

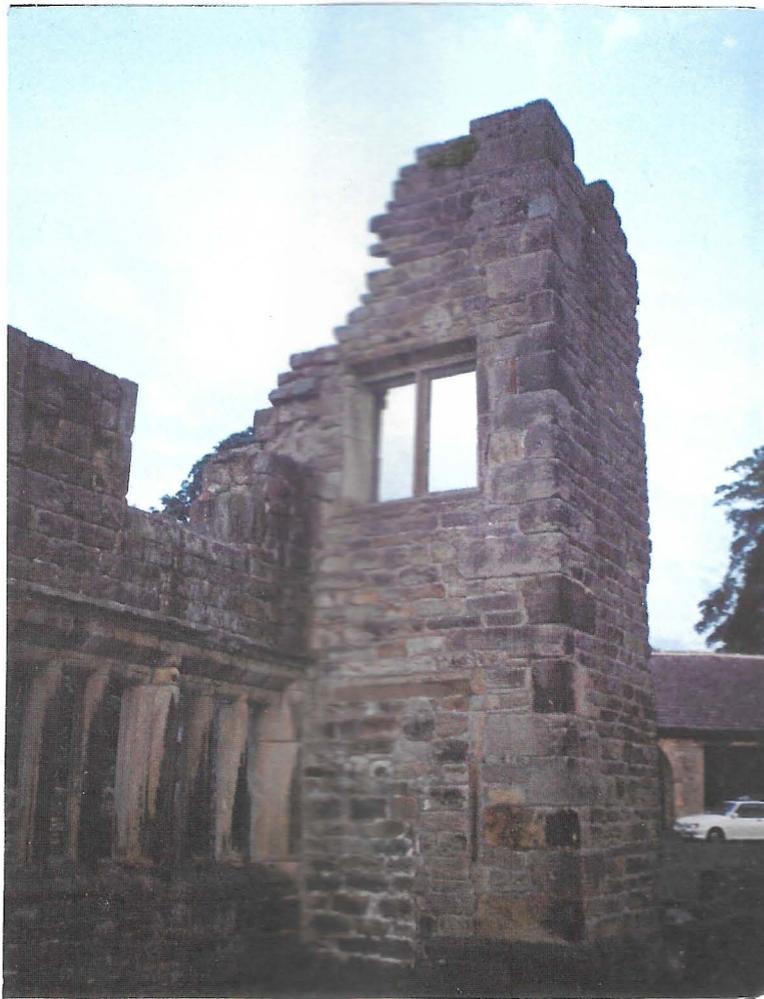
# THE RESEARCHER



A publication of the Merseyside **Anomalies** Research Association

“Interpretation is free, **experience** is sacred.”

Issue #2 Winter 1998



The 1998 Prescott Scareship  
An Urban Myth  
Hypnotic regression and “abductions”  
The Haunting of Wycoller Hall  
Detecting physical alien craft  
Spiritualism; a cruel act of deception?

£2.50

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## About MARA

The Merseyside Anomalies Research Association (MARA) was founded in February 1996. It is a non-profit making organisation whose aims are to encourage, promote and conduct unbiased objective investigation and research into UFO/paranormal phenomena. MARA provides non-financial support for undergraduate and post-graduate research into anomalous phenomena. It also has a functioning Witness Support Group which helps those who have had often disturbing close encounter UFO / paranormal experiences.

MARA consists of an informal group of people of all backgrounds and a variety of ages over 18. The group tries to limit itself to a relatively small number of people, composed of individuals with mixed backgrounds who want to actively investigate and research UFO/paranormal phenomena within the Merseyside region. We do not give public lectures at our regular meeting, but often present lectures or talks for other groups and societies. Membership application to MARA is free and despite the above size limitation is open to any interested individuals. As places are limited we have a waiting list for membership. The Association is jointly run by its group co-ordinators who are amateur investigators and researchers in their spare time, and members of well known national organisations. They are responsible for any major decisions involving the group in addition to the association's membership, activities, functions and research.

It is a policy of the organisation not to have any fixed beliefs and to remain apolitical. However, the organisation is not responsible for the opinion's expressed, or implied, by guest speakers, items within The Researcher, or by any arbitrary views of the Association's members. MARA is affiliated to the British UFO Research Association, Northern Anomalies Research Organisation, The Northern UFO Network, the Incorporated Society for Psychical Research, Halton EM UFO Factor, Merseyside Area Paranormal Society and works with the Association for Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena, Wirral Paranormal Investigations and the Wirral Saucer Group.

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### About The Researcher

This publication serves as a voice for MARA members who want to write about their research and interests in anomalous phenomena. We will also print letters from readers and we will also include articles and advertisements belonging to those people who are not a part of MARA but who would like to contribute their research to this small publication. It will not involve payment for the article but it will mean that your article will be read by a larger number of people involved with UFOs and the paranormal. Please send your letters and articles to Anthony Eccles at the address above. Keep it clean and objective, know what I mean? MARA reserves the right to edit all articles as necessary.

## The Voice

Since the first issue, in the Autumn of 1997, a number of events have taken place within the research community that has actually been an influencing factor with this issue. As an organisation, MARA appears to be doing well, by avoiding the unnecessary politics and just getting on slowly with the work. The journal has also done well, it has received a number of complimentary comments from a number of people. We have already begun to reprint the first issue, after all our predominant aim is to ensure accessibility to the public. Not only do we have a number of subscribers but we now also have a consultant to the group. He is Dr. Carl Williams, lecturer in psychology at Liverpool Hope University College, and I would like here to formally welcome him to MARA.

Last year was the fiftieth anniversary of ufology, and as a year of celebration it was disappointing. Instead of well attended and presented conferences, where fresh information and data is given, many of these events lacked good attendance and were often over-run by the stupidity of politics and, of course, the ever increasing commercialism. Certain researchers came into considerable conflict with such things as allegations over past actions (which had nothing whatsoever to do with the research they were currently doing). Jealousy and bitterness existed amongst certain people claiming to be researchers, and I feel that they are not researchers in the true meaning of the word. A lot of us, it seems, are actually going backwards instead of forwards in a thwarted attempt to find answers. I believe that the public do not just want to be entertained and astounded by obscure events, but that they also want something or someone to reinforce their existing beliefs which are already influenced by B-movie epics and well made serials such as The X-Files. And yet the paranormal seems to be predominantly caused by unexplainable scientific events of the natural world, and only a minority of the public are really interested in this. In some respects this pre-millennium society looks less towards God or angels for a meaning to life but instead more increasingly to extra-terrestrial and alien life-forms, which seem to represent something more tangibly real.

We focus, in this issue, in part, on experiences commonly known as 'abductions' because we feel that the investigations behind these may be reaching dangerous levels with regard to the effects hypnotic regression may have upon the mental health of the "witness", the subjectivity of such research and the ever increasing legal consequences if things go wrong. Researchers beware! Investigations into these type of experiences requires an approach by a qualified professional. Anytime now a research group could be sued for endangering a "witness's" health. Could you afford the consequences? After all, what will be your evidence in court? The results of hypnotic regression will not be accepted in a court of law, not because there is a massive conspiracy to cover these events up, but more realistically because there seems to be very little evidence to show that details emanating from hypnotic regression are not necessarily real. There is more evidence to suggest otherwise, for example, in claimed cases of sexual abuse. We in MARA feel responsible towards our witnesses, especially those who are members of the Witness Support Group we set up. We feel that we can best take such responsibility without having to resort to regression as a means of taking care of witnesses. However, it is appropriate to try and examine the problems of hypnotic regression from two people with different views and differing evidence. The subject still remains controversial within the scientific community and should therefore be viewed with reasoned caution by researchers alike, the majority of whom are not academically or scientifically equipped to better understand it than any professionals.

## Conference details and reviews

*by the members of MARA*

*24<sup>th</sup> January*

The Lancashire UFO Society (LUFOS) were the organisers to this largish event entitled "When Worlds Collide", and it initially appeared to be quite promising. The venue took place at the United Reform Hall in Southport and began at around 12:30. It was well attended, not just by members of the general public, but also by members of the various UFO groups in the North. Ten people from MARA had attended to support the event as well as to see if something new could be learnt from the conference. Unfortunately it had failed to do this. Instead it was noted that the speakers seemed too sceptical, not objective and even cynical in their aims. However, the talks were well argued and reasoned from the speakers' point of view, and covered a wide spectrum of UFO phenomena from the "nuts and bolts" view to the aspects of military cover-ups and self deception created by UFO organisations themselves. This latter point is extremely valid. The whole day appeared to be well organised by the LUFOS group despite the fact that the event ran over time.

The opening lecture was presented by a LUFOS member and were unfortunately not really experienced in giving lectures to the public. Peter Brookesmith presented a talk regarding the parallels between fairy folklore, nightmare/ Old Hag visitations and contemporary "alien abductions". Although he was interesting to listen to, his talk tended to drag on a little bit as he did not use any audio or visual aids to accompany it. Normally, good lectures are presented in this manner, after all it is the information the student requires, but for the general public it may have been quite hard for them to concentrate. By far the most high profile researcher present was Jenny Randles, who came up with new facts regarding the famous Rendlesham Forest case. Although some might criticise Rendlesham as being over-exposed, like Roswell, Miss Randles presented a fact packed session that was refreshing to hear. Whether delegates accepted the new data or not, the fresh information was clearly needed by those researchers who were genuinely interested into finding out what actually happened in Suffolk in December 1980. Kevin McClure gave a strong opinion regarding the possible harmful use of regressive hypnosis in paranormal/close encounter experiences cases (see his article in this issue on page 28). Another speaker, David Caton, from the Quest International, had presented some film footage which showed an alleged UFO approximately the size of a jumbo jet. The footage was clearly open to speculative interpretation, one person had commented on it being a child's balloon, which was denied by both the speaker and the witness who claimed to have experienced missing time. Tim Matthews gave his routine delivery, which many consider one-tracked and narrow minded. Although Tim does well to illustrate the deception given by man-made technologies, he fails to take a look into the wider field of real ufology which would allow him, perhaps, to become more correctly focused with his present research. Behind the scenes, though, there existed an element within the audience that resorted to spoiling the day and the fun of many people. This was not the fault of the organisers, the speakers or genuinely interested members of the public, but of someone who has made unimpressive and anonymous allegations against Tim Matthews. If there was any truth behind such allegations, the evidence should have been presented in an appropriate manner. So far, this "evidence" appears to have little foundation, except for what appears in anonymous "newsletters". No doubt, this conference will not be forgotten, unfortunately not so much for its line up of speakers but more for the destructive and embarrassing scenes caused by politics. It is said that where there is smoke there is fire, we will just have to wait and see.

## ‘Spiritualism’. A cruel despicable act of deception or genuine contact with the dead?

*by Colin John Veacock*

In 1884, Margaret and Kate Fox, two farm girls from Hydesville, New York State, shocked the world. They claimed that they had been in contact with the spirit of a peddler who had been murdered in their cellar, who repeatedly rapped and hammered on the walls of their home. Their amazing story spread around the globe. At long last, it seemed that someone had answered the age old question concerning life after death. Not long afterwards, Margaret and Kate's elder sister, Leah, joined in on the fun and games revelling in their new found fame as the three of them were swept to the dizzy heights of super stardom. It was to be the dawning of a new era. Spiritualism had well and truly arrived!

The Fox sisters were applauded and welcomed warmly wherever they went. At showbiz parties they rubbed shoulders with eminent politicians and theatre stars. By 1854, there was an astonishing ten million spiritualists throughout America. Six years later, spiritualists were in the White House entertaining the President. In London they astounded the aristocracy such as Queen Victoria herself and included those celebrated names like William Ewart Gladstone, who was born in Rodney Street, Liverpool, among their ranks. Then, the bubble burst...

In 1888, Margaret Fox stood on the stage of the New York Academy of Music and announced to a stunned capacity audience that the spirit raps reputedly produced in their home had been hoaxed. Margaret went on to describe how the noises had been produced by her knee bone, which, she claimed, clicked loudly when she moved it in a certain way. One may have expected the spiritualists throughout the world to be devastated by the news; .....not likely! Why let the truth get in the way of a good story?

During the Victorian era, William H. Mummler, an American photographer, came on to the scene with apparent photographic proof that ghosts existed. Although by modern standards, these photographs are easily identifiable as crude double exposures, they were good enough to fool such highly respected figures of the day, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In 1869, Mummler was hauled into court after he had been arrested and charged with fraud, only to be quickly acquitted when John Edmond, an ex-US Court of Appeal Judge and fervent spiritualist, swore under oath that he had not only seen, but had also heard a spirit.

Meanwhile, in good old Blighty, respected scientist, Alfred Russell Wallace (1823 - 1913) had led the way into researching psychic photography. He convinced himself, and many other scientists of his day, that some of these pictures had contained genuine spirit manifestations. Some of the aberrations caught on film did so without the need of a camera!

Eusapio Palladino could produce images on photographic plates which were not sealed in cameras and were not coated in the necessary desired chemicals. At the turn of the century she could even produce perfect impressions of her facial features in soft putty that had been sealed in an air tight container! The scientists that had investigated her mediumship were baffled and unable to offer any rational

explanation. "Embafflement" had soon turned to embarrassment when she had admitted to fraud, but only when the spirits refused to take part!

Another respected medium was Agnes Nichol, better known under her nom-de-plume as Mrs. Guppy. She had found herself showered with flowers as she went about her every day business. The roots of these flowers were sometimes found to be still covered with fresh earth, as if whatever had dropped these flowers on her had only just a few seconds before, removed them from the ground. It was not long before Nichol had attracted the attention of the debunking scientists who resorted to personal insults when they could not prove that she had been faking these events. They had theorised that since she was obese and overweight, these apports could so easily be secreted beneath her clothes.

Margery Crandon was another medium who underestimated the inquisitive minds of the scientists. She was left a bitter penniless woman after a seance was conducted in the 1930s, primarily to contact her deceased brother, Walter. However, unfortunately for her, the seance was attended by two psychical investigators who placed soft wax pads in various locations around the seance table. During the session, two glowing disembodied hands floated around the room finally landing on the table making the mistake of leaving their thumb prints on the wax pads. When these prints were examined they were found to belong to Nichol's dentist who was very much alive and sitting with them!

During the later period of the 1920's and the 1930's, hundreds of fraudulent mediums, who had fed on the misery and the poor emotional state of the recently bereaved, were hounded and prosecuted in scenes reminiscent of the witch hunts of the seventeenth century. Helen Duncan was fined the then monumentous sum of ten pounds when an old vest was found stuffed up her dress, which, it was claimed, was to be later used as ectoplasm.

Even the great escapologist, Harry Houdini, began to investigate the claims of the mediums after they had failed to put him in contact with his deceased mother. While in Atlanta City, Harry was approached by the wife of Arthur Conan Doyle, who gave him a message supposedly from his mother. Harry had his doubts because the message was in English, a language that Houdini's mother had never managed to grasp. Unless, that is, dying and forming a spiritual form in the after life causes language, as we know it, not to exist but to become universal, then it is a safe assumption that the message came from a more mundane source such as Mrs. Doyle's own mind (unless her mind was receptive to unseen subconscious signals emanating from other people or other realms of reality). Whether she purposefully meant to mislead Houdini is a question that we will never be able to answer.

Of course, there are mediums whose seances are legendary and have survived the scrutinising eye of the debunkers. Austrian medium Rudi Schneider, for example, had produced ghostly hands and dense paranormal fog banks under the strictest of conditions, and Carlos Mirabelli (1899 - 1951) was said to have manifested the dead many times.

Other successful mediums include Martha Beraud who produced ectoplasm from her mouth under laboratory conditions, and Englishman Daniel Douglas Home (1833 - 1886), who conducted over one hundred and fifty controlled seances, some of which were for the Russian Royal family, without ever having been suspected of fraud. But there is one medium who is mind blowingly and stupendously awe inspiring, not because of her amazing psychic feats, but because it is a mystery how she fooled so many people for so long. Perhaps 'mystery' is not the right word to

use. Looking back at descriptions of her seances, it becomes only too clear that she used her sexuality to distract the attention of the male psychical researchers who she came into contact with.

Florence (Florrie) Cook began to practise her mediumistic abilities at the tender age of seventeen in the 1870s. Florrie would be bound hand and foot to a chair and placed in a seance cabinet where she would presumably lapse into a trance. Then, in near darkness, the door of the cabinet would slowly open, for maximum effect, (I'll bet it creaked!) and out would walk the ghost of Katie King, who claimed to be the daughter of a sixteenth century buccaneer named Sir Henry Morgan. The clues were there right from the very start and someone should have rumbled the inept goings on when they had first begun. Katie King looked like Florrie, spoke with florrie's heavy cockney accent and even walked like Florrie, because she was Florrie...!

At one seance, a Mr. Volckman, a close personal friend of Mrs. Guppy who was jealous of the attention that Florrie was receiving, charged the spirit and wrestled it to the ground. Several of the other sitters quickly dragged him off kicking and screaming, after which the ghost quickly retreated back into the cabinet. The gas lamps were lit and the door of the cabinet opened to reveal Florrie, supposedly unconscious, still tied hand and foot to her chair, but decidedly worse for wear.

Florrie Cook's reputation began to spread far and wide, not because of her psychic ability, but because of her spirit guide, Katie King, appeared to be a very accommodating and sexually liberated spook indeed. Under the cover of the darkened seance room the ghost would sit on gentlemen's knees and invite them to stroke her naked form and run their hands over her body. Occasionally, the doors of the seance cabinet would be opened after a seance to reveal Florrie naked and exposed due to the spirits tearing off her clothes for some reason better known to themselves. It was during this time that many elderly wealthy gentlemen parted with their money to experience the nubile spirit wriggling about on their laps.

The bizarre story eventually reached the ears of the renowned and respected Sir William Crookes, who invited Florrie and her mother to stay at his home in Camden Town, London, so that he could conduct his own thorough investigation. It is said that Crookes took over forty photographs which showed both Florrie and the ghost of Katie King at the same time, but for some reason destroyed most of them shortly before his death in 1916. Crookes' final conclusion was that Florrie and Katie King were, without question, two separate people.

It is said on one memorable occasion, Florrie and another medium, called Mary Showers, walked arm in arm while their corresponding spirit guides walked behind them in a similar fashion. Unfortunately for Florrie, and Crookes, Mary Showers later confessed to being a fraud which damaged the impeccable reputation of Crookes, which left him open to scathing criticism. Some even went so far as to accuse him of having a bondage fetish, which the sight of Florrie strapped in a chair, occasionally in a state of partial and sometimes total undress, duly satisfied. It was said that the investigation of Florrie Cook was more to do with sexual domination and perversion than serious psychical research.

After three months of living in the lap of luxury at Sir William Crookes's home, Florrie announced that she had secretly married a sailor by the name of Corner. This coincided with the announcement made by the spirit, Katie King, that she was returning back to the spirit world for good. The elderly gentlemen of old London town did not have time to shed a tear, out of sadness, or some undoubtedly out of

relief, before Florrie's new spirit guide, known only as Marie, appeared on the scene and began to act in exactly the same sexually explicit and exhibitionistic fashion as Katie King had, much to the gratification of many of her paying clients. Then, on one fateful day, Florrie's luck had run out. During a seance, Sir George Sitwell grabbed hold of the apparition, Marie, and ordered that the lights be lit, only to find that the ghost was, in fact, Florrie in her underwear! The scandal eventually caused Florence Cook to give up her mediumship and retreat back into obscurity. However, like all good ghost stories, there is a twist.....

In 1971, a medium called Fulvio Rendhell, began to manifest a spirit which called itself (wait for it), Katie King! This Katie King looked nothing like the fake entity caught by Crookes on his photographs. Indeed, this entity appeared to be the real thing as it manifested under controlled conditions and was filmed by an infra-red movie camera!

It is sad, but nevertheless a statement of fact, that the claims of the spiritualist mediums have, when tested, been found to be badly wanting. It is a shame when you consider that there are real experiencers who have latent paranormal ability, which is truly remarkable. These mediums, though, by their very design, tend to be shy and sensitive. They shun the attention of the paranormal investigators and the Investigative journalists, unless it is for financial gain and the production of a sensationalised story. Thus they therefore become nearly impossible to trace. In fact, they are far removed from the brash, over bearing, so called psychic mediums that keep reappearing on our televisions and radios.

I think that it is morally wrong to build a reputation, and a bulging bank balance, by deceiving those unfortunate individuals who desperately search for proof that their departed loved ones have survived physical death. I believe that there is some sort of existence after death (and I'm looked upon as a cynical sceptic!) but I'm afraid to say that mediums that currently enjoy the limelight offer little in the way of evidence.

As long as we remember our lost loved ones fondly, and treasure the time we have spent with them they will always live on. Even if it is only in the hearts and minds of those we leave behind.

Colin John Veacock - is an author and long term researcher of paranormal phenomena. His new book "The Dawning of a New Age" examines the evolutionary aspects of paranormal research. He was once a member of the Ghost Club and is a member of the Incorporated Society for Psychical Research. He is also a joint co-ordinator for MARA.

# Passive Detection of Aerial Phenomena

## PART ONE

by William Bimson

### Introduction

This document explains various ways of detecting aerial phenomena and how to estimate their size and velocity. Some of the pitfalls of a simple sky-watch to observe UFO's are also covered. The term passive detection refers to the receiving of light or other radiation emanating from the phenomena as opposed to active detection as in radio detection and ranging (RADAR), which transmits radiation and looks for an echo. Since radar is beyond the budget of almost all UFO research groups, I will only use it as an introduction to the estimation of velocity of aerial phenomena.

### *The chances of seeing a UFO by simply looking at the sky.*

In order to estimate the chances of seeing a UFO in the sky simply by looking, we have to make a number of assumptions.

### *Assumptions made before calculation:*

1. Perfectly clear evening with no cloud cover.
2. Absolutely no lights from street lighting or buildings etc.
3. Full 360° view of the horizon with no obstructions.
4. The ability to view the whole of the sky to the horizon simultaneously, i.e. you have eyes in the front, back, sides and top of your head.
5. All UFO's emit visible light with a brightness equivalent to a 500 watt flood lamp in all directions. I will call this "1 UFO Standard Lighting Power or UFOSLIP" from now on.
6. That 1 UFOSLIP can be seen up to a distance of 100 km radius.
7. No optical magnification instruments are used as this would reduce the field of view and I have already been more than generous in assumption 4.
8. All UFO's come within 10 km of the ground.

What the above assumptions have produced is a hypothetical model of a perfect detection hemisphere with viewing conditions that would be the envy of any sky watch, figure 1.

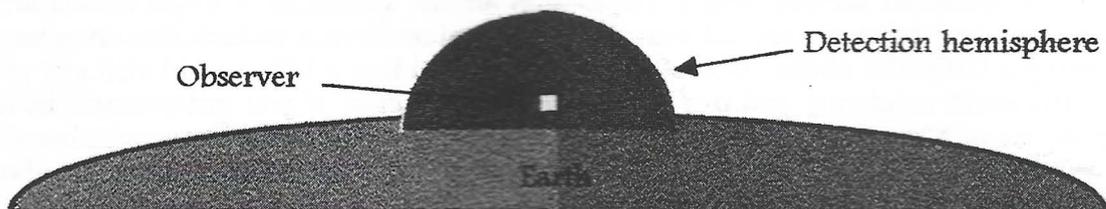


Figure 1 Perfect detection hemisphere created from the above assumptions.

The radius of the detection hemisphere is 100 km and the surface area of earth covered by the detection hemisphere is given by  $p.r^2$  where  $r$  is the radius. This gives a calculated area of 31,416 square km ( $\text{km}^2$ ). The superficial area of the earth is 510 066 000  $\text{km}^2$  (1). Therefore the fraction of the sky (F) that the observer can monitor is given by:

$$F = \frac{31416}{510066000} = 0.0000616 \quad \text{equation 1}$$

Hence the observer can only monitor 0.0000616 of the sky, and this figure must be inserted into any calculation.

We are now in a position to make some calculations. Lets assume that our alien friends have decided that earth is the 'in place' to go this year (perhaps to see how much more ozone we have destroyed), and arrive to view our planet at the rate of 100 UFO's per hour. Let the number per hour = N, and the number of hours of observation = H. From this, the chance of our observer viewing a UFO over a 12 hour period is given by.

$$\text{Chance} = N.H.F = 100 \times 12 \times 0.0000616 = 0.07392 \quad \text{equation 2}$$

This is about 1 chance in 13. Even with the extremely high figures of alien arrivals, number of observed hours and perfect viewing conditions with eyes everywhere, the chances of seeing anything are still small. Now let's take a more realistic example. Assume that the field of view on a typical sky-watch extends to 50 km to observe a light power of 1 UFO SLIP. The area covered is now  $\pi r^2 = 3.1416 \times 50^2 = 7854 \text{ km}^2$ . Fraction of earth covered (F) =  $7854 / 510\,066\,000 = 0.00000154$  of earth covered by the watch. Assume that 1 UFO visits earth every day, therefore N = 1/24. Assume that the observer looks for 4 hours therefore H = 4. Assume that the number of UFO's that emit visible light is one in 10, let this = L. Under these conditions the chance of seeing a UFO is reduced to.

$$\text{Chance} = \frac{N.H.F}{L} = \frac{1 \times 4 \times 0.00000154}{24 \times 10} = 0.0000000257 \quad \text{equation 3}$$

This is about one chance in 3,896,000. However, don't let me put you off looking up at the sky for aerial phenomena. As they say in the national lottery "it could be you" and you don't get charged a quid for looking up at the sky.

#### *Other factors affecting the chance of a sighting.*

You might wonder why so many UFO's are observed when the chances of finding one by looking at the sky are so slim. The answer lies in the number of man-hours spent looking at the sky (H in the above equations). Even the most casual observer driving home from work in the evening probably looks at a portion of the sky from time to time. H for the whole population of the planet is a huge incalculable number and takes up for all the other parameters which reduce the chances of seeing a UFO. The above calculations have assumed that a UFO would visit any part of the earth randomly and this is probably not the case. If you put yourself in the position of a visiting alien, you would probably find the flat oceans which cover approximately 71% of our planet fairly uninteresting and hence move to the more interesting land areas where huge amounts of energy are being generated and consumed. The chances of spotting a UFO increase further if you make your observations at a well known "window area". This is defined as an area which appears to attract UFO's for unknown reasons. A local example is the Runcorn area.

#### *Do UFO's want us to see them?*

If we are being visited by aliens, we must assume that they are much more advanced than us since they can travel to us but we can not travel to them. We must also assume that they have the ability to fly without generating a high degree of visible light if they want to. We have aircraft which fly without generating light

and those with stealth technology, are radar transparent making them practically invisible to radar. This led to the huge success of the F117 Stealth fighter during the Gulf War which avoided being shot down despite a total of 42 aircraft performing 1,271 sorties. This is in contrast to the conventional aircraft which suffered a large number of allied losses. Given the level of our own technology and the fact that alien technology must be more advanced, why do some of them emit so much visible light? Maybe they want us to see them? Alternatively, it may be a function of the type of power source they use. However, if they can control the frequency of the light emitted from the power source, they could easily put it outside the visible range of human beings. This is covered below under 'the electromagnetic (EM) spectrum'.

### *Scientific Notation*

To describe the electromagnetic spectrum, it is necessary to use very large or very small numbers and the only sensible way of writing these numbers is to use scientific notation. If you are familiar with scientific notation, please skip this section. Scientific notation is simply a shorthand way of writing very large or very small numbers without writing long strings of zeros. Everyone knows that  $10^2 = 100$  but you would never dream of writing it as  $10^2$  because it is easier and simpler to write 100. However, when you get to numbers like one hundred thousand trillion (100,000,000,000,000,000), the number of zeros becomes cumbersome. Fortunately, this number can be written as  $10^{17}$ . This is a very simple shorthand format. If ever you are worried about what number the power of 10 should be raised to, to represent a large number, just count the number of zeroes and there is the answer. For example  $10^3 = 1000$ ,  $10^6 = 1,000,000$  the number 15,960,000 can be written as  $1596 \cdot 10^4$  or  $1.596 \cdot 10^7$ .

### *The Electromagnetic (EM) Spectrum*

If you were to ask the average person "what is a spectrum?", they would probably answer "all the colours of the rainbow". This is a fair answer given the vagueness of the question, but a more scientific question would be what is the electromagnetic (EM) spectrum. The answer to this is, the complete range of frequencies of all known electromagnetic waves including, radio waves, infra-red, all of the colours of visible light, ultra-violet, x-rays and gamma rays. All of these waves are electromagnetic. That is, they have an alternating electric and magnetic field associated with them. They all travel at the same speed as visible light because they have the same nature as visible light. The only difference between the different types are their frequency and the way they interact with matter. By frequency, I simply refer to the speed of vibration of the electric and magnetic field of the wave. The number of vibrations per second is given the unit Hertz or Hz for short. The energy of an EM wave is in direct proportion to its frequency.

### *Low frequencies*

Those EM waves which have a low frequency from 10,000 Hz ( $10^4$ ) up to 100 million Hz ( $10^8$ ) are called radio waves and are used for communications T.V. etc. Higher frequencies in the range  $10^8$  to  $10^{11}$  Hz are the type of electromagnetic wave used by radar and in microwave ovens. As the frequency increases further to the range  $10^{11}$  to  $10^{14}$  Hz, they are termed infra-red (IR) waves. When you first turn on an electric fire, before the element starts to glow red, you can feel radiated heat from the fire. This sensation is from IR radiation.

### *High frequencies*

The spectrum of visible light (the colours of the rainbow) are only a very small portion of the EM spectrum between  $10^{14}$  and  $10^{15}$  Hz. White light is simply a mixture of all of the colours and black is an absence of any radiation in the visible

range. Ultra-violet (UV) radiation lies in the range  $10^{15}$  to  $10^{17}$  Hz and is harmful to the eyes and skin. Everyone is familiar with sunburn and this is caused by the UV from the sun or sun lamps. As a safety point I think that it is prudent to mention that cheap sun glasses can be very bad for your eyes. If you wear sunglasses which reduce the amount of visible light and hence make everything darker, the iris in your eye will open wider to allow more light in. Some of the cheaper sunglasses do not give protection against UV and therefore more UV will enter your eye when you are wearing the sunglasses than when you are not. So next time you are going to buy a pair of sunglasses, make sure they have a label on them which states that they give protection against UV. Anyone who has read *Left at East Gate (2)* will know that Larry Warren suffered severe retinal eye burn during a sighting. His doctor said it was as if he had been staring at an electric arc welder for a long duration, and yet the lights on the UFO did not seem that bright at the time. He was almost certainly exposed to radiation outside the visible range, either UV or X-ray which would damage his eyes without alerting him to the fact that the radiation source was strong.

#### *X-rays and gamma rays*

X-rays were discovered by Wilhelm Roentgen, a German physicist just over a hundred years ago. Their higher frequency and hence energy allows them to travel through objects which are opaque to visible light. This has led to their widespread use as a diagnostic imaging modality in medicine and industry. However, in the medical application, they have an unfortunate side effect. Their high energy gives them the power to ionise atoms (i.e. knock out electrons from the atoms). When this happens the electrons which have picked up energy from the X-ray shoot off at high speed and occasionally cut a strand of DNA. These broken DNA strands sometimes mutate to form a cancer cell. Hence there is a very small risk of contracting cancer every time you have an X-ray. Fortunately, the invention of image intensifiers now means that the radiation dose required to produce a diagnostic X-ray is much smaller than it used to be. Gamma rays are very similar to X-rays and differ only in their origin. X-rays are produced by changes in energy levels in the electron shells of atoms where as gamma rays are produced in the nucleus of atoms, hence the term nuclear radiation. X-rays and gamma rays cover the frequency range  $10^{17}$  to  $10^{22}$  Hz although it is known that with all of the elements on earth it is not possible to produce X-rays with the very highest frequencies. Hence anything detected above  $10^{21}$  Hz must have a nuclear origin and by definition be a gamma ray. A simplified chart of the EM spectrum is shown below in figure 2.

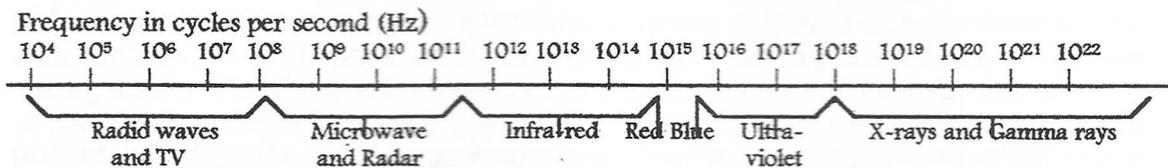


Figure 2 *The electromagnetic spectrum.*

Though evolution, our eyes have developed to see the small visible part of the EM spectrum from red through to violet, but this does not mean that UFO's only generate radiation in this band. They could look extremely black to us and yet be giving out huge amounts of UV, IR or X radiation. Imagine if our eyes had evolved so that we only saw anything which was in the green part of the EM spectrum. In this case anything that was not green or white would look black. All of the UFO sightings which concerned red and orange lights would have been missed. Therefore there is a need to have instrumentation to detect other forms of radiation

from UFO's and we should not become too reliant on our extremely narrow band eyes. Or else we may find ourselves in the position of the observer in figure 3 (next page).

### TYPES OF DETECTOR

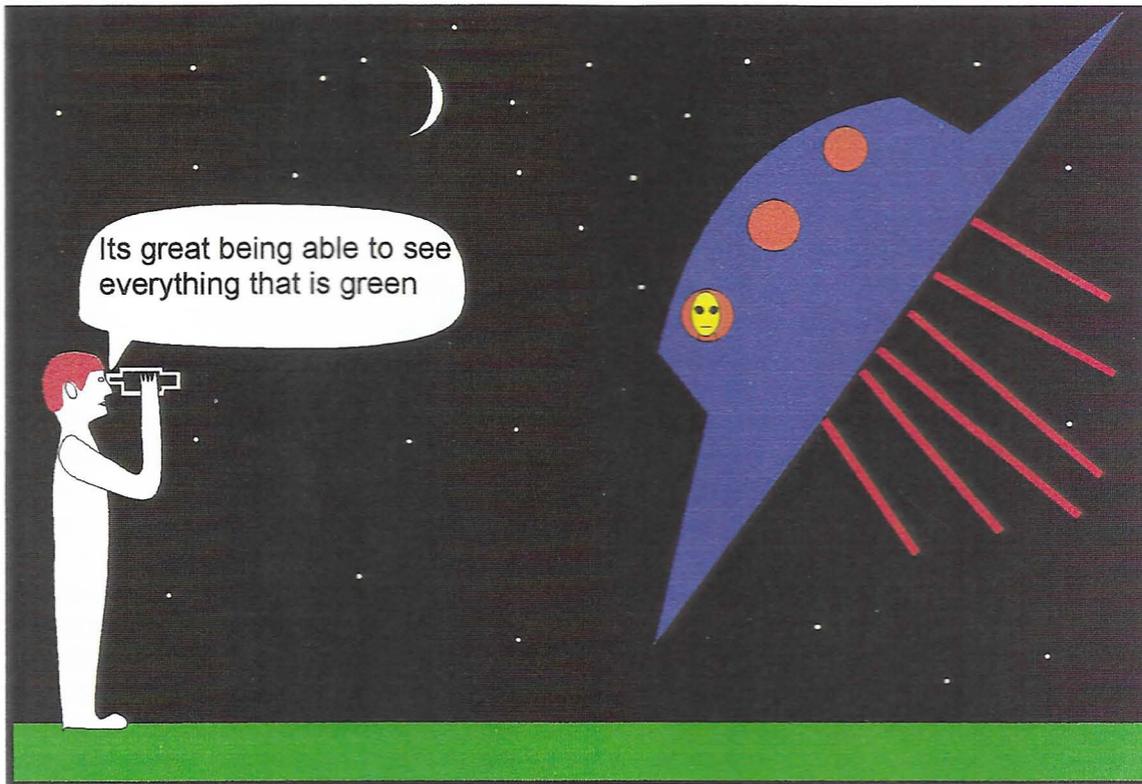
#### *EM radiation detectors*

Unfortunately, there is no single detector which is sensitive to the whole range of the EM spectrum. If we want to detect EM energy across most or all of the spectrum we need to use an array of different types of sensors. Figure 4 (next page) shows some of the sensors which could be used to detect EM radiation over a wide band of frequency.

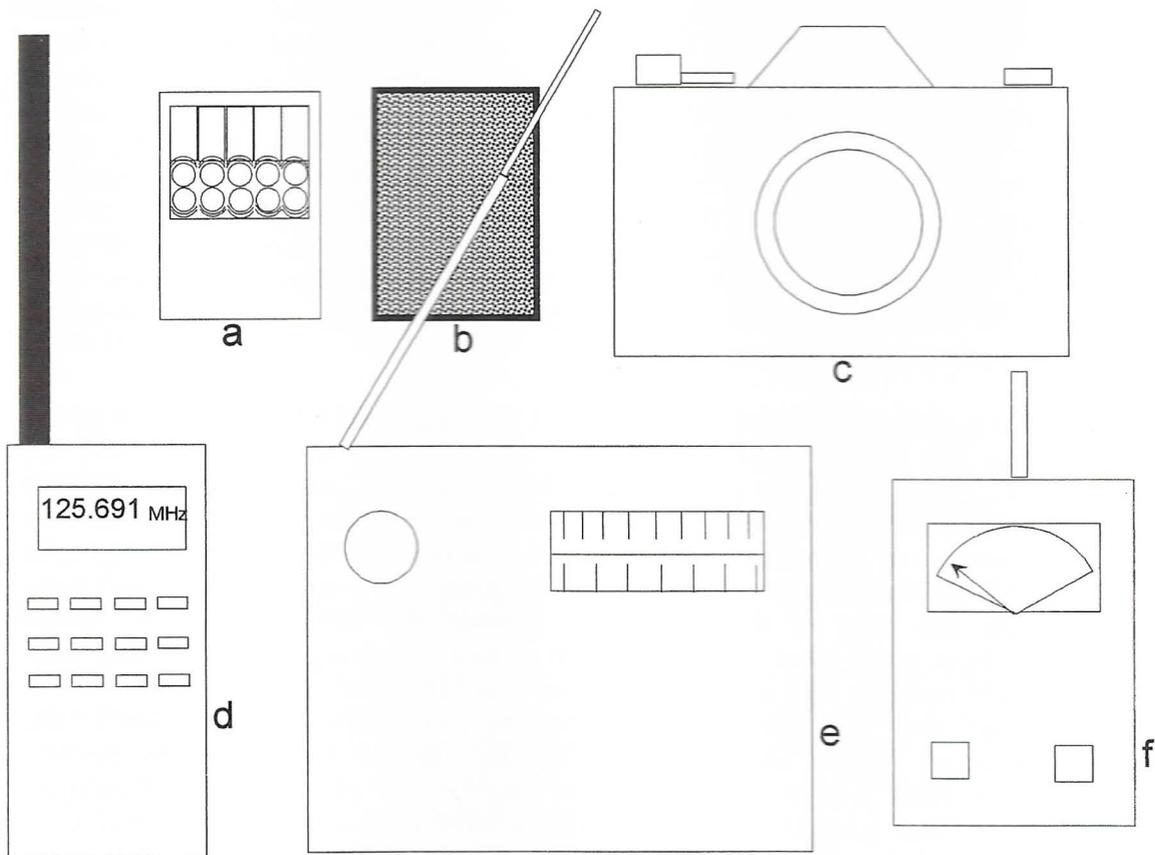
The sensor labelled (a) is a passive infra-red (PIR) detector of the type used in burglar alarms. It is designed to pick up an intruder's body heat up to a range of about 15 metres. If the sensor was pointed skyward and an object was giving out heat equivalent to about one hundred human beings, the detector would be sensitive up to about 150 metres. If the object was radiating heat at the rate of about 10,000 human beings, it would be sensitive up to about 1.5 km. The angle of coverage is quite wide typically 90° but since they are designed to be triggered by human beings, they would have to be shaded from all heat sources, including humans, to prevent false alarms. Some IR detectors are much more sensitive than this type; such as those used by the military in heat seeking missiles, although I am confining myself to sensors which are affordable to a typical research group

Sensor (b) in figure 4 has to be the cheapest sensor of them all and costs no more than about 20p. It is simply a small container of standard soap powder. Believe it or not, this piece of high-tech equipment will detect UV radiation. The soap powder absorbs UV radiation and then re-transmits the radiation as visible violet light. This is known as fluorescence. You have all probably seen this effect in dark and dingy pubs, clubs and discos where UV lights are used as a sort of special effect. Remember how your white T-shirt (and your dandruff) showed up under these lights. These UV lights are not as common as they were in the 70's and 80's, as people have become aware of the fact that they are bad for your eyes. For any research group who are so strapped for cash that they cannot afford the soap powder, a container of dandruff will suffice! If a soap powder sensor were employed on a sky-watch and started to glow in the dark, you could be pretty certain that you were being exposed to UV.

Sensor (c) is a straight forward camera loaded with standard film. This is not in the sensor array for taking pictures of visible lights in the sky, but to detect the presence of X-rays. Even if no pictures were taken with the camera, it is possible for the film to become exposed. In the days when X-ray machines were first used as a security measure at airports, holiday makers complained that their photographs were fogged. This was because the level and frequency of X-ray used was sufficient to penetrate the case of the camera to expose the film. Thankfully, image intensifiers have again come to the rescue to reduce the dosage of X-rays that your hand luggage receives and all security X-ray machines are now described as film safe, meaning they will not expose the film in your camera. If the film in the camera becomes fogged and the back of the camera has not been opened inadvertently, then X-rays or gamma rays may be the cause. A Geiger counter would be a better monitor of X and gamma rays because it gives a real time indication (you do not have to wait for the film to be developed), but the average household does not possess one of these. Sensors (d) and (e) are for picking up radio waves.



**Figure 3** Anything which is not green or white looks black to the observer.



**Figure 4** an array of sensors used to detect EM radiation over a wide band of frequency.

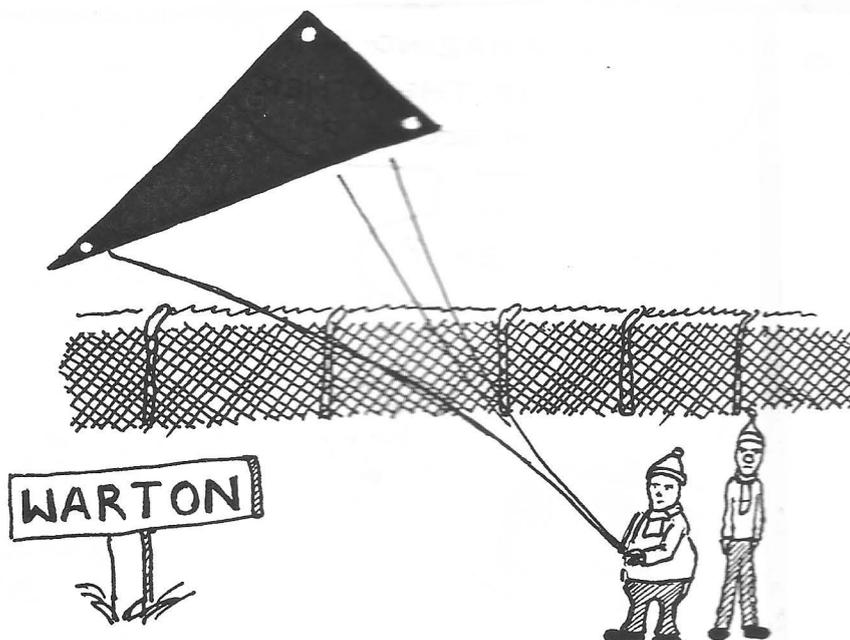
Sensor (d) is a hand held radio scanner of the type used by snoopers who want to listen too other people's mobile phone conversations or police radio messages. The advantage of this type of scanner as opposed to an ordinary radio, is that it will scan a fairly wide band of the radio waveband automatically to determine if there is any signal present. Of course, you should not expect to hear phrases in English such as "take me to your leader." If any sort of tone is heard from the scanner at the same time as visible or other observations detect an aerial phenomenon, and the tone disappears at the same time as the phenomenon, then it is reasonable to suggest that the phenomenon was the cause. In this case the exact frequency of the detected radio wave should be logged. Hand held radio scanners are fairly expensive and I would not advocate the purchase of one for this specific purpose, but if you already have one it is a useful additional detection device. Sensor (e) is a standard portable radio and can be used in the same way as the hand held radio scanner but will not scan automatically and will not cover any where near as much of the radio band as the scanner.

Sensor (f) is a microwave detector of the type used for testing leaks on microwave ovens. This detector fills the gap between radio and IR but at a cost of about £100 is for serious enthusiasts only, especially when you consider that it is not particularly sensitive. Unfortunately, the alternative to this type of detector is a radio telescope, which is much more sensitive but also a great deal more expensive and less portable.

*When should these sensors be used?*

I have already demonstrated with calculations that the chance of seeing a UFO on a typical sky-watch is extremely small (equation 3). Is it worth setting up all the above detectors for such a small chance? I would say not. It would be more sensible to only set up a sensor array in situations following a number of UFO sightings on consecutive evenings, as the chance of detection is then much greater.

The second part shall be concluded in the next issue.



# PSI-MAN SAYS.



TODAY, PSI-MAN INVESTIGATES THE FOOTBALL LOVING, DANCING, DOG.

"SO, WHAT EXACTLY DOES YOUR DOG DO WHEN HIS TEAM SCORES?"

...AND FOWLER SHOOT'S... ITS A GOAL.

"WATCH!"



"THAT'S AMAZING, WHAT HAPPENS IF THE OTHER TEAM SCORE?"

"HE REPEATEDLY JUMPS INTO THE AIR."

"HOW HIGH?"

"IT DEPENDS HOW HARD I KICK HIM!"



*Handwritten signature*

# Wired for Wycoller

## ~An Overnight Surveillance

*by John L. Hall*

### *The History*

Wycoller Hall had once consisted of a flourishing community engaged in spinning and weaving. Some of its houses go back to the early sixteenth century, and a slab footbridge has been there since the twelfth century. Charlotte Bronte took Wycoller Hall, which was almost complete in her day, as the inspiration for Ferdean Hall in *Jane Eyre*. Now the great fireplace (which was to be used as our set-up point) is all that remains intact. An old coach road passes by the Hall, as indicated on the site map, running from the moor road and through the village onwards.

### *The Cunliffes*

For many years the Cunliffes had lived at Wycoller Hall. Country squires were known for their spectacular horsemanship, reckless coach driving and different country sports, such as fox hunting and cock fighting. The last squire had died in 1818 or 1819, and he was said to have watched a cock fight in his bedroom whilst being propped up in bed.

The Hall was originally built by the Hartley family at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was extended by Squire Henry Owen Cunliffe as part of a campaign to attract a wealthy wife. There are stories of hauntings occurring in the nearby buildings too, a phantom coach and horses is said to journey down the old coach road and through the stream and down to Trawden.

The family had always been wealthy until 1819 when the members of the family had fallen upon ill fortune. When the last Cunliffe had died in that year the property of the Hall became neglected very quickly until it had become a ruin.

One of the Cunliffes was rumoured to have married a black West Indian whilst they had travelled there. It is said that with a deep regret of marrying her hastily, Cunliffe had murdered her on the return voyage to England and he had quietly disposed of the body. As a result of this, another personality becomes involved with the haunting of the Hall.

### *The Legend*

There is a story that every year in the wild and stormy weather, a spectral horseman gallops up to Wycoller Hall wearing clothing that belongs to the Stuart period in history. The rider then dismounts at the main door to the Hall and rushes through, going upstairs (which no longer exists) to a room (which is also not there today). A woman's anguished screams are heard in the night as he cruelly whips her and then, the sounds die down with only a sobbing to be heard. The horseman leaves remounting his wild looking steed and gallops away. Tradition has it that Squire Cunliffe had murdered his lady in that room. It was she who had predicted the extinction of the family, and the prediction had eventually come true. Every year the murder is supposedly re-enacted like a looped taped cassette. There are also several other versions of phantom horsemen that exist in association with the Hall. This includes the story that the Cunliffe's murdered wife had made a prediction that had foreseen the extinction of the family line. A third version, which dates to the reign of Charles II in the seventeenth century, relates to Simon Cunliffe chasing

a fox, when out hunting, and pursued it into the Hall and up the stairs into his wife's room which had caused her to collapse. She had then died of the shock.

During periods of severe storms, it is often said that when the howling wind is at its strongest the phantom horseman can be heard galloping along the lane and heading towards the Hall itself. It may just be that no version of the tale might be correct and could plausibly all be fictitious. Such stories can be found in the old Halliwell Sutcliffe novels. But then again, who is to say that the details included in the novels were not based upon real experiences.

The phantom coach, as it is often stated, has been regularly heard. One night, at around half past eleven, had witnessed a mysterious coach from the position of the visitor centre along the green sward at the southern end of the ruins. Described in their own words, they were in their parked car facing the houses on the other side of the pack horse bridge (the houses were either empty or semi derelict), when they had heard a loud rumbling noise immediately above the car. This noise had startled them. It could be heard for a second time and the car was filled with an icy chill which began to terrify the couple. The driver had got out to have a better look only to see nothing, only the rumbling sound had continued but louder, a sound comparable to a chair being dragged along a cobbled floor. Both of them wanted to leave but the car's engine had failed to start, and would not do so until the experience had ended. As soon as the event had passed, the car's engine would start and they both drove away as quickly as possible. The phantom coachmen, often witnessed in this area, usually have a deeper association with other superstitious figures such as spectral huntsmen and the Demon of the Wild Hunt. It is even closely linked with the tales of Hellhounds, the Devil and the Grim Reaper. The Hellhounds or mysterious dogs are also a part of the folklore that belongs to this area. A *guytrash*, or 'black dog', is also rumoured to haunt the lanes and the surrounding area, however, this story has unreliable foundations regarding evidence for such events ever being witnessed.

A black lady ghost has been witnessed many times wandering the ruins. This might tie in with the tale of Cunliffe murdering his West Indian bride. The dark figure has been observed by the large fireplace in the main Hall, and was said to have been dressed from head to foot in black silk. A couple from Trawden were seated upon the bench, which sits on the opposite side of the from the ruins, were disturbed by this wandering black lady. Even council workmen had apparently seen this image moving upon the old packhorse bridge. They had even spoken with her, so she must have appeared very real, she was soon to disappear in front of their very eyes! Only later did they believe that they had seen a ghost, along with her unusual dress.

### *The investigation*

The main focus for the overnight stay was to take place within the ruined Hall itself, in an area designated by the stone remains of a fireplace. Colin Veacock was elected team leader due to his prior knowledge of the site and also because of his experience in investigating paranormal phenomena with Ghostquest and the Incorporated Society for Psychical Research. Colin also possesses an extensive amount of location fieldwork, he has previously stayed overnight at Wycoller, where he had managed to record what sounds like the cracking of a whip; a sound which had featured on Liverpool Live's 'Why Files'. He had also informed me that he had also heard a woman humming a tune on a number of occasions.

During the early evening of July 12<sup>th</sup>, a number of researchers from MARA travelled by car to Wycoller Hall, which is situated in a country park near to Colne

and Trawden in North Lancashire. The team had consisted of seven people and Ben, a Kerry Blue dog. The aim of the stay was to attempt as best as possible an objective way of capturing any present anomalies on audio and video instruments, and to see if these could also be sensed by any of the team members. Not only did we use technical equipment, but the dog could also have been a good indicator of any anomalous phenomena present, as they are, according to folklore, very sensitive to the 'supernatural', so their reactions to such anomalies can be gauged. The MARA team had arrived there at approximately 9.30pm, at a time when the sun was just slowly descending but slow enough to allow the team members to explore the place visually before it had become dark.

The equipment used had comprised of a number of automatic cameras, including: a 34mm Olympus Trip AF; a mounted video camera; motion sensors; digital and non-digital thermometers, and a series of three Shure microphones, which were connected to a portable audio recorder called a Tascam Four Track. This was positioned with the team members as they sat on fully sheltered stone slab "seats" in part of the main hall of the building, and located to the right hand side of the main entrance to the Hall. The instruments were left to run by themselves for set periods, which prevented any interference by any member of the group.

The equipment was set up at 10.30pm in the fireplace alcove. An hour later, the "vigil" began. The weather was warm, with minimal cloud that evening, and the forecast had predicted occasional rain showers for the Sunday morning. What we hadn't anticipated was the flurry of activity from the countless hordes of midges from the nearby stream that had managed, from late evening until morning, to continually bite every member of the team.

Members conducted a number of sessions throughout the night, lasting forty five minutes each, to accommodate equipment checks. For the first hour, the team members felt that it was necessary to retreat into the toilets to escape the mass of midges. It was dark outside and a number of torches were used to guide the team around the ruins of Wycoller. John Hall sat patiently in the alcove monitoring the microphones using a headset and also the video monitor. Such a wide variety of sounds had been picked up from nearby cattle and sheep, crows and owls. An outbound jet aeroplane, as well as number of distant cars, were clearly heard. Throughout the morning hours there were some moments when an occasional thump and a noise, which can only be best described as whispering, were heard. Later, the playback was to become very interesting. The outside temperature varied between 1.4°C to 1.43°C for the first session, and at 1.30am the team members were suddenly drawn to one particular area of the Hall, because one of the motion sensors had been set off! It was a disappointment to note that it was only a false alarm, it had been mistakenly triggered by one of the team who was checking the equipment in that area, as it was during an interval and not an actual observational session. John Hall thought he had seen a small child run within the ruins, but he suggested that it could also have easily been due to tired eyes.

Julie Boyd, one of the team members, was unfortunately ill throughout most of the evening and remained, for the most part of our stay, in the car. However, she claimed later to have heard a noise akin to that of a cracking whip and an accompanying scream, details that were familiar to the Hall's history, but not to the majority of team members who were not previously informed about its history, in an attempt to make the stay more objectively focused with regard to the types of observations that could have been made. These noises had also been heard on a previous visit by Colin Veacock, who had managed to record them.

But what about the dog? For most of the time, he slept peacefully and remained by the teams' side. However, there were two occasions where he had reacted quite strangely. The first was when the team had arrived back at the ruin from the toilets after the first session, around 1.00am. He refused to enter the area of the alcove of the fireplace, appearing very uncomfortable; and it was some time before he would settle down again. The second time was significant. At approximately 3.30am (it was cold, and the midges had calmed down) the dog had suddenly woken from his sleep and growled, looking very agitated. At that particular point a sigh was heard, not only by the team members present but also by the dog, which plainly reacted to it. The sound was recorded along with Colin's comments regarding it! Despite background noise, the sound was quite distinguishable.

Along with anomalous sounds (and no they weren't the midges) such as clear knocks, thumps and a "sigh", photographs were also taken, and some of them show a number of "floating" white globes that could possibly be the result of a lens flare, and thus need to be properly scrutinised. But these were taken around the time of the noted anomalous noises, the sounds of the camera can be clearly heard on audio tape too. The photographed anomalies coincidentally appeared to be in the areas that contained the microphones that had picked up the other strange sounds!

The team packed up at 4.30am, as it appeared that the rain was approaching. A conclusion for this overnight stay was that one event, throughout the whole of the stay, seemed to be genuinely strange. The event was staged to enable team members to learn about observation techniques. How easy it is for tired eyes and unfocused minds to pick out things that may not necessarily be there at all! It was very easy, towards the end of the stay, for any member to lose concentration and feel very tired. Plenty of food and hot drinks aided the team get through those hours. As a training exercise it was hard, interesting, and successful. An event that will be repeated again later this year, and one that will include insect repellent!

### *Conclusion*

The audio and video tapes were examined. Only the audio tapes had produced any interesting sounds that could not be accounted for, as they were picked up in areas monitored by ourselves and without the presence of anyone else, such as the locals (who would not come out at all due to the experiences that they claimed to have had). A curious detail had come into focus, and that was how silent the area became during a specific duration of the team's stay, a duration when the anomalous sounds had been detected. Not surprisingly, the video footage did not detect anything unusual. The team members present were Elaine Hannah, Tony Eccles, Sue McAllister, John L. Hall, Billy McGarry, Julie Boyd and Colin Veacock.

### References

*Wycoller Hall - country park* (1996) Lancashire County Council Country Planning Department.

Kathleen Eyre (1972-4) Lancashire Legends, Dalesman

Terence Whitaker Lancashire Ghosts and Legends

John L. Hall - is a investigative member of various paranormal groups such as ASSAP and NARO, and is also the Treasurer and joint Co-ordinator to MARA. John spends part of the year, with his partner Elaine Hannah, going to the Isle of Man and researching the islands' history of paranormal events and folklore history.

### Wycoller Hall

The following photographs were taken in July 1996 by Colin Veacock and members of Ghost Quest and the Society for Psychical Research. They had conducted an on site investigation of the ruins. Some anomalies had been picked up on film.



The above photograph shows a typical anomaly which has more recently been explained as camera rope. But can that explain what is shown? Below, a view of the Great Hall with its large recess, an area where MARA had set up its equipment.



MARA investigation of Wycoller, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1997

The camera had picked up some anomalies which may simply be lens flares .

© Anthony Eccles 1997. Camera used was a 34mm Olympus Trip AF.



## Stronger inference for the objective reality of UFO abduction experiences

*by Mark, J. Glover*

Hypnotic regression has more recently been considered as an unreliable and irresponsible method of obtaining information about UFO abduction experiences, or close encounters of the fourth kind (CE4s). This has come about due to the fact that hypnosis has been shown to be flawed, both because the hypnotist may implant thoughts into the witness's mind, and the retrieved memories may only be the result of the collective unconscious mind of contemporary western society, which has become inevitably contaminated with extraterrestrial imagery. I am proposing however three indicators for determining the possible reality and therefore reliability of some CE4s, which may have been extracted through the now controversial process of hypnotic regression. I have chosen to call these "reality probes". They have yet to be tested however, so for the moment they merely represent, at best, untried hypotheses.

When we speak of "reality" we need to define what we mean, however. Most people will consider reality to mean objective experiences, or those that are solid or physically real. However, reality need not necessarily be objective, as has been pointed out by ufologists like Jenny Randles and John Spencer. After all, our dreams are not (as far as we assume) physically real, and yet we experience them as real to the point that when we awaken from a nightmare, we are so relieved that it was only a dream or subjective experience. Testimony indeed as to how real we found it to seem. Dreams are therefore a very good example of a 'non-physical reality'. I am not intimating that CE4s are therefore merely dreams, but what I am saying is that reality may involve or include different levels of consciousness, some of which are less, or not even at all, physical in the sense we are normally familiar with. We have been conditioned in the West to rely upon empirical evidence as our only basis for what really exists or is "real". Subjective reality is dismissed as irrelevant because we are unable to perform any so called reliable "objective" experiments upon it. Ultimately however, everything we experience in the objective, apparently solid world, can only ever be subjective anyway, since our brains and minds are only really interpreting, perceiving or in fact "feeling" reality. In other words, in the final analysis, nothing can in fact be absolutely proven to be real or exist at all. We can only ever make inferences, and hopefully these will be strong ones. The three reality probes I shall speak about consist of (in order of commonality):

1. Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in UFO abductees.
2. "Tingle" or "chill" factors within their story.
3. Undiscovered truths revealed within the incident.

PTSD is by now reasonably familiar to most people, but I will discuss this factor anyway after first looking at chill factors, leaving undiscovered truths till last.

### *Chill factors*

I am using the term "chill factor" here to explain the effect one may feel upon hearing evidence within UFO abductee's or 'experient's' accounts which tends to send a shiver or tingle down the spine - so to speak, making one straighten to attention at some possibly profound or salient key element of a case, even though to some, it may appear to be quite trivial. The sort of thing for instance Sherlock Holmes might respond to (e.g. "It is the fact that the dog didn't bark Watson, that is so interesting"). There are a number of examples of this within CE4s. If we look for

instance at the case of Herb Schirmer, the police patrolman in the Ashland, Nebraska incident (USA, 3rd Dec. 1967); a famous case, whose main details involved a conscious memory of a landed UFO and a CE4 relived under hypnotic regression. One of the first outstanding or salient aspects of the transcript of Schirmer's hypnotic regression, concerns his reaction to the purported alien entities. Schirmer is extremely terrified by them, and in a way that seems far too excessive for a man whom one would expect to be a "hard-nosed" American cop, well trained for the dangers that might be imposed upon him by any would be assailants. Yet here he is, almost child-like in his fear at initially apparently unarmed figures, supposedly constructed by his sub-conscious mind. Abductees Whitley Streiber and Betty & Barney Hill (discussed below) also expressed this overt terror; as have many other experients (viz.).

*'..... Damn right! ..... I'm afraid ..... I'm shaking ..... I am being prevented from leaving ..... something in my mind .... I wanna go home .... I'm prevented ..... Oh no! THEY'RE COMING TOWARD THE CAR .... trying to draw my revolver..... prevented ..... something in my mind.'*

The next interesting part represents what I believe to be the first real chill factor within the whole incident. It involves the bright flash (like a camera bulb) he says is fired at him by one of the entities. This is very interesting because it is an aspect which is frequently reported at the beginning of CE4 cases, and was first noticed by the respected American research investigator - John Keel in his extensive investigations of UFO witnesses in the 1960s. Keel was convinced that this factor represented a very significant clue. One wonders why therefore, if this is just sub-consciously manufactured, such an initial seemingly innocuous aspect is consistently reported in many experiences of this kind. The next chill factor occurs as one of the entities is described by Schirmer as touching his neck, and it is the way he describes the pain he momentarily experiences through this that makes it at least seem that he is genuinely reliving some type of "real" experience:

*'Oooh! Oooh! It hurt when he grabbed my neck .... hurt for a minute ..... grabbed on left side, below my ear ..... I can't see too well, so there must have been something in his hand .....*

Next comes Schirmer's reaction to one of the entities' eyes:

*'..... looking directly into my eyes. I don't like it ..... his eyes are funny.'*

This is another particularly provocative aspect often cited by witnesses. The eyes of the purported entities are deeply unnerving. Betty and Barney Hill also experienced this in their CE4 encounter, which took place earlier in the 1960s (19th Sept. 1961, Concorde - New Hampshire). Barney says the entity he saw in the craft through his binoculars, before they were abducted, had eyes "like a Nazi." And Betty said that she looked away and then back at one of the entities during the abduction and got from it, just for an instant, what she described as - "a sense of evil". Some witnesses describe the eyes of the entities in their experiences as looking right through to their 'soul'. This intensity of psychological fear or discomfort always seems way out of proportion to what one would expect for something that is supposed to be merely the construct of sub-conscious imagery or an implantation by a hypnotist. Whitley Strieber also emphasises this in his experiences. Because the fear and anxiety about this aspect are so consistently irrationally intense, I am convinced that there may be something very significant and important about this disturbing theme running through CE4 events. The best chill factor in the Ashland

case I believe however comes when Schirmer next describes being questioned by one of the entities:

*'He's asking me some questions ..... asks "Are you the watchman over this place? ". ..... I'm the policeman .... [and again the reference to the eyes] ... I wish he wouldn't stare at me like that.'*

The word - watchman happens to be an archaic term for a sort of policeman. It is not really an American term, and it is odd therefore that Schirmer should use it if his regression details are merely the influence of his hypnotist or the imaginary constructions of his own sub-conscious mind. Surely "lawman" or "law-enforcer" should have more appropriately sprung to mind, if the latter were to have been the case. It almost sounds like a deliberate clue was being dropped as to the reality of the experience. This is especially significant, since in the next few moments Schirmer feels impelled to actually ask the being if he is real:

*'..... I'm asking him if he is real .... He squeezes my shoulder ..... Oh Lord! I'm not dreaming ..... He is real!'*

Strieber does a similar thing in one of his abduction experiences, when he says he asked one of the entities if he could smell it to see if it was real. Strieber says it smelt like cheese. This may be significant, since smell seems seldom, if ever, to be reported in dreams. Strieber also looks about the room he has been brought to during the abduction and comments that it is "filthy". Provided he is being sincere regarding his experiences, why would, or should, he make such a detailed observation in a dream, and why the emphasis and this presence of mind in checking out its reality? In dreams or imagination we do not think to do this as a rule. C. D. B. Bryan in his book "Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Alien Abduction and UFOs - Witnesses and Scientists Report" (Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London, 1995) makes a similar point about a witness he heard give her experience of entities that came into her bedroom. He points out that she made the observation, in just passing, that they tried on her high-heeled shoes. This makes Bryan suspect that her story is true because he asks why would she cite such a small detail so matter of factly if it were not a real experience? Similarly, Barney Hill said that the entities in his abduction experience were fascinated by his false teeth. Getting back to Schirmer however, the entities express concern that he might shoot his gun at their craft. Why say this? It is almost as though whatever is causing Schirmer's experience is trying to indicate or emphasise it has some objective reality. Admitting they can be damaged or harmed is like the entities (or source) are pointing out - "We (it) must therefore be real; mustn't we (it)... don't you think?". Schirmer also says that the entities asked him for the whereabouts of a power plant and a water reservoir. This is another common theme with UFOs, which have been witnessed near power plants and bodies of water, sometimes in the process of sucking up water. However, it must be borne in mind of course that there is always the chance that witnesses or experiencers like Schirmer could just pick up such details sub-consciously, if they are privy to reading sufficient UFO literature. I do not know unfortunately whether this applied to Schirmer.

A literal chill factor which is again too subtle I believe to be either implanted or the result of sub-conscious fabrication, is that Schirmer notices that the entities' craft is cold; colder than the surrounding air. Like Strieber, he is cognisant of small environmental details which suggest some kind of objective reality. In later hypnosis sessions he goes on to describe an emblem worn by the entities on the tunic of their uniform. It was of a winged serpent. The "winged serpent" is an ancient mythological and archetypal symbol; the sign of Lucifer, which originally

meant "bringer(s) of light". Barring collaborative dishonesty, this more than anything would seem to indicate that the Ashland case may possess some profound meaningful reality (or at least significance) to it, if only in a Jungian sense. Finally, it is the manner in which Schirmer consistently describes his experience in the present tense, in a way which makes it sound credibly real and as if he is really reliving something that actually physically happened to him and not just something his sub-conscious mind is manufacturing. The above cited chill factors, I believe, are evidence or subtle clues (although of course not proof) of the possible reality or exogenous (not just within the brain) reality of his CE4 experience. Some researchers ridicule the study of these experiences as a waste of time and as having nothing to do with UFOs. Yet I believe they may contain a rich harvest of meaning and information about the UFO phenomenon or some other equally interesting anomaly, even though I accept that hypnotic regression can be flawed with inaccuracies in terms of absolute details. I am now also prepared to accept that it is a procedure best not encouraged. Despite this however, I do believe we must not throw the baby out with the bath water, as it were. Just because hypnotic regression does not always work properly or is misused, is no excuse, I believe, to damn it all together. After all - diamorphine (heroin) is much misused and may not always be properly effective, but that does not prevent doctors from continuing to prescribe it for the relief of severe pain. If an individual wishes to face the risks, then I feel we have neither the right to prevent, nor criticise, their decision to undergo hypnosis. That is, once advised and counselled, it should be left entirely up to them.

#### *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*

This reality probe concerns the possibility that some UFO abductees appear to suffer from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This might, in my opinion, be highly significant, since it may therefore represent evidence that CE4s not only have subjective effects, but also physical ones, albeit possibly within a physical reality with which we are not normally acquainted. This evidence of physiological stress following physical trauma is very well shown to be the case in a number of salient or obvious physically traumatic experiences, such as: major civilian disasters, like air and rail crashes, and boat sinkings; severe individual accidents, like car crashes or falls; physical and sexual abuse, as well as assaults, especially those involving torture and rape, whether committed individually or en masse, as with prisoners of war and hostages. All of these seem to produce within their victims the effect of PTSD. This is why so much counselling and physical assessment is now recognised as necessary following such traumas. I do accept however that the jury is still out, as it were, on whether PTSD is really a physical illness.

War is another very good example of physical trauma that seems to produce PTSD. Some people are still suffering the effects of World War II in this way. In World War I, examples of what Freud labelled "hysteria" were evident, in which men suddenly became lame or blind after experiencing or witnessing extreme physical trauma. These brutal conditions of war, as we all too readily know, were very objectively real and not imagined. An hysterically blinded individual actually seems physically blind, as tests will show, and the same is true for lameness, which is a physically testable paralysis; although of course its cause is called "psychogenic" (mind induced) rather than organic. There is nevertheless a physical stimulus, either through actual trauma to an individual's body, or to the perceived danger of imminent or potential trauma to their body. Also, during the first world war, many men suffered what became known as "shell shock", which now seems undoubtedly a form of PTSD because of the presenting symptoms. In the second world war, men who were shell shocked or "battle fatigued" were often dubbed as having "no moral fibre", when in fact they were not cowards at all, but suffering quite naturally from the effects of very real psychogenic and physical stress upon their

nervous systems, which produced actual physiological effects. Studies of dead soldier's, for instance, in prolonged modern combat, show some signs of actual brain damage. In the first world war, one would be shot at the hands of the authorities for suffering such an effect. In today's ufology, if one is cynically frank, UFO abductees aside from PTSD, merely suffer the humiliation of ridicule and condemnation, as their military counterparts did in World War II.

What is the evidence though to suggest that UFO abductees have PTSD? Before answering this, we need to examine the characteristics of PTSD following obvious or salient traumatic events. So here are the following common symptoms of PTSD: *flashbacks or reliving the trauma; headaches and other aches and pains; insomnia; nightmares about the trauma; a terror of anything associated or reminiscent of the trauma; obsessive, aversive and compulsive behaviour in relation to the trauma; depressive anxiety; agoraphobia; sexual dysfunction; anorexia; amenorrhoea or disturbed menstrual cycle; immuno-deficiency; panic attacks; and obsessive guilt or shame.*

Although much of the above are psychological, and psychogenic in nature, they can also represent actual, physical or eventual real organic changes within the body that are commonly associated with physiological disease. It is as though the body is responding to an actual real or perceived potential insult and not just to some imagined physical threat or danger. The shock of the trauma itself knocks the body for six, so to speak, and it responds accordingly in order to cope and compensate. One experiences this in micro form, even in minor traumas, like slipping on ice or falling off a bicycle. Victims of such accidents will often comment that it made them "go sick" for a moment and they are then seen to become - pale, shake uncontrollably and appear dazed for a short while, until they recover themselves. It also almost seems as though no amount of psychological influence really helps to subdue these sensations of physical unease during that brief recovery period. The body is adjusting itself. These are the symptoms of physical shock, an evolved defence mechanism, which seeks to preserve life and the body's integrity. It is now also thought that a bad accident for instance may actually induce diseases like cancer, stroke, diabetes and other auto-immune syndromes. This is testament to how physiologically sensitive we are to actual or perceived real trauma as living organisms. Given these implications then of the effects of PTSD regarding obvious traumatic incidents, if CE4s are actually physically real (in whatever sense) and traumatic, we should see PTSD in those individuals who have had such experiences, and be able therefore to differentiate them from fantasised accounts. And this appears to actually be the case.

Some would argue that the recovered memories of supposed child abuse prove that hypnotic regression in CE4 cases is similarly dangerous. However, US psychiatrists and psychologists are successfully using PTSD to differentiate between genuine cases of abuse and implanted false memories, where PTSD is clearly absent. One possible cause for the memory loss of CE4 events, I believe, is that whatever their source is, it may be deliberately or otherwise causing interference or disruption with the short-term memory processing component of the brain known as the hippocampus. This can be produced quite simply (as research shows<sup>2</sup>) by the application of an electrical shock similar to electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) used to treat some psychiatric conditions. I would like to go into this further, along with other theories related to it, in a later article.

#### *Undiscovered truths*

The final research probe I want to discuss concerns that of undiscovered truths. These represent incidents or dialogue within the UFO abduction experience, or

CE4, that involve things which were previously unknown or could not possibly have been known by the witnesses or humanity at the time of the experience. Let us say for instance that the purported entities in a CE4 experience performed medical techniques or discussed a scientific theory that was unknown of at the time the experience took place. If it could be established that human science at such a time could not have been aware of such theories or practices, it would tend to suggest that the experience could not be merely coming from fabrications of the witness's sub-conscious mind, and we then indeed need to ask where the source of such information could therefore have possibly originated. One might posit that if it were not some non-human intelligence that was responsible, then some sort of telepathy or precognition of future events is taking place and manifesting in some bizarre way. However, once we begin to suggest such hypotheses, I think we are already entering an at least equally, if not more, amazing realm of reality than if we just accept that say alien beings from another part of our galaxy or universe were the probable source of such things.

One of the finest examples of an undiscovered truth goes back again to the Betty and Barney Hill story in which they were purported to have been shown a star-map by the entities, which supposedly contained the entities' home stars. This apparently happened to match the stars Zeta Reticuli I and II, which were, (we are told) apparently only discovered after the Hill's experience. Also in the same case, the Hills indicated that the entities took skin scrapings of the couple. This is a method sometimes used in genetic (DNA) fingerprinting, a technique not applied (by humans) until its invention more than twenty years after their experience. That is not to say that the purported entities were necessarily taking the samples for just such a purpose, but it would seem a plausible possibility, since they apparently intimated that they were investigating the couple's biological make-up, which would be enhanced by obtaining DNA profiles. This is my point, such clues therefore do seem to add up to something significant regarding evidence for a certain type of real experience. It is not solid proof as such, but it tends to lend some credence, I feel at least, to the possible exogenous or external reality of the Hill's story and others like it. When we add these bits of evidence to those already discussed, together with the albeit disputed fact that Pearce US air force base is said to have actually tracked an anomalous object (UFO) in the vicinity at the time of the Hill's sighting, then the inference of some kind of objectively real experience must surely become stronger. This may not indicate that we are dealing with extra-terrestrials per se, but it is in my opinion, evidence that this experience was not simply a case of fantasy proneness. If we bother to look at other cases, I guarantee similar evidence will be forthcoming. The problem with some ufologists however, is not so much that they go overboard with CE4 cases (as some criticise), but rather that they unfortunately fail to look deeply enough for the potential clues that may indicate their true reality, nature and meaning.

To sum up then, I am proposing three reality probes that may strengthen the inference or suggestion that at least some UFO abduction experiences, or CE4s, have a basis in some form of objective, as yet not understood or recognised, reality. These include: evidence of post traumatic stress disorder in witnesses; chill factors that make their story salient or come alive; and undiscovered truths about reality or technological processes which neither the witnesses, nor anybody else, could possibly have been aware of at the time the incident took place. The Dogan tribe in Africa may represent a very good example of this. They have been accurately aware of the components of a star system (Sirius) long before modern astronomy. They say their knowledge of this originates from strange amphibious beings, they call the Nommo, whom they believe came to their people from that star system some 3,000

years ago, bringing to them their religion, as well as a knowledge of the arts and civilisation.

Finally, when the three reality probes proposed are combined in any UFO abduction experience, especially with the additional element of independent objective evidence (e.g. radar tracking), they constitute, in my opinion, what science refers to as "strong inference", which in this case - regards the reality (objective or otherwise) of such phenomena. We must also bear in mind of course that some CE4 experiences are said by their experiencers to occur in conscious memory, either partially or wholly, making hypnotic regression unnecessary anyway. There is already a vast wealth of evidence for us to sift through and apply my proposed investigative tools. Let us begin digging then, unless we are not possessed of the courage to face the cynicism of some sceptics.

#### References:

for Schirmer's hypnotic transcript [italicised and in inverted commas]-  
Warren Smith (1977) *UFO Trek*. Sphere: London p. 74-75.

<sup>2</sup> Squire L.R., Slater, P.C. & Chace, P.M. (1975) *Retrograde Amnesia: Temporal gradient in very long-term memory following electro-convulsive therapy*. *Science*, 187, 77-79.

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#### Witness Support Group

This group was based upon the original London based Witness Support Group which began some five years ago under the guidance of the late Ken Philips of BUFORA. The function of this group is to enable witnesses to freely express their experiences regarding paranormal phenomena (varying from UFO close encounters to extreme poltergeist activity). These experiences can sometimes be upsetting, or even traumatic, for an individual. The group meets in private and protects the witnesses from fear of ridicule. Witnesses may express themselves literally and subjectively, depending on how they feel about their approach to their experiences. However, publication of their experiences, with full anonymity, may be arranged at some time in the future, if they so desire.

Anyone who participates in the Witness Support Group has the right to remain totally anonymous, along with any work they do. The group usually remains separate to other MARA activities and functions. It is co-ordinated by Mark Glover and Paul Rogers, who ensure that a balanced view is maintained; which avoids the construction of any religious or cult mentality, and also prevents any individuals from dominating the group.

It must be stressed that this group is not a counselling group, nor is it in any way medically analytical. It is merely there to allow people to talk freely about their experiences, and share them with other witnesses who may have had similar encounters; all in total confidence. The Witness Support Group is available to all members of the public who have had paranormal experiences. For further information please contact:

Mark Glover 0151 476 0356 12, Buckingham Close, Ford, Bootle, Liverpool, L30 2PL and Paul Rogers 01695 729410 e-mail paulrogers3@compuserve.com

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## RECOVERED MEMORY & HYPNOSIS SPECIAL

*by Kevin McClure*

If I'm right, and there never has been a single, physical, enforced act of abduction of a human being by an alien, non-human being, the belief in abductions has left some very confused people out there. For some, the confusion will arise from a belief that aliens intervene in our lives for our benefit. They will be depending on an alien presence for love, support, care, even rescue. Even if they feel that they have been abducted and used for physical, sexual purposes, and have minimal control over what is happening to them, they will have faith in the good intentions of their unseen benefactors. A sort of Stockholm Syndrome with invisible captors.

For others - apparently the great majority - the confusion will have more serious implications. Because of their belief in the reality of abduction, many groups and individuals have changed their ways of life. Many believe that they have been abducted to be inseminated by aliens, have become pregnant with a hybrid foetus, and have been abducted again to have that foetus removed so the child can grow up on a spaceship. They recount their memories of these supposed events during hypnotic regression and they, and others, live in fear that the next time they are regressed they will discover that they have, once again, been abducted and abused. They will have concluded that they are not in control of their own lives, and that compliance is the limit of their range of choices. They will be deeply involved in listening for explanations of their perceived experiences, in sharing their experiences with other abductees. To borrow a term from the 'Courage to Heal' movement, they will be sharing much of their lives with other abduction 'survivors'. They may believe that because abduction is "generational" - an often suggested possibility - that if they have children they, too, will become abductees. They may not want to have children.

A thorough look at 'UFO close encounter' reports before Hopkins' *Missing Time* appeared in 1981 shows that claims of physical, involuntary abduction were exceedingly rare. They had none of the really unpleasant elements - the repeated interference with children, the gynaecological and rectal examinations, the implanting and removal of foetuses, the maternal visits to alien nurseries. Until these concepts were introduced from 'recovered memory' material, and they received wide publicity, they scarcely occurred in published accounts. Researchers as wide-ranging as John Keel, Jerome Clark, D Scott Rogo, Brad Steiger and Jacques Vallee found it possible to believe in, and write about, all kinds of phenomena. But they simply found no evidence for the type of abduction experience which, by the time Streiber's *Communion* came out, had become the standard. The alien abduction mythos has appeared from somewhere, by some means, and it has appeared surprisingly suddenly. How has this happened?

It is increasingly clear to me that the alleged 'physical' evidence that we were told would validate the claims that the abduction experience is real is all, simply, worthless. Implants continually disappear prior to investigation, except for those 'obtained' by Derrel Sims which are somehow never fully analysed, however much time passes. 'Cup and scoop marks' could be anything, and are almost certainly ordinary abrasions, wounds and scars. There is no evidence that they are made by aliens. The alleged UV fluorescence resulting from 'alien handling' has been shown to be a hundred and one things - but none of them 'alien handling'. There is no

medical evidence of alien involvement in 'missing' or interrupted pregnancies. Indeed, there is no medical, or even simply objective and tangible, evidence to suggest that aliens interact with human beings at all.

Which leaves only three possible sources for the increasingly widespread belief in the reality of abduction by aliens. The 'memories' recovered through the use of memory enhancement techniques, primarily regression hypnosis; the assertions of the researchers, investigators and authors involved in arranging the use of those techniques that the accounts so obtained arise from real events; and those who are so convinced by those assertions that they come to believe that they, too, may have been abducted. At which point they will often find themselves being regressed by the investigators and authors, thus completing the cycle, confirming their own beliefs and those of the researchers, and themselves becoming full-fledged abductees.

I suggest that, without the use of 'recovered memory' techniques, there would be no alien abduction phenomenon. The line of development of the abduction mythos in the US is clear. From the freak example of the Hills, to Hopkins, Jacobs, Mack, Carpenter, Boylan, Sims and their various acolytes and assistants, all can quote cases - a handful of cases - which have first presented from supposedly conscious recall. But none of these has ever been shown not to derive from the key, media-friendly, 'recovered-memory' accounts of which anyone with an interest in the subject is inevitably, unavoidably aware. And all those researchers resort to 'recovered memory' techniques to further explore those consciously-presented cases. Similar approaches prevail in the UK. Recovered memory techniques are utilised by Tony Dodd of Quest International, who has refused to disclose who his hypnotists are, or what appropriate qualifications they may have, if any. Malcolm Robinson of SPI became convinced of the reality of abductions through the 'A70' case, although all its abductions arose during hypnosis. He says that he only uses a qualified hypnotist, but has repeatedly failed to reveal what that qualification is. Other researchers who publicise material obtained only through the use of recovered memory techniques include Jon King, Philip Mantle, Jon Downes, Matthew Williams and Peter Hough, none of whom have dealt satisfactorily with the question of why regression and hypnosis need be used if the memories are actually of real events, when real events are so seldom forgotten.

Increasingly, the evidence regarding the use of 'recovered memory' techniques suggests - strongly - that they are wholly undependable. That what is produced is likely to be an impenetrable melange of fabrication, misapprehension, remembered real experience, misremembered real experience and the 'rememberer' wanting to please those he knows to be present, or interested in, the 'memories' that are recovered. And there is pretty much no evidence that material obtained in this way is actually true.

To me, if I understand this right, this suggests that those whose lives are being affected and interfered with by their belief in their abduction experience are victims of abuse. Not, maybe, abuse that is committed or caused deliberately, but abuse that arises from the strong, utterly mistaken, personal beliefs of those who propagate the abduction myth. It isn't real abuse like that which human beings regularly, persistently inflict on each other. But it's abuse, and it hurts, and it damages nonetheless. I think we would be right in seeing 'alien abductees' as victims, who we have a duty to inform and assist.

Unfortunately, much of the vital evidence about the reliability of recovered memory techniques is drawn from the field of real, human to human, abuse. There is strong,

indeed overwhelming evidence that 'recovered memory' can produce accounts which are wildly, tragically, untrue. But I want to emphasise that nothing I say here belittles or doubts the horrors of the real abuse of children by adults, which is one of the unforgivable failures of our society. It is not those who are abused or hurt who are at fault, but those who take on responsibilities for therapy, and for establishing the truth, in circumstances which they are totally incapable of handling.

It has become undeniably clear that the use of techniques for hypnosis and regression can have disastrous consequences for therapists, patients and their families. Across the USA, courts and juries are awarding huge amounts of damages to patients whose therapists have led them to believe, through using these techniques, that they were the victims of hideous physical, sexual and psychological violence, including what became known as Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA). When it became clear that the 'memories' they had produced were not of real events, the therapists and their therapies were closely investigated, and found to be tragically flawed.

\$5.8 million was awarded in one case alone in Texas in August 1997, where a patient had been led to 'remember' that her family had "practised murder, cannibalism, sexual abuse and incest". Courts awarded two patients of a Minnesota psychiatrist sums of \$2.67 million and \$2.5 million, because "under hypnosis and sodium amytal, and after being fed misinformation about the workings of memory, they had come to remember horrific abuse by family members." A church counsellor in Missouri settled out of court for \$1 million because it was found that the memories developed during therapy, which her patient had been convinced were accurate, could not have been. Her father had resigned his post as a clergyman because of the accusations. A Wisconsin psychiatrist who implanted demonstrably false memories, and attempted to exorcise her patient, too, settled out of court for \$2.4 million.

In some of those cases, families had been broken up, lives had been ruined. But though greed - in obtaining money from medical insurances - played its part in the exploitation of unwitting patients, most of the therapists involved believed sincerely that the information they extracted was true, and a recollection of actual events. They believed they could help their patients by telling them to accept the reality of these 'memories', and to challenge their supposed abusers, who were commonly close family members. Now we are considering a much more unlikely phenomenon for which there is absolutely no objective evidence, where the abusers are extraterrestrial. Yet what research and investigation there is, is often conducted using very similar techniques. The claims of alien abduction are, perhaps, even more outrageous and incredible than those of SRA, and even less likely to be true.

There is minimal medical or scientific support for the belief that 'hidden' or 'forgotten' memories can be accurately recovered or restored through hypnosis or other regression techniques. Such techniques are seldom used by the Police, and, increasingly, courts will not accept testimony recovered through regression unless there is separate, independent corroborative evidence to support what has been 'recalled'. It is rare for regressions involving abduction by aliens to be conducted by anyone other than amateurs, well-meaning or otherwise. Where professionals are involved, they are generally already believers themselves, and bring to the scene of the regression all their own beliefs and preconceptions. It's not hypnotising people that's difficult, it's having the sense and knowledge to understand what you should, and should not, do with a person's mind once trance has been induced. And how what you do might affect their lives, and the lives of those around them.

Plenty of professional research results, and advice and opinion, at the highest level, is available to those considering exploring supposedly hidden memories. Any therapist willing to make the effort should have no trouble finding out about the unreliability of hypnotic regression. A statement by the Research Council of the American Medical Association in 1985 said that

*“memories obtained under hypnotic interventions contain confabulations, pseudomemories and inaccuracies. Self-report, alone, cannot be used to determine the reliability of true from false memories.”*

The *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry* (Kaplan & Sadlock, 1985) said

*“Hypnosis not only fails to produce more accurate memories but also increases the patient’s willingness to report unclear memories as facts. Confabulations, distortions, fantasies and cued responses all add to the potential unreliability of such memories.”*

Phil Mollon, the Head of the Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy Service at Lister Hospital, Stevenage states in *Clinical Psychology Forum* that

*“Experiments show that false memories, including those of past lives and abduction by aliens, can be implanted through hypnosis. Hypnosis can elicit both true and false memories, but with enhanced belief in their accuracy”.*

The *Guidelines Related to Recovered Memories* of the Australian Psychological Society state that,

*“Memories’ that are reported either spontaneously or following the use of special procedures in therapy may be accurate, inaccurate, fabricated, or a mixture of these.”*

Even experimental hypnotists themselves, commenting in *The International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* (January 1996) on the use of hypnotically elicited recall as legal testimony, list a number of problems with hypnotically induced memory. These include the likelihood that suggestibility increases; confabulation increases; confidence in the memory increases; critical review of the memory decreases; sources of the memory are confused; reconstruction increases as a result of new in-puts; fantasy development may increase; practitioner’s beliefs may influence the patient. Comments of this kind are the rule, not the exception, and continue to emerge as the seriousness of the recovered memory problem becomes apparent. I’ll try to update you in *Abduction Watch* whenever important new findings appear.

Although here are hundreds of academic and professional studies, books, and journals about the problems of the recovery of memory in therapeutic situations, I haven’t yet seen one which regards recovered memories as always being even halfway dependable, let alone completely accurate. Not only is recall under hypnosis widely recognised as unreliable, and has been repeatedly proved to be so, but it is very unusual for people not to remember, consciously and often repeatedly, a severely traumatic event that happened to them either recently, or many years ago. I understand that memory blocks are very rare, because that isn’t generally how memory works. So, if a detailed, vivid, exotic account of supposed events emerges during regression, there is a high probability that the exotic elements of the account will have no objective reality at all. This is where the common

argument that because some truthful material will emerge from regression, regression should be used regardless of the known risks, fails miserably. It's an argument born of desperation, which defies rational thought in accepting that the most implausible 'recovered memories' are also the most likely to be true.

Those who want - need - to defend the myth of alien abduction protect their belief by claiming that conscious recall of abduction is rare, and regression necessary, because the aliens deliberately confuse abductees and block out their memories of what they have suffered. This stupid and unprovable suggestion is remarkably arrogant - brave hypnotist defeats sly aliens - but it can serve to lead people away from the reasonable, logical conclusion that where the only evidence for an event is the product, direct or indirect, of recovered memory techniques, then it is highly likely that the evidence results from the techniques, and not from memories locked away by aliens. The near-Victorian idea that the brain is a series of little storage facilities, some locked and some not, is particularly popular among those who want to be seen to have the power to do the unlocking, but I am now confident that the secret lies in the process and circumstances of regression, and not in the hidden memory of the person being regressed. Regression is not a magic key to unlock limitless hidden truths, but that is certainly a valuable illusion for an unscrupulous investigator - or therapist - to maintain.

So, what separates those who 'recalled' being victims of Satanic Ritual Abuse from those who recall being the victims of complex abductions and medical procedures at the hands of aliens? Only one factor, in my opinion. That the 'experiencers' of alien abductions have not yet questioned the validity of the experiences they have said they have had. They have not yet started fighting back.

With SRA, the accusations were made against human beings, who could in some cases start their own legal actions, provide their own information about what had been recalled. They could prove that they didn't chop the heads off babies, didn't perform sacrifices to Satan. They could prove that they were in another state, another country, at a time when their son or daughter said they were at home abusing them. They could show that the accusations of abuse, the supposed memories, had never existed before the therapist became involved. They were able to prove that while their accusers had not told deliberate lies, the hypnosis, the regression, the therapy, were all deeply flawed.

The aliens - should they actually exist - have no such opportunities. They can't take the abduction investigators to court for leading people into having false memories, or being persuaded of horrible abuses they never really suffered. The aliens are compliant, silent, ideal bad guys who can never say anything to defend themselves.

It will, in the long run, be down to the abductees to begin to realise that they've been led into making reports for which there is no substance, through the use of recovered memory techniques that are known to be inaccurate and unreliable, if not actually dangerous. Ten years from now, I doubt that new abductees will be coming forward, and many current abductees will, by then, be deeply embarrassed by what they have reported. Even now, I'm sure that some of those who have reported extraordinary events to their repressors must, sometimes, wonder why on earth they ever did so. But they must be afraid of looking foolish, or gullible, or just plain ill. It's not like SRA, where your family can forgive you and welcome you back. There is little for an abductee to gain by recanting, saying it never happened, saying they were wrong. And there are scarcely any examples for them to follow.

Despite all the adverse publicity, some investigators, researchers and therapists may still not know the important facts about seeking recall through regression. They

may not realise what they are doing. For me the first tenet of therapy, of helping people in any way, is 'Above all, do no harm', but great harm is being done. There is clearly a great need to stop the abduction mythos causing any more damage to those it has already taken in, and to prevent it taking in any more than is absolutely unavoidable. Then, beyond that, there is the important task of enabling those who have become convinced they have been abducted, with all that entails, to realise that they have been misled. To enable them to realise that, simply, they are not abductees, and that they don't have to deal with those problems any more. And nor, as investigators, do we.

Kevin McClure ~ has written articles for the Fortean Times and is the author of *The Fortean Times Book of the Millennium*. Kevin produces a journal called *Abduction Watch* which examines the "abduction" scenario world-wide. Subscription costs £5 for five issues per year and can be obtained by writing to Kevin McClure at 3, Claremont Grove, Leeds LS3 1AX, England.

*ABDUCTION WATCH is published monthly, and in the UK a 12-issue subscription costs only £10. Please make payments out to 'Kevin McClure', and send to:*

3, Claremont Grove, Leeds, LS3 1AX.

MARA would like to thank Kevin for his permission to reproduce his article here in full for this issue of *The Researcher*.

## MARA UFO / paranormal Conference

MARA will be hosting the Merseyside UFO and paranormal Conference this year, with a number of guest speakers presenting lectures on a variety of subjects.

The date:

Saturday October 31<sup>st</sup>

Venue, speakers, and times to be announced in the next issue.

## An Evening with Billy Roberts

by Julie Boyd

Having only ever seen Billy Roberts in his videos, I thought I would take the opportunity of watching him demonstrate live at the Neptune Theatre in Liverpool on the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> October 1997. This would also double as an opportunity for me to take a look at the Neptune Theatre itself, which is supposed to be haunted! I know that there are some amongst us who are quite sceptical, myself included, regarding demonstrations of mediumship, but this was my chance to take an objective view. Personally, I have always felt that Billy Roberts was one of the few down-to-earth, genuine people in this field of the paranormal, and I came away feeling no different.

However, I do feel that some of his audience leave a lot to be desired. Billy started the evening by making it clear that he had no time for those who were there just to be cynical, and like-wise, the same went for those who just wanted to be amused. Basically, he has no time for the p... takers, if you will excuse the expression! The theatre was quite full and a box was provided at the sides of the stage for those wanting to place their hand written names and birth dates for Billy to randomly select and 'read' from.

He is able to give information out about the individual, their past, present and future situations from their handwriting and vibrations, not necessarily with help from the spiritual side. It is quite obviously impossible for him to give a reading for every single person submitting their slips of paper or mementoes. But, as he says himself, if he gives a good reading for someone - then they love him, and if he fails to - then they hate him! Such is the nature of people and I think a lot of them just like to have their ears tickled, quite frivolously too it seems!

As part of his introduction, he gave a brief talk on the nature of Energy, some of us will identify it as *Chi* or *Prana*, and how its Universal Flow can never be destroyed; hence the existence of the 'Eternal Spirit'. However, I think that this was a bit above the heads of most of the audience, who were more interested in getting a message from Aunt Ethel on the other side. Not for them, was the pursuit of spiritual knowledge, which was pretty evident by the behaviour of some!

At some point during the show, Billy introduced an elderly lady who was blind from birth and who gave a demonstration of her clairvoyance. Unfortunately, I cannot remember her name. I went there with all the usual sceptical pre-judgement doubts in my mind, but they were proven wrong! He does not 'fish' for answers to his questions like so many clairvoyants, and neither does he generalise, rather he insists upon consistency in any reading. Of course, each reading is subjective and personal to the recipient, and only they will know of its accuracy - whether immediately or later. As in some cases, a reading or part of a reading only becomes clarified within time. I did not have the opportunity of testing this, (yes, I did put my name and birth date in the box!) but no doubt that opportunity may yet arise. Billy does do private readings, and if that opportunity occurs, I'll let you all know. After all, I do have some skeletons locked away in the deep dark cupboard, and if any medium can uncover them, then I will be pleasantly surprised. Unless it is all down to good old fashioned telepathy? Then again, Billy Roberts did foretell the death of Princess Diana, so who knows. See him if you can and judge for yourselves.

On a final note, apart from books and videos on display in the foyer, sets of Christian Tarot cards were also on display. I always thought that this would be contradictory to Christian beliefs?! I have nothing against Tarot cards (I have them myself) but 'Christian' ones seemed a bit odd. Nevertheless, I personally did not like them or their imagery, but each to their own, I suppose.

Julie Boyd - is author of a number of articles regarding the paranormal for publications such as *Predictions*. Julie is also a member of MARA and enjoys researching psychical anomalies.

## British UFO Research Association VIDEO & AUDIO CASSETTES

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Merseyside Mini Conference November 1995

Peter Hough "UFO cases from the North - West"  
Steven Gamble "UFO cases from Northamptonshire"  
Ken Philips "The Witness Support Group"

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Merseyside Mini Conference May 1996

Anthony Eccles/ Mark Glover "UFOs in Merseyside"  
Jenny Randles "Government Cover Ups"  
John Spencer "Discussing the origins of UFOs"

### 4<sup>th</sup> Merseyside Mini Conference November 1996

Gloria Dixon "Close Encounters / Military Aircraft"  
Philip Mantle "British Abduction cases"  
Matthew Williams "The British Cover Up"

### 5<sup>th</sup> Merseyside Mini Conference June 1997

Margaret Fry "UFO Crash on Berwyn Mountain"  
Tim Matthews "The Flying Triangle"  
Stan Conway "A lesson of UFO physics"  
Larry Warren & Peter Robbins "UFO crash in Rendlesham"

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or e-mail at paulrogers3@compuserve.com

## A View on Counselling

By Sue McAllister

Not all people are good listeners. This is a definite requirement for someone who wishes to become a trained counsellor. I would like to shed some light on the subject as many people think they know what counselling is, but they don't. I don't want to sound condescending but it's true. A lot of people think that counselling is about giving people with problems advice, but it isn't. At this moment in time I am in my first year of a training course in counselling skills, which leads onto a diploma in counselling, three years in all. I don't claim to be a practising counsellor and could not counsel anybody at this stage, but people can use counselling skills when dealing with others, ie friends, family and colleagues.

You see, there is a big difference between counselling someone and using counselling skills. Counselling skills, are used by a lot of people all the time. For example, being non-judgemental, honest, respectful towards other people's feelings, using confidentiality and listening, to name but a few. These qualities are also needed in professions such as nursing and teaching. There is a definition of counselling.

*"Counselling is freely entered into by the person seeking help. It offers the opportunity for the clients themselves to identify things that are troubling or perplexing them. It is clearly and explicitly contracted, and the boundaries of the relationship are identified. The activity itself is designed to help self exploration and understanding. The process should help to identify thoughts, emotions and behaviours that, once accessed, may offer the client a greater sense of personal resources and self determined change."*

MARA's Witness Support Group offers support in many ways. Using confidentiality in the group is very important, so that the people concerned feel safe. The group is non-judgmental. This is equally important so that people are made to feel accepted as persons and not to be considered crazy or loony (or even as part of a study)! I was asked if I thought counselling would be useful to some people who are a witness to strange or unusual phenomena, such as seeing a U.F.O. or 'ghosts', encountering entities, experiencing psychic abilities or an 'abduction' event etc. I think it is entirely up to the individual to make the decision to seek further help, as long as the counselling is practised by someone qualified like a counsellor. What may be tremendously useful and helpful to one person may be totally useless to another.

Having a Witness Support group, like MARA's, can be all some witnesses need, for people to listen and nothing more. Some may be propelled into finding answers and wanting to know why? And how? But most, if not all, of this paranormal activity cannot be explained. It is how the individual perceives the activities they witness, and how they deal with them that counts more than anything in my opinion. If MARA's Witness Support Group, counselling, psychotherapy or the Samaritans helps some people, then who are we to say that they don't work. It is up to the individual to decide. Every adult's responsibility is to themselves. All we can do, as a group, is to offer the support and understanding in a caring and welcoming way, and together help one another to better understand these strange and weird experiences.

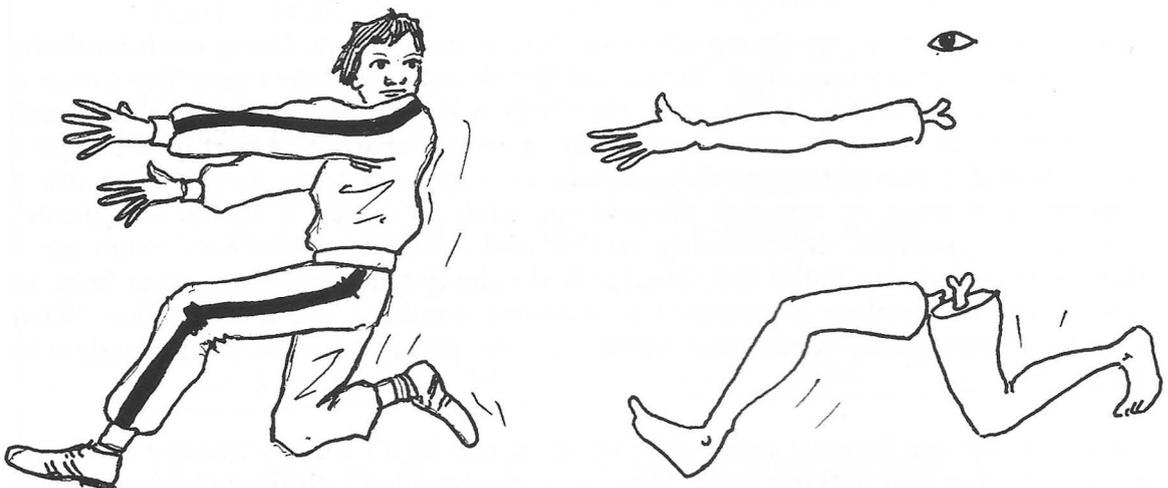
**References:**

<sup>1</sup> British Association for Counselling (1991) *Counselling: Definition of Terms in use with Expansion and Rationale.*

Bond, T., Dexter, G. & Russell, J. (1992) *Differentiation between Advice, Guidance Befriending, Counselling Skills and Counselling*

Sanders, P. (1996) *First Steps in Counselling* - second edition.

Sue McAllister used to work for a well known pharmaceutical company. Sue has had eighteen months experience working with Victim Support and is presently training as a therapist counsellor. She is also involved with MARA's Witness Support Group.



STEVE AUSTIN, THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN,  
WAS CONSTANTLY HAUNTED BY HIS MISSING  
BODY PART'S!

## New Ufology

*by Andy Blunn*

When I was first asked to write something for this embryonic publication. I didn't really know what to write. This journal is all about research into unexplained phenomena - something which we all claim to be involved with. But it is my opinion that we need to seriously re-evaluate the way we go about 'researching' the paranormal - and in particular the UFO phenomenon.

In the (relatively) short period I have been involved at the 'business end' of UFO research, my ideas about the phenomenon have been radically altered. I have never been more sceptical than now. When I first joined the Northern Anomalies Research Association (NARO) back in August 1994, I sympathised with the idea that UFOs could possibly be alien spaceships from some far off world, and saw my membership of NARO as an opportunity to possibly obtain some proof that UFOs are objectively real. Of course at that time, the group was very small, and there were only a handful of us meeting in Jenny Randles' living room; in fact, there were only a handful of such groups in the country. Then the X-Files came along to change all that, and now there are many, many more such groups.

It didn't take me long to realise that the subject is immense in its complexity, encompassing many different areas of human understanding (amongst none of which is exobiology!). To be a 'ufologist', one needs to be a 'jack of all trades', in particular, he/she needs to understand human beings and their (sometimes irrational) behaviour. A ufologist needs to understand science and the applications of science in the modern world. A ufologist needs to be a historian, an 'all-rounder' - because the study of the UFO phenomenon involves, without a doubt, the sociology of our world. Being a ufologist isn't about having night vision scopes, or spying on the M.o.D. It isn't about running a UFO group or producing magazines. And it isn't about slagging off other researchers for the sake of it. This doesn't mean that criticism should be avoided however, because the debate is essential as it stimulates new ideas.

Having read issue one of "The Researcher", I thought I'd comment on an article written by William Bimson regarding the so-called disinformation and secrecy methods employed by governments with regard to UFO research. I respect William's viewpoint but I do not agree with him. The article is typical of the paranoid attitude to UFO research that develops when one fails to look at the big picture, which is what I was referring to in the previous paragraphs. His text is symptomatic of the kind of imported Americana that is currently infiltrating this country.

In America, conspiracy theories have mushroomed because of the idea that the American government is engaged in the process of taking away everything that each 'hard-working American family' has earned. One of the most popular conspiracy theories in American ufology is that an elite team known only as MJ-12, who exist to use back-engineered technology, so that a privileged few can leave Earth to establish colonies. Mixed in with all this we have the ideas that Aids is a method employed by MJ-12 (who are controlled by the aliens) to curb the ever increasing population of the globe. Others which have surfaced (and been given serious attention at past British UFO conferences) include the idea that the dark side of the moon is flourishing with an American colony that mines the moon for minerals. Indeed, I recall reading a letter in one of the news-stand 'zines which

speculated how the Japanese would react upon reaching the moon and discovering that permission to mine it must first be obtained from the 'American Lunar Mining Authority'!<sup>1</sup>

William talks of overcoming the techniques of the government in order for the truth to emerge. Peter Brookesmith makes an interesting point in an article written for 'Magonia'<sup>2</sup>, where he says:

*"UFO and political conspiracy theories address the void that opens when social identities are denatured by remote yet intrusive government, and both participation in and control of political life move out of individual reach."*

In other words, Brookesmith is suggesting that the kind of ideas William promotes are filling a gap opened up by a government that is distant, yet dominating and increasingly repressive.

Those who are labelled as sceptics are often labelled as debunkers or purveyors of disinformation by the believers. They cite, as William does, physical evidence of crashed alien spaceships that have been recovered by the US government. In his article, William refers to a piece of the Roswell wreckage - supposedly recovered and proved to be genuine....

*"[Hardware] evidence is difficult to come by, but there is some already available - such as alien implants and parts of spacecraft wreckage with isotropic ratios which prove they are of non-earthly origin."*

By this, I take it William is referring to the 'Roswell fragment' which Derrel Sims' 'scientists' have analysed. In fact, the recovered metal is far from being extraterrestrial in origin. As a scientist, William should be aware that Ge-75 has a half life of 1.38 hours, and with such a short half-life, you can't detect the presence of such an isotope after days or weeks unless the initial concentration of the isotope was massive enough to kill anyone in the vicinity.<sup>3</sup>

William is similarly sloppy in his analysis when he says with confidence that we have recovered alien implants. There has never been any conclusive evidence produced which has unequivocally shown that even one 'alien implant' was anything of the sort Derrel Sims a.k.a 'The Alien Hunter', refuses to reveal the names of the 'scientists' who conduct the 'research' into his implants. But these 'scientists' are generally unnamed and their whereabouts unknown. Where are the results? Why hasn't there been a paper submitted? The answer, it seems to me, is that these 'scientists' do not exist. They are yet another product of the abduction mythos. At the recent British UFO Research Association conference in Sheffield of August last year, Sims assured the audience that the 'implants' would shortly become indistinguishable from the rest of the body - now isn't that convenient? No longer will the 'implants' be metal, they will be biological - part of the body itself. How long will it be before the implant is an eye or an ear, replaced by the aliens after they have 'abducted' someone?

One aspect that surprised me early on is the low evidential standards that some ufologists have. This is largely due to a couple of reasons, the first being that most ufologists are nothing more than enthusiastic amateurs (although with a little time and effort, anybody can get the job done properly). The second, and more important reason is that mainstream ufology is now big business, and this means a good story sells books and creates TV work etc... This year in particular has seen ufology rammed down the public's throat on TV and radio, at conferences and in

new books and magazines as everyone tries to cash in on the so-called 50 years of ufology. This means that with the skill of a politician, ufologists all over the world are pulling the wool over the public's eyes. In short, ufology has reached saturation point. This kind of 'UFO overkill' has, ironically weakened rather than strengthened the position of those who battle it out day in and day out on the Internet news groups and in their little research groups. Both believers and sceptics alike are engaged in a battle which, by its nature, has no end. They are simply stooges of the Ufological religion which has created an infrastructure of UFO lobbyists spurred on by Mulder and Scully. The cottage industry which has spawned countless UFO fanzines has also created a level of investigator incompetence that has far outstripped anything that we could have imagined even as little as ten years ago.

So where does this leave research groups like MARA and NARO? I think that they need to be very careful. Ufology is heading into dangerous waters. It may not be long before a witness sues a paranormal research group as a result of any 'counselling' handed out or false memories recovered using hypnosis. I think that ufology needs an overhaul, only then will the question of the origin of UFOs be solved.

#### References:

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Sightings Magazine. Don Cooper of the group 'Serius' wrote last year.

<sup>2</sup> From *A Plague of Aliens: Visionary Rumour as Contemporary and Costume Drama*, Magonia Issue 60, Summer 1997.

<sup>3</sup> From comments made by a managing director in Issue 3 of Kevin McClure's Abduction Watch.

Andy Blunn is a second year undergraduate at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) studying Aerospace Engineering. He is also the Co-editor of 'NARO Minded', a quarterly journal produced by the Northern Anomalies Research Organisation (NARO). Contact him by emailing : [andrew.p.blunn@stud.umist.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.p.blunn@stud.umist.ac.uk) or write to NARO Minded 41, Somerset Road, Droylsden, Manchester, M43 7PX.

## UFO / paranormal experiences

If you are experiencing any unusual phenomena within the Merseyside area and you would like us to help you, then please do not hesitate to contact us by phone or by mail, especially if you are worried or frightened by what you have experienced.

We are here to help you

Total confidentiality assured

To contact MARA please see details on page 3

## An Urban Myth

by Elaine Hannah (Jan 1998)

In an area of Merseyside called the Dingle, there stands the Tiny Tots Nursery which is still located on Princes Road. Someone I know very well was employed there as a nursery nurse for just on three months. Different children went there, some were new-born, the majority, though, were between one and five years of age and they were looked after every day of the week. The building itself was very old as it was once an old Quaker Meeting House with a bell tower that remains intact today, on the gable-end of the roof.

The nursery contained a 'baby room', obviously. But the room was always cold - very, very cold; more so than any other room in the building. Now this should not occur in a room where new-born babies are kept, especially as the heating was kept full on all day. This nurse I knew sensed something was 'spooky' about the confines of the room, and she had felt quite uncomfortable staying in the room for a long period of time. Other workers there also did not like being present in the room. What was also noticed was that the babies had appeared to be distressed and unrestful, they would not sleep for long periods of time, it was said by one nurse that the babies appeared to be worried about something and their attention distracted by something unseen within the room. No more was thought about that!

The washroom too seemed 'funny'. The curtains which hid the toilets - fluttered as if a breeze had pushed them, and this in a room which contained no windows or other small portals. It was a place the children hated being in. The cause of this was not known and no-one even spoke about ghosts. Not until, however, one of the children started acting somewhat differently.

The nursery nurse I knew had noticed that one child in particular had an unusual companion or 'phantom' playmate, and no-one else had spotted this. But it seemed that this little boy, named Jake, used to bring into the nursery everyday a Milky Way chocolate bar, apparently for his new friend. All children have invisible friends, it shows how imaginative and creative their minds are and is a healthy way of thinking for a child of that age. So initially no one thought any more of this.

A small period of time had passed and the nursery nurse who had first noticed the small boy decided to watch him go to meet his friend. Over he went to a secluded part of the building where his attention was focused on a particular corner of the hall and he placed the chocolate bar on the floor. The boy turned around and was soon confronted by the nursery nurse.

*"Who are you talking to Jake?"* Asked the nurse.

*"The old lady."* Replied little Jake.

It had seemed that Jake was told by this old lady to bring a chocolate bar to her every day into the nursery and that he was not to tell anyone else about it; it was their secret. Jake described her as having a bun in her hair and she sat in a rocking chair. The nurse let him go on and she looked over to see whereabouts the chocolate bar was on the floor so that she could give it back to Jake later in the day. However, the chocolate bar was gone! She had seen Jake put it on the floor and leave it there, and no-one else was present with them. The other nursery helpers were approached and they did not know that Jake had an imaginary friend, he just seemed to play quite happily with the other children. You see this tale is true; you know why? Because the nursery nurse I was speaking about was ME!

## Blast from the Past - January 1974

*by Anthony Eccles*

I was asked by a fellow colleague to look into the archives of the local newspapers for January 1974. By pure coincidence, as "fate" has it, I had chanced across a number of articles regarding local unusual events. I decided to enclose this material in a small section for the journal for the sakes of archival research. The following extracts have been taken from the January issues of the Liverpool Daily Post, exactly as they were written.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January - front page "Hedge hop helicopter flight a mystery"

*"Police in Cheshire and Derbyshire were last night trying to establish the identity of a hedge-hopping helicopter. The mystery machine was spotted early yesterday in a field at Holmes Chapel, Cheshire and then it made its way in a series of hops across the border. A Derbyshire police spokesman said last night: "We are interested in establishing what person or persons made this unscheduled flight. As for it coming from Ireland, I have no comment to make other than we do not want to give rise to speculation." The machine was last seen around dawn yesterday over a pub near Buxton. It is believed to have landed behind hedgerows and trees on occasions and was tracked by police vehicles for a large part of its journey. Derbyshire police say that they have had similar reports in the past. Cheshire police said last night they were "mystified." Both forces appealed to anyone who may have seen similar activity to contact them. In London the Ministry of Defence confirmed that it had had reports of the helicopter, a spokesman said that "no service craft" had been involved, and it was understood that civil police were investigating."*

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January - front page news brief "Phantom 'copter hunt stepped up"

*"A Cheshire police spokesman said last night that police activities had been "stepped up" in an effort to catch the phantom helicopter pilot who almost nightly has had the officers of four counties scouring the night skies. For several weeks now the 'copter has been seen hedge hopping the border areas of Cheshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Yorkshire during the hours of darkness and especially in the early hours of the morning. Scores of police were again training night glasses into the darkness to spot the mystery machine last night. And all of the 700 qualified helicopter pilots in Britain are being asked to account for their movements since mid-September."*

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January - front page "Copter grounded"

*"The phantom helicopter seems to have gone to ground, Cheshire Police said at midnight that they only had one report yesterday. It came from a woman, a police spokesman said, who said it was about 1000 feet up and was on a direct flight path to Ringway airport. "We established that a light plane was travelling to Manchester about that time and the woman admitted she had only got a glimpse of it." The spokesman added: "For the time we can only wait and see if the helicopter turns up again."*

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January - front page news brief "New sighting?"

*"Cheshire police said early today that they had unconfirmed reports of the mysterious helicopter in Macclesfield and Buxton areas. The helicopter, which caused some excitement some time ago, has not been reported sighted for the last week."*

## The 1998 Prescott Scareship

*by Julia and Mark Rosney*

In the shadowy world of UFO investigation, golden opportunities seldom present themselves to you. When they do, however, they emerge when you least expect them. How many times have you heard or read a story concerning UFO encounters, where the investigator/witness saw something which was 'out of this world' and they 'forgot to reach for their camera', 'forgot to load film in it' or other variations on the same theme? How prepared would you be, when faced with the unexpected? The following is a cautionary tale for all would be UFO investigators.....

Julia Rosney (my long suffering wife) takes up the story.....

It was 9:20 PM, Tuesday 20th January 1998. With another quiet night ahead of us, we sat down to unwind, Mark with his Fortean times (The journal of strange phenomena), me with another TV film. Then the phone rang. Mark got up to answer.

Listening to one side of the conversation, it soon became apparent what the call was all about. I began to feel the buzz coming from the hallway, where Mark excitedly took brief details. Even before he came back into the room I could guess..... 'another UFO report'. But this one was slightly different. The UFO was still in the vicinity, in Prescott - just two miles up the road from us. The witness had described a large saucer shaped object hovering over the skyline. They also added that 'dozens of people were looking at it', and that the 'local church bells were ringing.....'

"I'll take you love", I said (as only a dutiful wife would). "This is an opportunity we cannot miss". I hastily arranged a baby-sitter whilst Mark, in a blind panic, gathered his 'UFO' kit. Getting to the location required some speed. It was only when we were on the road that Mark checked his 'UFO kit'. It comprised of: 1 Camcorder, 1 completely flat Camcorder battery, 1 pair of binoculars (still at home), 1 compass (still at home), 1 tripod (still at home), 1 camera - without any film (still at home), extras - 1 flask of hot tea, 1 scarf, 1 bob hat, 1 local area map.....all still at home.

As we got to Prescott, via burrows lane (the B5201) I drove to a vantage point on Bridge Road by the old BICC works. Looking west towards Knowsley Safari Park, we spotted a large bright object hovering in the distance. "Could that be it?" I asked, as we sped round a roundabout twice. When we had first set out we hadn't expected to see anything at all, so were taken aback by the bright fuzzy shape on the horizon. We sped on, trying to get closer to it. I headed towards Knowsley village down Knowsley lane (the B5194), Mark in the rear of the car swearing at the flat Camcorder battery, me swearing at the middle aged gent in front of us who was doing 25 mph in his posh R reg. Rover.

Mark kept an eye on the object, which was growing larger by the second. In no time at all we could make out the 'saucer shape', which the witness had described to Mark. At this point we decided to find somewhere to park up, before it disappeared completely. I turned left down a dark country lane and stopped the car. Mark shot out and tried to get the Camcorder to work, but to no avail. For a few short seconds we stood transfixed believing that what we were looking at really was 'not of this earth', the peak of Mark's UFO career, all his wildest dreams come true....at last! But then came... "I can see a strobe light on top," said Mark. "It's got

to be a balloon or airship, or something like it." he added. I agreed. I had just seen it too. I thought Mark was filling up - but it was just the cold.

It was a fairly clear night, minus 2° C, with a bitter breeze which literally took your breath away. I got Mark's pocket telescope and tried to focus on the object. It was like 'Independence day' come to Liverpool. I steadied the telescope on a farmer's gate and I eventually got the object into view. "Do you want to know what it says." I said. "Uh yes," said Mark. "GOODYEAR". And that was that. Case solved!

We watched the airship, or 'blip', for a few minutes until it began to move off slowly. We followed it for a while, but gave up at Speke airport. Time to go home!

Although it turned out to be an airship after all, it was still exciting. I'm told it was there to film a football match at Anfield. If Mark had been a Liverpool fan then he would have witnessed the 'craft' from the best vantage point possible; from the terraces of the football ground. No..... I would rather be a UFO investigator's wife!

Once we had stopped and got a good look at it, it was instantly apparent that we were looking at something conventional. The big give-aways were; the red and green navigation lights fore and aft, and two intermittent strobe lights, one red and one white, which sat on the top of the airship. The sight brought back to mind the mystery airship invasion which occurred all over the USA and UK around the turn of this century. I now have some idea of how it must have felt to witness something that big looming on the horizon.

Even though this UFO became an IFO (Identified Flying Object) there were still important lessons to be learned from it. Firstly, upon closer inspection, the 'strip of lights' down the centre of the airship turned out to be reflections from the gondola lights, playing upon the rippling fabric of the balloon envelope. The classic saucer shape was produced by the fall off of light on the curved surface. I also made a mental note of the apparent size, the location of lights upon it's surface, object brightness and colour, direction of viewing and duration of sighting. All these details will be useful when the witness reports come flooding in. How many UFO reports have you come across where the witnesses have seen a classic saucer, complete with a band of lights running across the middle? I have personally investigated three and have read of many others. If the Camcorder had been working then I could have taken footage to compare what was actually there with what the witnesses have reported. A lot could have been gleaned from this.

I have never observed an illuminated airship at night before, but I have gained from this experience. I can add it to other observations of 'unusual' night-time phenomena (which have been reported to me as UFO's), such as the blinding lights of an aircraft performing a turning manoeuvre which, for heart stopping moments, appears to hang motionless in the sky; or Artificial satellites, those small, bright points of light which cut a speedy and silent path across the inky blackness. After all, the difference between a UFO and an IFO is essentially down to experience. If you have seen it before, and can clearly see it for what it is, it becomes identified - which also applies to the second time you clap your eyes on a 'Venusian Scout Ship!'

The moral of this tale is two fold. Firstly, I allowed the urgency of the situation to get the better of me, so much so that if it had been a genuine 'unidentified', I would have missed out in a big way. Observation is one thing, but evidence is something else! The second pearl of wisdom is; whatever you consider to be your 'investigation

kit' - keep it all in a rucksack or hold-all, and always have it at hand, as you never know when the next opportunity might arise.

#### NEWSPAPER EXTRACTS

The Liverpool Daily Post, Wednesday 21st January 1998 read: "BALLOON'S UP"

*" People were gripped with panic that aliens were about to invade Liverpool last night. The police were contacted by several people worried about a UFO that seemed to be hovering above their homes. But the scare was soon dismissed - the UFO was in fact an airship filming the Liverpool - Newcastle match for a satellite T.V. company."*

While the Liverpool Echo, Wednesday 21st January 1998 read: "REDS GO MARTIAN ON!"

*" LIVERPOOL was on alien alert last night, but the flashing lights in the skies, which led to several anxious calls to police, were not visitors from another planet- they were from the Goodyear airship, providing aerial coverage of Liverpool's win against Newcastle."*

### Contributors

"The Researcher" would like to thank the following for their important contributions to this second issue:

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