is recorded on the sub-atomic level where it can be detected by the sub-conscious mind. This is also easily disproved as each person would have thousands of memories instead of just one or two.

Again it was open to questions at the end and was one of the most intelligent and interesting question and answer sessions of the day, I made no notes of it however as I had my hand stuck up waiting to make an awesome point.

Why is it," I asked, "that people aren't re-incarnated into the past as the theory of re-incarnation seems to be based on the idea that time exists after death and there for you can only be born after you die."

Jenny grinned and said "Yes, but you can't check if someone has been re-incarnated into the past, if someone was re-incarnated now from the future how could you verify what they were saying."

"Oh yes," I said "sorry".

Its hard to do justice to all the speakers but Jenny I feel I let down the most as the talk was successful mostly in its detail, there was real science in this talk and the impression of proper in-depth investigation was the defining feature.

*(The final part of this review will be in the next issue.)*

*HMMMMM....department.*

## UFO HIJACKS CAR IN ULSTER: VICTIM REPORTS SIX HOURS OF "MISSING TIME"

An Ulster man claims that his car was lifted off the ground by a UFO, and he experienced six hours of "missing time" as a result.

On Thursday, March 23, 2000, John H., employed at a factory in West Belfast, County Antrim, Northern Ireland, "was on my way home from work after a long and tiring shift which had lasted 24 hours. So, as you can imagine, I wanted to go home to my wife and children and sleep for a few hours."

"But," John reported, "as I was on my way home, I pulled into a petrol station to fill up the tank and noticed to my right a large light in the sky. At first I thought maybe it was the moon.

But on looking again, it didn't take on the shape of the moon. Indeed, it took on the shape of an egg."

"I was amazed at what I was looking at. At first I thought to myself, Go and get someone to look at this thing..But, as the thought crossed my mind, something told me to get in the car and drive away from the filling station. Without paying for the petrol or anything!"<sup>12</sup>

"I got into the car and drove away. The thing was following me. I live on the Falls Road in West Belfast, but I was driving the road that leads down to Dublin.

I didn't want to go to Dublin! I wanted to go home to my wife and babies. I couldn't understand why I was driving down this road."

"While I was driving, I noticed the object again. It was starting to scare me very much indeed. So much, in fact, I started to scream. Without knowing why, I stopped the car on a hillside road that leads to a farming area northbound on the M-3. The car, it seemed, was lifting. I felt it. But for some reason, I was not sure that it was. It was as though someone was screwing with my brain. Telling me what to think."<sup>13</sup>

"All I can remember after this was driving on

<sup>12</sup> *HMMMMMM...*

<sup>13</sup> *double 'hmmmmmm'*

the Whiterock/Donnegal Road and back to my house on the Falls Road. The funny thing about it is, on my way home from work, it takes five minutes to get to my home from the filling station. But it was 2:30 a.m. before I got home."

"I have about six hours of my life gone, and I

can't account for it. I want to know what is going on, and I have to know it now."

The case is currently being investigated by Conor McLaughlin of the Belfast UFO Society.

*(Joe Trainor, UFO Roundup)*

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## OPERATION PUSSY CAT

BY CYRIL DIXON

With military planning fit for a Kosovo war zone, they were poised ready to pounce. But the target of this RAF unit is a danger only to chickens, rabbits and livestock. And some say it doesn't even exist.

Even if they spotted their quarry, the volunteer gunners did not have the ammo to finish it off. For the squad was mobilised specially to track down but not kill the mysterious wild cat dubbed the Beast of Bodmin.

Complete with camouflage gear and the latest surveillance equipment, about 50 reservists spent the weekend dug into trenches on Bodmin Moor. Their mission: gather conclusive evidence that the elusive creature - thought to be a puma or similar predator - exists.

Yesterday, after the weekend exercise failed to detect so much as a cat's whisker, Squadron Leader Andy McCombe explained the thinking behind the operation.

"I have to train my volunteers in techniques used for keeping the enemy under observation," he said. "This involves setting up observation posts in open territory and keeping watch all through the day and night. It seemed a good idea since we are based in Cornwall to give them something extra to do at the same time.

"Watching for something with four legs and a tail would tend to focus their minds a bit more. At the same time, there have been so many sightings of these animals which are considered unreliable. If two military-trained personnel, using sophisticated equipment, saw the same thing it would have more credibility."

Royal Auxiliary Air Force squadron 2625 called their task Operation Last Look since it was their second and final search for the beast. Volunteers from the St Mawgan-based unit include teachers, bank clerks and insurance

staff, together with a nightclub bouncer and - it being Cornwall - a surfboard maker.

On Friday night they split into groups to erect hides across the fog-bound moor with chicken wire and bits of foliage. To catch their quarry, they were equipped with night goggles, a seismic intruder device which detects movement and a thermal imager to home in on the big cat's body heat.

The gunners kept in touch using walkie-talkies and although they had standard issue L85 rifles they had neither bullets nor blanks. But like so many other attempts to get to the bottom of myths and legends, Operation Last Look came to nothing.

By the time it came to an end yesterday morning, the team had sighted only a few moorland ponies and heard the odd unidentified rustle in the undergrowth. Sqn Ldr McCombe said:

"Sadly we did not see the Beast of Bodmin. But there were several moments when the electronic beepers went off and the adrenalin began flowing. Those bursts of activity woke us all up and livened up the exercise."

The squadron's training has now come to an end, and the Beast of Bodmin can rest safely in its lair. But the techniques learned in the operation could prove vital.

"We are not just out there having fun and looking for cats," said Sqn Ldr McCombe. "This is extremely valuable training for people who could be involved in important military operations. Last year 12 of the squadron were sent to support regular units in Kosovo and Kuwait. Some of the Kosovo gunners were detailed to guard helicopters from possible enemy raids."

*(The Express, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2000)*