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The



M.A.R.A.  
Merseyside Anomalies Research Association



Issue 13, Winter 2005/6

# Researcher

Exploring the World of the Paranormal

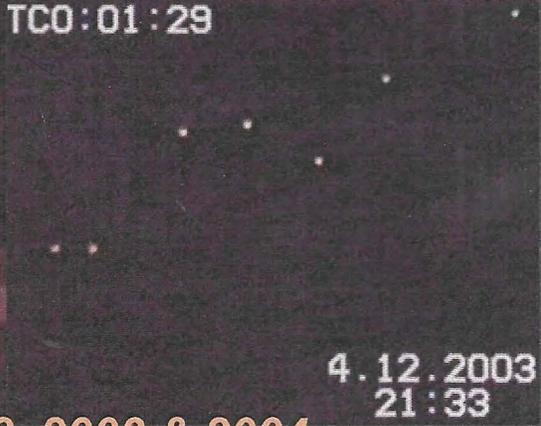
## Mysterious lights over Halewood

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# The Researcher

Issue 13. Winter 2005/6

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Many thanks to our growing band of readers for their continued support.

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## MARAs

A mara is an evil spirit that torments people at night, according to a tradition widespread throughout Northern and Western France. This misty form would settle on people while they were asleep and give them terrible nightmares - from which its name is derived.

Belief in maras is also widespread in Scandinavia, according to Elliot O'Donnell in his book *Dangerous Ghosts* (1954), and in Jutland it is said that they take the form of naked women to give men erotic as well as unpleasant dreams!

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# The Voice



Editorial by Mark Rosney

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? In the case of the Halewood lights, a phenomenon that tends to occur every winter over a very small area of South Liverpool, the answer is a resounding NO!

MARA investigator Bill Bimson has spent the past few years collating sighting information, sifting through video footage and doing painstaking analysis of this annual event. Read his detailed report in this issue.

As well as UFOs, we also feature close encounters of the furred kind - MARA member (and soon to be editor of this austere journal!) Eileen Shaw tells us about her own close encounter with a Black Leopard in Wales, while Researcher regular Colin Veacock looks closer into the legend of the Werewolf - myth or reality? Find out on page 4.

If all that gives you the urge to flee the area at high speed, Researcher newcomer Neil Jenkins may just have the perfect solution - just beam right out of there Star Trek style. Neil takes a look at the possibilities - and the problems - surrounding the creation of a Star Trek style matter transporter. Could it one day be a reality?

Also in this issue, John Hall continues to catalogue the rich mythology and legends of the Isle of Man; this issue turning his attention to Peel Castle and the legend of the Moddhey Dhoo - the island's very own phantom black dog.

Finally, we turn to the skies once again, when Blair Wilkins recounts a strange encounter in the skies over South Liverpool, where the official explanations left more questions than the original sighting.

As mentioned earlier, my innings as editor of this fine magazine comes to an end with this issue. I am delighted to pass the editorial baton into the very capable hands of Eileen Shaw who, I am sure, will guide this journal, for many years to come, through the uncharted waters of the exciting world of the paranormal. Watch this space.....**R**

Do you have a paranormal experience you wish to tell us about?

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or visit our website  
<http://www.mara.org.uk/>

## Living with the Animals

By Eileen Shaw

***Sightings of big cats have been reported from all over the UK, yet the authorities still refuse to believe that there is something potentially sinister prowling around in our countryside. Researcher newcomer Eileen Shaw shares her own personal experiences of her encounter with a big cat.***

**I**n November 2002 my life changed dramatically when a lonely, rough-haired lurcher called Bo moved into my home. It wasn't that I ever wanted a dog or even invited him in, but there seemed nowhere else for him to go. With a cat who hated him on sight, a full-time, often stressful career, and a degree of freedom that I had treasured since the children had grown up and left home, I admitted to feelings of resentment. I wasn't ready to join those robust, dedicated walkers, out in all weathers and managing to look as if they were having fun. But he moved in anyway.

I discovered very quickly that in my relatively confined 1930's semi, the dog and cat must never meet. Doors had to be kept closed at all times to separate the feuding pair. My formerly docile feline friend displayed a side of her personality never seen before; but things were to get much, much worse.

***'I had given up hope of identifying the appropriate hillside and found myself totally lost'***

After two days of leaving Bo 'home alone' while I went to work, all hell broke loose. He took out his frustration on my freshly ironed laundry, cushions from the sofa and beautiful new towels from the bathroom. I returned home to find them neatly shredded and displayed like trophies around the half of the house made available to him.

Day three saw me setting off to work; Bo smiling happily in the back of my car; and that's the way it's been for over two years now. Wherever I go, he goes. Social life in tatters like

my laundry, foreign holidays a distant memory, my triumphant companion now enjoys long, muddy walks in the Liverpool suburbs, observed, I feel, by quizzical eyes looking out from the warm, cozy comfort of more orderly homes.

June 2003 found me loading the car and heading off, not to John Lennon Airport and distant sun-kissed shores, but to a farm cottage near the Preseli Hills in South Wales – accompanied by Bo.

Several hours later, 11.30 p.m. to be precise, I had given up hope of identifying the appropriate hillside and found myself .... sorry ourselves .... totally lost and not a little unnerved, in a small parking area behind some shops, waiting for daylight. I had hoped to stop in the village, known locally as a town, to ask directions. Sadly though, (for us anyway), there appeared to have been some kind of celebration and, with street corners occupied by revellers, I kept on driving until I found a secluded spot to just hide away for a while.

Yes, we left Liverpool in good time and yes, the weather was good, but no-one can disagree that Carmarthen and Caernarfon sound the same and, well anyway, the journey took longer than planned!

Bo doesn't travel all that well. He finds it stressful, so he was tired and ready to sleep. After an hour or so the last of the revellers had disappeared and everywhere was quiet. I let Bo out of the car for a few minutes but was glad to return and lock myself in for the remaining hours of darkness. Within two minutes my hound was snoring. Some protection! It was going to be a long night.

Then something caught my eye. It was a fox.

I watched it walk swiftly in front of my car and a little way up the lane before disappearing into some bushes. It was clearly defined in the moonlight. About fifteen minutes later it returned, (I assumed it was the same fox) walking back in the direction it had come from. Loud snores from the back reassured me that Bo hadn't seen anything.

Another hour or so passed, and then I saw it. Slightly taller and longer than Bo (he's 27 kg),

black, rounded face, running effortlessly and gracefully down the lane, passing directly in front of me. There was no mistaking its cat-like gait. I hoped it would return, but it didn't.



**Black Panther in the wild**

By 5 a.m. it was light enough to move on. The farm was barely 10 minutes drive away; easy to find in the morning light. Later that day I described what I'd seen to the farmer and his family and it was confirmed that there had been several sightings of a black cat in the area. I also heard that one had been seen with its young not far from Fishguard. Local farmers had been out hunting for them, anxious to protect their livestock. There have been reported sightings of big cats all over the UK, with numerous sightings on the Isle of Wight. They have even been linked with the paranormal. It would appear, however, that they're very much alive and, clearly, breeding in our countryside. It is believed that the number of these animals is running into many hundreds. They are able to thrive because of the abundance of food and lack of predators. Our countryside provides a perfect environment. Even areas close to Liverpool have had reported sightings, and the Runcorn Weekly News, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2003 gives an account of a

black cat resembling a panther being spotted prowling the back streets of Halton. This animal was allegedly seen near Halton Castle near the church field and alarmed two witnesses when it turned and growled at them. Eighteen months prior to this a taxi driver was said to have witnessed a massive cat staring at him when he parked his car off Warrington Road in Runcorn. It was described as jet black, with big powerful shoulders and quite a small head. Its body was about four feet long with its tail adding

at least another three feet to its length. About two years ago, a huge cat, known as the Beast of Widnes, was seen on the prowl at St. Michael's Golf Club in Widnes.

According to Ian Wickison, who has

been tracking and researching the big cats in the U.K. for several years now, the black leopards found in the British Isles could be either of leopard or jaguar species. Both leopard and jaguar can give birth to black offspring. Of the several species of big cats living and breeding in the British Isles, the largest members of the group are the black leopard, the puma and the lynx. Sightings increase in the months of August, September and October when harvesting takes place and essential cover is removed. Both the puma and the black leopard are slightly larger than a Labrador dog. Their main diet is rabbit, but Ian has also known them to eat snails and frogs for protein. Although there is no shortage of evidence to suggest they have been responsible for killing sheep, often the sheep have not been eaten, suggesting that they were killed in self-defence, possibly after alarming the big cats by walking up to them and showing no fear. Secretive and solitary, the black leopard has been described as the most aggressive

and most feared animal in the world. It usually hunts in the night or the early hours of the morning. Although it has black fur, it is spotted and its spots can be seen in the right lighting conditions.

In a recent conversation with Ian Wickison I was advised that he has had many sightings of black leopards. Although they are quite capable of inflicting serious harm he believes they are likely to attack only when confronted or, especially, when protecting their young. However, the black leopard has a proven track record as a man killer and Ian is concerned that some action should be taken by our Government before someone is seriously hurt or even killed. Some of the big cats living in our countryside are likely to be second, third and possibly even fourth generation offspring from animals originally brought into the country by our colonial forefathers who introduced them as exotic souvenirs from distant corners of the Empire.

Some of these animals would have escaped from zoos or circuses over the years. However, most of the big cats originate from those illegally released into the countryside following the introduction of the Dangerous Wild Animal Act in 1976, when irresponsible owners set their animals free to avoid having to purchase expensive licences.

I'll keep an open mind about the Loch Ness Monster, the Yeti and even the Bodmin Big Cat, but I believe the animal I saw to have been a black leopard; enigmatic, mysterious, mystical - but very real and totally terrestrial. Let's hope the Government will step in before it is too late in order to afford some protection, both to the public, and to these beautiful and potentially vulnerable animals 

For more information on big cats, please go to:  
<http://www.scs.abelgratis.co.uk/bigcats2>  
<http://www.britishbigcats.org>



**Bo, MARA's very own mascot!**

Big Cat Illustration by Colin Veacock  
 Photo of Bo by the author

# Can Teleportation be a Reality?

Neil Jenkins

## A Silly Introduction

Scotty. Star Trek. We all watched it, didn't we? At the very least, surely we all had mums who watched it (in my case both). Even if you never really got into Star Trek you've probably considered this question anyway at some point.

What am I talking about?

No, that's not the question! Have you ever thought how great it would be to get to work and back every morning without the drudgery of the commute by simply "beaming" yourself over there? Think of the fortune you'd save on family holidays. And in life there are those sinking moments of embarrassment when you'd like to be immediately transported somewhere ..... *anywhere*.

Of course, we're talking here about the Star Trek Transporter machine aboard the *Starship Enterprise (NCC-1701)*, often operated by the trusty Scotty. It seemed to be that only those crew members wearing the *red* jumpers, the Engineers, were allowed to operate it, however. Although I seem to remember that Spock allowed himself the odd fling on the Transporter controls — this from a "man" who showed no emotions, allegedly. A bit like a Dad who's child absolutely *insists* that he go on the slide with them ... "Oh, well if I *have* to ...".

The tendency for Engineers to operate the Transporter might be a deliberate act on their part — the great Eddie Izzard has observed that if anyone wearing a red jumper (except Scotty) were to beam down to the surface of a planet they would end up being killed in some unusual way before the rest of the party could return to the *Enterprise*. Although this was obviously brushed-over in the TV series, the *Enterprise* obviously worked on the present-day football squad system approach in order to replace those red jumper wearers who would meet their inevitable demise each week. At the start of its mission, the *Enterprise* must have been completely *packed*. In the first few months of a mission the gold and blue jumper wearers must not have been able to move for naïve, fresh-faced red jumper wearers wandering around the ship bumping into each other.

Anyway, it would be fantastic, wouldn't it? To be beamed down, over, to, somewhere. Although, if it were to be a reality one day, you could bet that

it would still be cheaper than a trip on the Channel Tunnel.

But seriously, could such a machine ever be a reality? More importantly, does contemporary knowledge of physics allow it in principle? As we shall see, it's an issue to which not just physicists can contribute.

## Getting Serious: Current Discussions

Since the Star Trek TV shows of the 1960s, people have considered, even dreamed about, such *teleportation*, or *matter transference*. Rumours abound about secret experiments with military connections attempting to develop machines to transport inanimate objects across rooms, and an internet search on such issues would uncover all sorts of discussions and "reports". On the internet, you'll find serious scientific discussions, discussions which allege to be serious, hypothetical discussions related to games and "role playing", and weird stuff related to witchcraft "teleportation spells", and so forth. Even something supposedly unconnected with the teleportation debate as the Philadelphia Experiment<sup>1</sup> mentioned it as a sort of by-product.

However, the problem with such a subject as this, in keeping with other stories where science fiction might plausibly cross over into reality, is that we simply do not know what to believe and what not to believe. Moreover, the problem is often how to be objective about stuff that we actually *want* to believe to be true. This, indeed, is human nature in its most naked form.

## Clues to the Physical Reality

By far the greatest topic in the serious teleportation debate is how the "teleportee" is conveyed from *A* to *B*, and the consequences of each method. The possible methods discussed are usually one of these two:

<sup>1</sup> The Philadelphia Experiment is beyond the scope of this article, and for details the reader is recommended to type it into a web search engine, hit <Search> and stand back. In summary, it's an alleged experiment allegedly involving the US military, Einstein (allegedly), grey aliens (equally allegedly), etc. and is rather bizarre! Although "eye witness" reports are sometimes convincing, and the story is so great to hear, I consider it to be the subject of complete and utter fabrication. Listen to the internet replays of the Art Bell interviews on this topic if you can.

- (i) A stream of data conveys the information about how to reconstruct the teleportee at *B*; or
- (ii) The actual atoms of the teleportee are being transmitted to *B*.

Straight away we start to see problems. Let's explore why.

This has received more attention from non-physicists than physicists. However, Roger Penrose considered item (ii) in his unique and excellent book *The Emperor's New Mind*<sup>2</sup>.

### Converting a Person to Data Bits

Penrose points out that in order to reduce someone to a data stream we must have in place a combination of extremely complex detections and computations, a way of focussing and receiving the data stream, and murder! The process would run as follows. A teleportee stands in the Transporter at *A* and the machine is activated. The machine then scans the teleportee to map, with incredible accuracy, the precise locations and nature of every atom (including all subatomic elements) of every molecule of every organ in the teleportee's body. This, I would hope, should also include the teleportee's clothes, equipment, etc. Then, this tremendous amount of information must be transmitted to the receiving station at *B* before a similarly monstrous computer decodes the data stream and recreates the atoms exactly as described and, as if that wasn't impressive enough, place each atom in the correct molecules at the exact (perhaps relative) locations specified in the data stream. Think of it a bit like an instant, digital genetic cloning.

It already sounds a bit far-fetched, doesn't it? But there's more to consider. Now, if this works, we have an exact copy of the teleportee at *B*, but we still have our teleportee standing in the machine at *A*. Remember, we scanned him, so just as a scanned photo in your flatbed scanner at home remains under the lid after the scan is complete, so our teleportee remains standing in the Transporter machine at *A*. So we now have *two* copies of the teleportee. What do we do now? It's obvious — when the machine at *A* receives confirmation from the receiver at *B* that the teleportee has been reconstructed without problems, we simply kill the original! An ethical issue if ever there was one.

Now, seldom has more weird stuff been crammed into two paragraphs of text since James Joyce said to one of his mates "You know, I feel a

book coming on". So let's explore some of these issues more closely.

Firstly, notice that we spoke of a receiving station with a computer to allow the reconstruction to take place. In *Star Trek*, however, the characters are often beamed down to the surface of a planet<sup>3</sup> and so do not, apparently, require the use of a receiving station of any sort. So quite how each member of the landing party is reconstructed is best left to Trekkies who own copies of the *STING Technical Manual*<sup>4</sup>.

Not only that, but as Lawrence M. Krauss<sup>5</sup> points out, the human body contains in the order of  $10^{28}$  atoms (that's a 1 followed by 28 zeros). Even if we take the simplistic approach of assuming that we need 1 kilobit (Kb) of data to store the nature and location of each atom, these  $10^{28}$  atoms translate to  $10^{28}$  Kb. Now let's be really annoying and consider this in a present-day framework. First of all you would need a  $10^{21}$  GB hard disk to hold the scan of just one person. Then that data would have to be transmitted to our receiving station. Even taking a fast present-day data link, such as a  $1\text{Mbs}^{-1}$  DSL connection, we would require about  $3 \times 10^{14}$  years to transmit that data. Current estimates suggest that the age of the Universe is  $1.37 \times 10^{10}$  years, therefore the length of time required to make such a transfer would be a factor of around 20,000 times the present age of the Universe. Clearly, we must await vast leaps in technology!

But even *with* such a receiving station, and the appropriate technology in place to store and transmit such huge quantities of data, we will have problems when scanning and reconstructing the teleportee's atoms as a result of the constraints placed on us by *quantum theory*. Atoms consist of fundamental particles: a nucleus of protons and neutrons held together by the strong and weak nuclear forces (involving the continuous exchange, loss and gain of a host of particles, including *W* and *Z* bosons, gluons, etc.) and electrons (held in "orbit" around the nucleus by the exchange of virtual photons, the carriers of the electromagnetic force). So, rather than a simple little entity, an atom is actually a hive of very complex activity. Not only that, but there is a limit to the extent to which we can measure the exact state of any component of an atom due to the *Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle*

<sup>3</sup> "... and it's always an oval of gravel with three rocks behind it ... every week!" — Eddie Izzard.

<sup>4</sup> Rick Sternbach & Michael Okuda, 1991, *Star Trek: The Next Generation — Technical Manual*, New York: Pocket Books. [ISBN 1-85-283340-8.]

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence M. Krauss, 1995, *The Physics of Star Trek*, Flamingo. [ISBN 0-00-655042-8].

<sup>2</sup> Roger Penrose, 1989 (reprinted 1999), *The Emperor's New Mind*, Oxford University Press. [ISBN 0-19-286198-0].

(HUP). HUP essentially says that we cannot measure accurately the position of a fundamental particle if we can know its momentum (i.e. velocity) accurately; and conversely, we cannot measure the momentum if we already know the position. The upshot of all this is that we have natural inaccuracies placed on our measurements, by Nature herself, which prevents us from knowing the precise states of individual particles within atoms, and therefore the exact nature of the atoms themselves. Imagine the mess that would be caused at the receiving end if the teleportee's atoms were not put back together in quite the right place and with slightly different (perhaps "guessed") states. The teleportee would suddenly find they were affected by neurological or physiological disorders.

Recent experiments have demonstrated the principle, and then reality, of *Quantum Teleportation*<sup>6</sup>. The first such experiments were carried out in 1998, principally by physicists at the California Institute of Technology, and followed on from theoretical work by Charles Bennett and his team at IBM five years earlier. The quantum state (i.e. the "information") of one photon (a particle which carries the energy of light) is transferred via the use of a cable to create a replica photon 1 metre away. However, in order to allow this the quantum state of the "original" photon is destroyed and therefore the original photon itself ceases to exist once the replica is created. This is because quantum theory tells us that we cannot copy the quantum state of a particle without affecting the initial quantum state. Essentially, when we copy a quantum state, we kill the original and the copy survives.

More recently, a team at the Australian National University have managed to teleport an actual laser beam<sup>7</sup>, making the beam disappear from one location and reappear in another location 1 metre away.

And even more recently still, with work announced during the summer of 2004, two independent teams in the US and Austria managed to teleport atoms<sup>8</sup> (actually ions — charged atoms). Furthermore, this experiment is a considerable leap from the earlier ones, since whereas the photon teleportation experiments were *probabilistic*, meaning

that you performed the experiments and then looked to see which photons had been teleported, these new atom teleportation experiments provided a *deterministic* technique for teleportation — you pressed a button and an atom is teleported (actually with a 75% success rate).

Of course, this is all a far cry from the transmission of the vast quantities of data required to teleport an everyday object, or a person.

So how have these experiments got around the problems posed by HUP? They have both utilised a totally weird property of particles called *entanglement* or *non-locality* (or to give it its formal name, *Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen channels*). The details are best left to a (possible future?) article on the bizarre aspects of quantum theory, but in a nutshell, fundamental particles that are entangled will always stay "connected" even if separated by huge distances. For example, take two entangled particles with equal and opposite "spins". If you now take one of those particles to, say, the edge of the Universe and get its spin to "flip", the particle back on earth will also flip ... and the flip will take place instantaneously! Therefore, the "information" is transmitted between the particles at infinite speed. Einstein referred to this as a "spooky interaction" and cited it as a reason why quantum theory must be fundamentally flawed, but experiments have since proved him to be wrong.

The experiments I have mentioned above have all used entanglement to transmit some properties (i.e. the quantum state) of one particle to that of another. The net result is that at the end of the experiment you are left with a particle which has the quantum state of the original. A typical order of events would run as follows:

- i. Create a pair of entangled particles, B and C;
- ii. Introduce a particle A to be teleported;
- iii. Entangle B with A;
- iv. Due to the entanglement of B and C, the quantum state of A transfers to C;
- v. Quantum state of A is now destroyed and C is an identical copy of original A.

Some of you will have noticed already that in this scenario we are not teleporting the original matter itself but merely its information. Indeed, when physicists talk of "teleportation" they actually mean the transfer of quantum states *between* matter.

It is also worth mentioning that it might be conceivable that one would require some sort of "scanning beam" to allow us to probe the position of the teleportee's atoms, both on the initial scanning and during the reconstruction. However, to probe the distances involved (i.e. the size of

<sup>6</sup> Bennett, C.H., et al., 1993, *Teleporting an Unknown Quantum State via Dual Classical and Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen Channels*, Phys. Rev. Lett., 70, pp. 1895-1899; and

Furusawa, A., et al., 1998, *Unconditional Quantum Teleportation*, Science, 282 (no. 5389), pp. 706-709.

<sup>7</sup> Bowen, W.P. et al., 2003, *Experimental Investigation of Continuous Variable Quantum Teleportation*, Phys. Rev. A, 67.

<sup>8</sup> Riebe, M., et al., 2004, *Deterministic quantum teleportation with atoms*, Nature 429, 734-737; and

Barrett, M.D., et al., *Deterministic quantum teleportation of atomic qubits*, Nature 429, 737-739.

individual atoms and the spaces between them) would require electromagnetic waves with a wavelength comparable to, or less than, this distance. That leaves us only with x-rays and the more energetic waves (e.g. gamma rays). These would severely damage the very tissue they were intended to reconstruct.

### Can We Send the Actual Atoms?

Perhaps one of the biggest issues associated with sending the actual atoms of the teleportee from *A* to *B* is how to strip them away from the teleportee's body in the first place. The atoms are held in molecules and to strip them away from these molecules is a physical and chemical headache. Firstly, how do we trick the atom into coming away from the molecule, and secondly what happens to what's left of the molecule before we get around to taking other atoms from it?

I'm not a chemist, so I won't begin to speculate about the second issue, except to say that it should be considered whether or not the remaining parts of the molecule would itself constitute a new molecule which might react chemically with the other molecules around it, or whether these remains will somehow reconfigure themselves after the first atom is (or even subsequent atoms are) removed.

As regards the first issue, namely how to prise the atom away from the molecule in the first place, we have to overcome the fact that the atom is held in a chemical bond with the rest of that molecule. To break this bond requires the input of a certain amount of energy. You may or may not remember from school that most of the atom is in fact empty space. The nucleus is a tiny entity in the very centre of the atom with a cloud of electrons orbiting relatively (for an atom) large distances from it. (Ernest Rutherford, whose team pioneered the splitting of the atomic nucleus in the 1930's, described it as "the fly in the cathedral".) The fact that the mostly-empty-space atoms at the ends of my fingers don't pass through the mostly-empty-space atoms of the keys on my keyboard while I'm typing this article is due to the electromagnetic force which holds the electrons around the nucleus. This force not only holds the electrons firmly<sup>9</sup> in place, thus preventing my fingers mixing with the keys, but also binds atoms to other atoms. This "binding energy" must be overcome if we are to get the atom away from its molecule. This requires us to put energy into the process, just as you would have to

<sup>9</sup> I say "firmly", but this is not to say that the electrons are nailed in place, as it were, around the nucleus. As you might already gather, quantum theory tells us otherwise. However, for the purposes of what I'm talking about, "firmly" will do nicely.

expend energy if you were to prise two items apart that had become stuck together.

Then, once all  $10^{28}$  atoms had been coaxed to exist alone, they would have to be "stored" somehow before we can construct some sort of matter beam for transmission (the *STING Technical Manual* tells us that they are held in a "pattern buffer" at this point). However, how would one conceive holding these atoms without their reacting with one another?

And, once again just as if that wasn't enough, even if we can get through this hurdle without falling, how do we then transmit those atoms (together with the "information") to our receiving point at *B*? To get an atom to be projected forward at close to the speed of light would require expending an energy roughly equivalent to the atom's rest mass energy (the energy the atom possesses when it isn't moving) which we must then multiply by, at least,  $10^{28}$  to get the rest of the atoms moving.

Finally, we've so far confined ourselves to a consideration of the physics involved in teleportation, but there are other disciplines that have something to say.

### The "Awareness" Debate

We've spoken about somehow moving, or reconstructing, a person's constituent atoms, but what about other aspects, such as the many electrical impulses taking place in the brain. For example, I've often wondered the following: If the teleportee was thinking of something during the initiation of the teleportation process, would he/she still be thinking of that thing when they are reconstructed at *B*?

Penrose looks beyond the physics in his discussion of teleportation to ask some fundamental philosophical questions. When the reconstruction of our teleportee is complete, does he/she have all the exact same memories, feelings, impressions, hopes and intentions of the "original"? If this is so, it has important consequences for the debate on whether a computer can ever have a mind, and therefore *awareness*. There are people (the so-called "Strong AI" fraternity) who claim that it is perfectly probable that a computer can have awareness purely by algorithm (i.e. software). In other words, the hardware, either the electronics of the computer or the organic matter of the human brain, is irrelevant. Penrose likens this situation to the teleportation of a human by converting him/her into a data stream (as discussed). They would then claim that even the data stream, during actual storage/transmission, contains the very awareness of the teleportee.

Penrose refutes this (as do I). What happens if the copy teleportee is standing at *B* complete with the full awareness of the original, but the original has not yet been killed? Is the teleportee's awareness really in two places at once? Penrose believes that human awareness is likely related to some as-yet undiscovered quantum issues within the brain. But then he is able to contradict his "feeling" but pointing out that the findings of Quantum Teleportation suggest that the awareness of the original would be destroyed by the teleportation process. Perhaps the original would die naturally as a result, and in any case would not be aware of it!

Notice that I haven't mentioned the human "soul" (and deliberately so). "Soul" is one of these vague words that can mean different things to different people. It invokes strong feelings in people who consider themselves to be very spiritual and is often used in arguments by less "spiritual" people when they don't know what they're talking about any more. For example, when someone says "Well, that's the 'soul', isn't it", they actually mean "Look, I don't know how to continue this discussion, so can we talk about something else now?" When we talk about teleportation, we essentially assume that all there is to a human being is atoms and information, but this may not necessarily be the case. Krauss states that "the transporter would be a wonderful experiment in spirituality". This is because, if we could build a working transporter and successfully teleport a person somewhere and show that they are exactly the same person, physically and "spiritually", then this would pretty much prove that the soul didn't exist and that would *really* get pub arguments rolling. But imagine if we make the first human teleportation with our working transporter only to find that the spiritualists are right. There's a thought to close on.

### So What Do I Think?

In our debate, we've not only delved into modern-day physics, but also into philosophy, computer science and even cosmology. And in many of these areas there are massive issues to deal with before teleportation can be considered seriously as an option. But remember, much of our thinking is polarised by what we've seen on television, in films, and when playing computer games. The reason we concentrated our discussion on converting our poor teleportee into a data stream (with or without their constituent atoms in tow) is because this is how it is considered to be done in Star Trek, and has been duly recorded and

"described" by "Trekkie Techies" since the 1960s<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, it is likely that Gene Roddenberry, the creator of Star Trek, created the transporter machine so as not to land his beautifully designed starship on planet surfaces, thus avoiding televisual trickery and other techniques beyond the show's budget.

If a technique for teleporting large objects such as humans really is discovered in the future it will undoubtedly have nothing to do with these discussions. It may have more to do with a better understanding of how to move around in spacetime than with quantum theory.

The experiments that have demonstrated the principle of teleporting photons and atoms will more likely have applications in communications and computing, and for that we should perhaps be grateful. With all that we've had to say on this subject we have to ask ourselves — is this really a way to travel? Indeed, Penrose himself asks, more fundamentally, is it indeed really travelling?

I think, on reflection, I'll stick with the Channel Tunnel.

*Neil Jenkins is a scouser, and a graduate of Mathematics and Astronomy from the University of Leicester. He has been involved in research in solid state physics at Daresbury Laboratory and in astrophysics at the Royal Greenwich Observatory and the University of Keele (during his PhD years) before being forced to join the commercial world. He has been working for Belgian space company Rhea System for eleven years where he was able to continue astrophysics research activities when on contract for ESA with the Infrared Space Observatory at ESTEC, Holland, and Villafranca del Castillo, Spain. He now spends his time working on terrestrial-oriented satellite projects during the day and being an amateur physicist, photographer and internet radio DJ in his spare time. He also likes normal stuff.*

<sup>10</sup> In fact, the *STTNG Technical Manual* (see footnote 4) states explicitly that the Star Trek transporter works by first scanning the teleportee, then dematerialising them, holding them in the "pattern buffer" before transmitting the "matter stream" to the required destination. The matter stream is, it seems, composed of both the scanned atomic information *and* the actual atoms that are described in this information.

# The Halewood Lights

An investigation into a locally recurring LITS phenomena 2002 - 2005

By Bill Bimson

*Since 2002, MARA have received regular reports of mysterious balls of light hovering in the skies over Halewood, Merseyside. MARA investigator Bill Bimson has made a very detailed study of this recurring phenomenon. Here is his report.*

**L**ights In The Sky (LITS) are the most common type of UFO reported in the Merseyside area. Throughout MARA's nine year history, we have never had a UFO case which gave anywhere near as much video evidence as the Halewood LITS case. We also have an excellent photograph and many UFO report forms filled in by the public. Despite the wealth of evidence, we have not been able to come to a conclusion about what the LITS are, but we have been able to eliminate all possible known causes which leaves the LITS as unidentified.

ellipse in the map below (fig 1). This is an important piece of evidence in itself because it shows that the LITS must be fairly small and close to the ground. If they were much larger and further from the ground, then they would have been spotted from areas much further away. The proximity to John Lennon Airport is significant because we have not heard of any pilots reporting the LITS, but that could be because of a policy of keeping the public in the dark about unidentified lights.

Most of the sightings took place around the Halewood area of south Liverpool in October and November of 2002 and December of 2003 to January 2004.

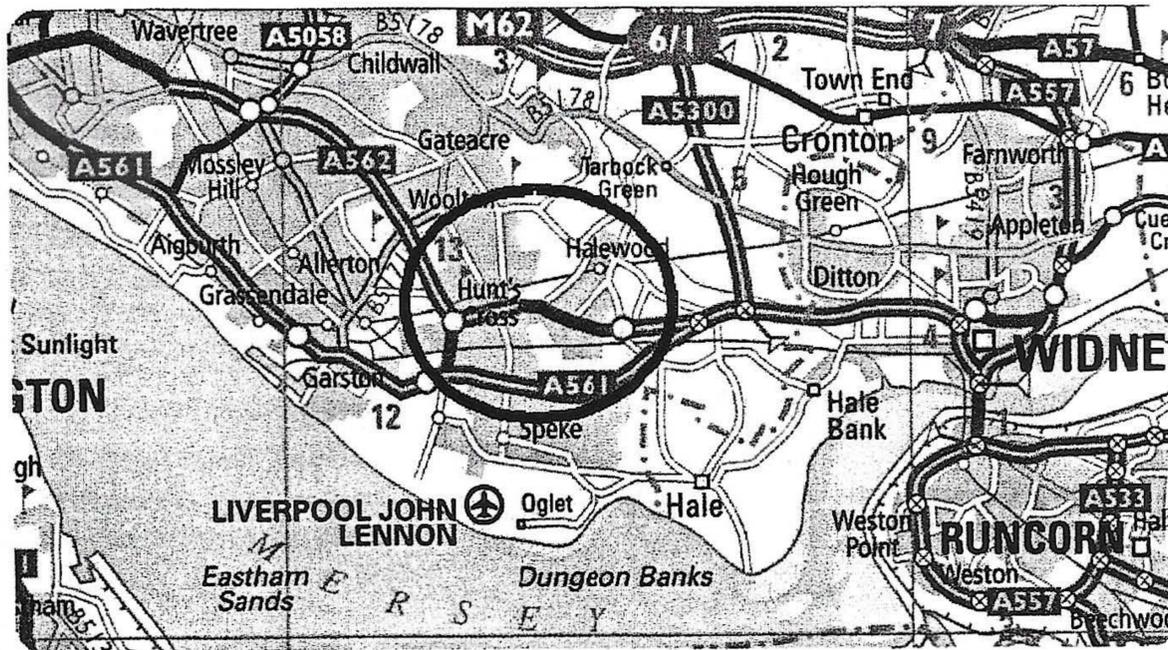


Fig 1: The LITS occur over a quite small area of Liverpool

Halewood is geographically close to the towns of Widnes and Runcorn which are well known as a window area for UFOs.

Moving LITS can be caused by a number of mundane phenomena including aircraft, birds, laser shows, satellites and aluminised balloons. Earth lights and ball lightning are another cause of LITS but these phenomena are rare and not well understood. I will give reasons in this article which show that none of these phenomena are the cause of the LITS. The LITS occur over a quite small area of Liverpool as depicted by the

The LITS have been described by a multitude of witnesses as orange spheres, golden spheres, copper or bronze coloured spheres, fiery circles with red shields around them, hazy inverted light bulb type objects, and from two reports, fairground carousel type objects.

## Reports in 2002

Although we had been given reports of LITS over Halewood prior to 2002, they became more numerous and were accompanied by video and photographic evidence in 2002. The

first report in 2002 came from a railway man working at Hunts Cross railway station. The witness filled in a report form which included the diagram (fig 2) and he agreed to be interviewed by MARA. He was interviewed at his house and gave a very credible

report of the incident. He described copper / bronze coloured spheres moving across the sky going from north to south and gaining altitude as they moved. The last train for the night was just arriving and many passengers noticed the LITS as they disembarked. Many of them joked about UFOs and some had probably been drinking given that it was approaching midnight. The witness originally saw the spheres from the station platform but decided to go onto the footbridge across the lines to get a better view as this was the highest point in the station. Their speed was very slow and they eventually disappeared from sight as they moved further away and higher in the sky.

After the interview, we went to the station and took some photographs of the location. A

magnetic compass bearing was taken from the bridge to get a bearing on the start point of

the LITS sighting but when this was later compared with a map, it was obvious that there was a mistake in the reading. A subsequent reading found that the steel footbridge affected

the reading whenever it was taken anywhere near the safety barrier on either edge of the bridge. The reading was correct when taken midway between the barriers.

Another witness saw the LITS on the same night but just over an hour earlier. We were not able to interview this witness but he did fill in a report form for us. His location was the Mackets Lane area of Halewood and a diagram from his report is shown here

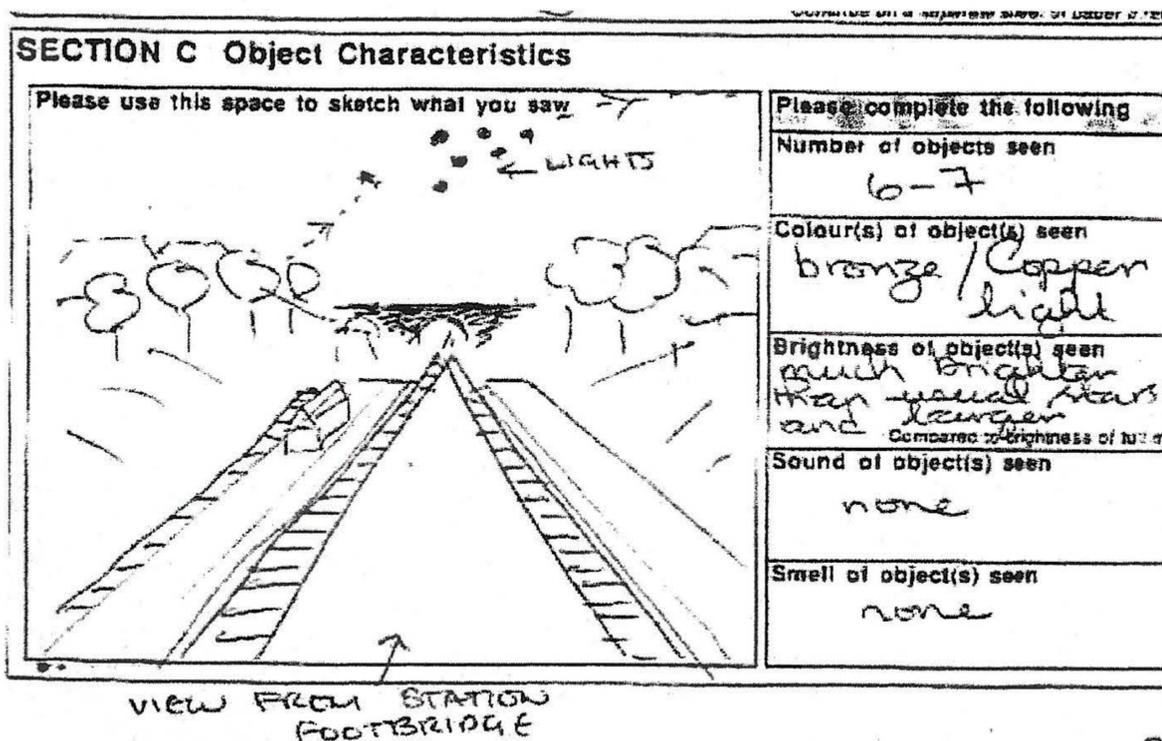


Fig 2: Witness diagram from the first sighting, Hunts Cross 2002

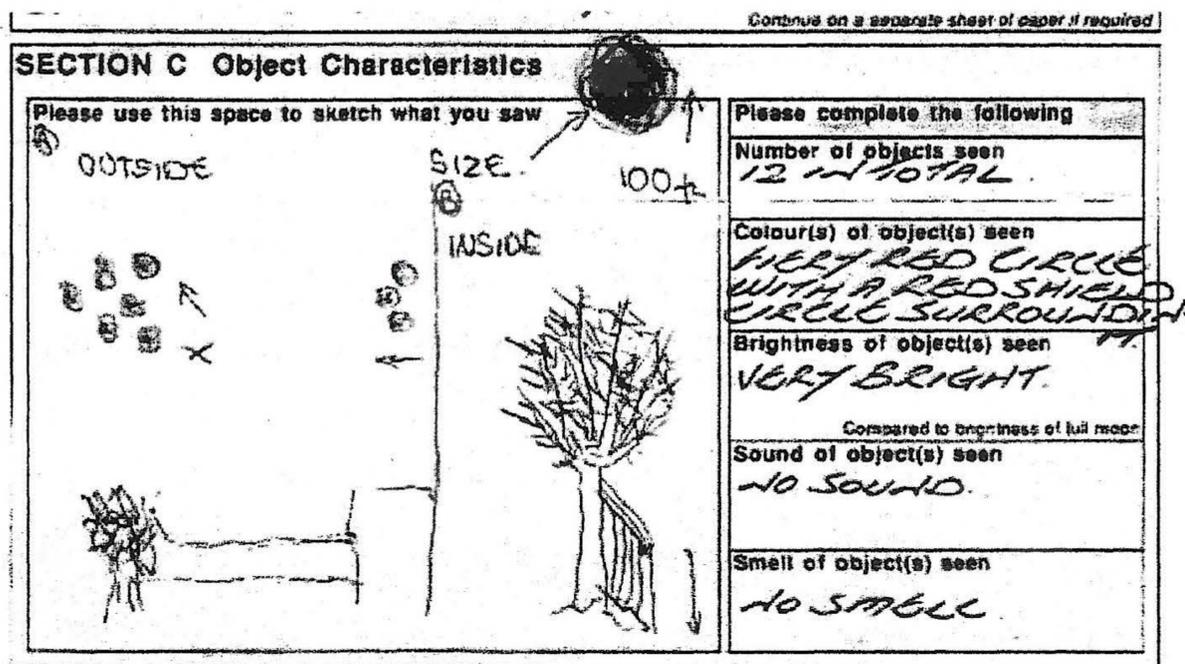


Fig 3: Witness diagram from Mackets Lane sighting

(fig 3). He described the LITS as fiery red circles with a red shield surrounding them. One group of LITS moved slowly from right to left in the diagram and then stopped until a second set caught up with the first, then they all moved off together gaining altitude and moving further away until they disappeared. Several other reports came in from the 18<sup>th</sup>

October 2002 although no more report forms were filled in or witness interviews made. One of the reports describes two smaller LITS breaking off from a larger light and moving independently.

### Photograph of the LITS

Shortly after these reports, we received our first digital photographic evidence. Although the witness would not agree to an interview or to fill in a report form, we are confident after analysis that this is a genuine photograph. The picture (fig 4) is the original photograph after lightening in a photo-editing package to reveal the clouds in the sky in more detail. The one on the right is a zoomed-in section showing the LITS in more

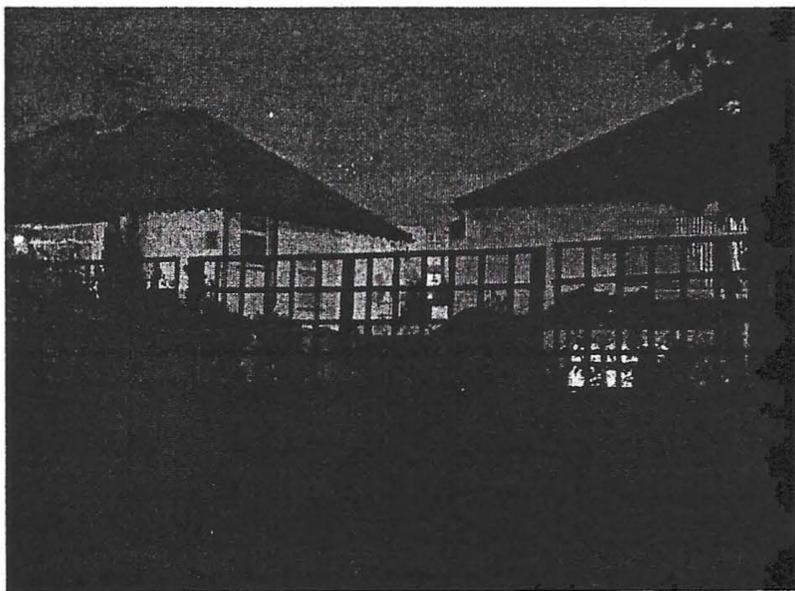


Fig 4: The first photographic evidence

detail. The colour of the LITS in the picture is probably much lighter than in reality because the automatic exposure of the camera would have compensated for the overall darkness of the area and sky at night.

### ***'The LITS are NOT part of a single craft'***

It is obvious from this photograph that the LITS are not part of a single craft because clear sky can be seen in between them. The camera used to take the photograph was a Minolta DiMAGE F100 and the exposure time was 4 seconds which could account for some of the LITS having a slightly elongated shape because of their slow movement. If the LITS had been attached to an aircraft, the smearing effect would have been much greater as the aircraft would have been moving much faster than these LITS were.

### First video evidence of the LITS

The first video evidence we received of the LITS was presented to MARA in January of 2003, but was recorded on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2002 from about 11:40 pm to 11:45 pm. In fact the video shows the time and date to be one hour in advance of this, but this is because the camera clock had not been changed to show Greenwich Mean Time instead of British Summer Time. The video footage was taken on a security camera at Halewood train station and was recorded by a railway man who had been panning the camera up and down the platform just before the last train of the evening was due to arrive. When he spotted the LITS low on the horizon, he recorded them until they eventually

faded out. The recording was made on a security video recorder which only takes about one frame every 3 seconds, so when it is played back on a normal VHS recorder at normal playback speed, the footage runs at about 9 times normal speed. The video lasts for 5 minutes of real time as indicated by the clock on the security camera and this translates into 35 seconds when the video is played back at normal speed on normal VHS recorder. The railway man was interviewed by three members of MARA and gave a very credible account of the experience. He also filled in a sighting report form for us.

### Help from outside of MARA

The video footage was so amazing that I was determined to get professional help in analyzing it and in trying to find an explanation for the LITS. I decided against getting help from the Ministry of Defence or National Air Traffic Services as they had proved to be very

unhelpful in cases that I had contacted them about previously.

### Academic help

I sent a report to Filer's Files which is an American UFO electronic magazine (e-zine) which is sent out to subscribers via e-mail once a week. I asked George Filer (e-zine editor) if he knew of any academic institutions that would be interested in looking at the footage and he put me in touch with John Kasher at the University of Omaha. After sending a low resolution version of the footage to John's home and University e-mail addresses, I heard no more from John.

### Help from the geologists

A few weeks prior to the sightings, there had been some slight seismic activity in the Manchester area which was strong enough to make it onto the local news. Security cameras in central Manchester which were mounted on long poles were seen to shake slightly as the people of Manchester went about their business and didn't even notice the mild tremor. This lent support to the idea that the LITS may have been earth lights. Earth lights are thought to originate when atmospheric conditions are just right and when the underlying rock has a high quartz content and is put under stress to produce a piezo-electric effect. The latter produces a voltage both inside and outside the underlying rock and it is thought that when this voltage is combined with the right atmospheric conditions, a condition similar to fluorescence might exist. Paul Deveraux has written a couple of books on the subject but the theory has not been published in peer reviewed scientific journals and geologists and geophysicists are always a bit cagey when the subject is broached.

### The BGS respond

Tony Eccles (formerly from MARA) contacted the British Geological Survey (BGS) because he felt that there may have been a connection between the seismicity and the LITS. Tony had a geological map of the area which showed that the area had some sandstone and pebble beds with a high quartz content and the area also had a number of geological faults. The BGS reply is given in the next paragraph (fig 5).

Dear Mr Eccles,

This is a controversial subject. Conventional science allows (but does not yet explain) that earthquake lights do occur near the epicentre of large earthquakes. There is some evidence from the UK of such a phenomenon occurring in connection with much smaller earthquakes, but this is even harder to explain physically. There are also reports of "earth light" phenomena which are clearly not connected with earthquakes at all. In the present case:

\* I greatly doubt that these lights had anything to do with earthquakes in Manchester.

\* I also doubt that the Croxteth Fault is any more likely to be connected with the lights than any other of the numerous faults in the area (many of which are probably not marked on your map).

\* Whether the lights were connected with the earth at all, or are purely atmospheric in origin, is impossible to tell.

Fig 5: BGS reply to Tony Eccles

I telephoned Dr. Reitbrock who is the seismic expert at the University of Liverpool's Geophysics department. He stated that any change in tectonic strain in the Halewood area would be absolutely minimal after the seismic events in Manchester and also stated that he had no knowledge of earth lights and as far as he was aware, neither did anyone else in the Geophysics department.

Given the statements from these two experts in earth science and the statement from the first witness who described the LITS as rising higher and higher into the sky before disappearing, it seemed very unlikely that earth lights could be the cause of this phenomenon.

### Help from the meteorologists

I was starting to come to the conclusion that the LITS were a rare atmospheric phenomenon similar to ball lightning so I contacted the Tornado and Storm Research Organisation (TORRO). TORRO publish their own peer reviewed journal called The British Journal of Meteorology, and so I knew that I would be getting help from a professional organization.

Peter Van Doorn at TORRO was very helpful and very impressed by the video footage. He showed it at a TORRO meeting but Terence Meaden (the director of TORRO) declared after a casual viewing that the footage was caused by birds and that the birds could be seen flapping their wings in the footage. I did some analysis which is described later in this article which proves that the footage could not have been caused by birds and got back in touch with Peter to ask Terence to reconsider his decision, but Peter stated that once Terence has made a judgment he would not change his mind regardless of what evidence was presented. He sounds a bit like a football referee to me.

### Help from SOBEPS

I was contacted by Patrick Ferryn of the Société Belge d'Etude des Phénomènes Spatiaux (SOBEPS) for information initially on the digital photograph which was displayed on the MARA website homepage. SOBEPS was known to me because of their work in the late 80s and early 90s on the Flying Triangle cases in Belgium and France, so after obtaining permission at a MARA meeting, I wrote back to Patrick and agreed to the collaboration he had asked for over this case. Patrick told me that he had access to an image analysis expert in Paris (Dr. Louange) who would like to look at the video footage and would prepare a report for us which we would be free to use as we saw fit once it was prepared. Louange is well known for analysing footage for Jacques Vallee. I was asked to keep Louange's name secret until after the report was published because last the time Louange made an analysis of UFO video footage, he was swamped by the French media and wanted to avoid that at all costs. Patrick told me that Louange would only do an analysis from a digitisation of the original video and that a copy of the footage would be unacceptable. Patrick stated that if I sent him the original video by courier he would personally drive to Paris to take the Halewood footage and two other pieces of UFO footage to Dr. Louange. At the time I did not have the original footage because I had made a copy of it and given it back to the railway man who supplied it. I contacted him and asked if he would consider letting me have the original tape in exchange for a copy of it and a few other bits of MARA video footage and a digitized version of his tape so that he could watch it on his newly acquired PC. He agreed

to this and the original tape was sent to Patrick by "Signed For" registered post. This happened around March of 2003 but I heard nothing back from Patrick for quite a while apart from an acknowledgement that he had received the tape.

By the time that Patrick went to Paris, the war in Iraq had started and Louange was too busy analyzing satellite photographs for the French Government to be able to do any analysis for us. We are still waiting for that report although Patrick did return the tape after a period of about 9 months.

### Help from a member of the public

A member of the public wrote in with his expert advice on the digital photograph and the next paragraph is his statement which agrees with analysis from Paul Rogers of MARA.

Hello,  
I am a graphic designer and amateur photographer, and quite good at retouching photo images. I often pull up fake UFO photos and am able to manipulate them in my graphic software to "debunk" them and show where they were manipulated. Often the lighting on the "UFO" doesn't match when it's analyzed in different colors or the color spectrum curve is changed in the retouched area. In your photo, however, I noticed some pretty cool stuff. I am sending you some of my "edited" images. The only editing done was brightening the picture and messing with the RGB (red green blue) curve a bit. When the photo is brightened, you can see there were clouds in the sky that night which also show up minutely around the lights. In addition, there is a "halo" around the lights which would not be there if they were "painted" or pasted in, or retouched on the photo. The halo usually occurs when the light you're photographing is too bright for the camera and overexposes a bit. You can see this light issue is native to the photo by comparing the halo around the images with the halo from the lit window to the bottom right of the screen. In addition, several other lights show up to the right side of the photo, but they're probably stars or satellites in the night sky. Being dimmer, they do not have halos, and do not even show up in the initial darkened image. Just thought you'd like to see this, so I'm sending it your way. The bigger formation of lights looks odd like the

shape of a plane with its nose pitched slightly upward, and it's being beneath the clouds could "possibly" be explained away if you lived near the airport. It looks like a plane taking off. However, I find it interesting that there's not a single reflection from the hull. If it were a plane at close proximity, you would see some kind of outline of the shape. If it is not at close proximity, the lights should not be bright enough to cause the halo around them in the photo. Anyway, just thought you'd like to take a look.

**Interview on BBC1 TV**

MARA was interviewed on BBC1 TV for "North West Tonight" and "Inside Out" during 2003. The interviews concerned several UFO sightings over Merseyside and one of the main cases discussed was the Halewood LITS with the video footage shown on both programmes on the same evening. After the programmes, members of the public were invited to talk to Tony Eccles over the web and leave comments about the programmes. Once again, it was suggested by some that the video footage was caused by birds, so I felt it necessary to publish a reply via the BBC website and on our own website explaining why the footage could not have been caused by birds. This is described below.

**Video footage analysis**

One of the reasons that some have misinterpreted the cause of the footage to be birds is that there appears to be a slight change of shape in some of the LITS as the footage progresses.

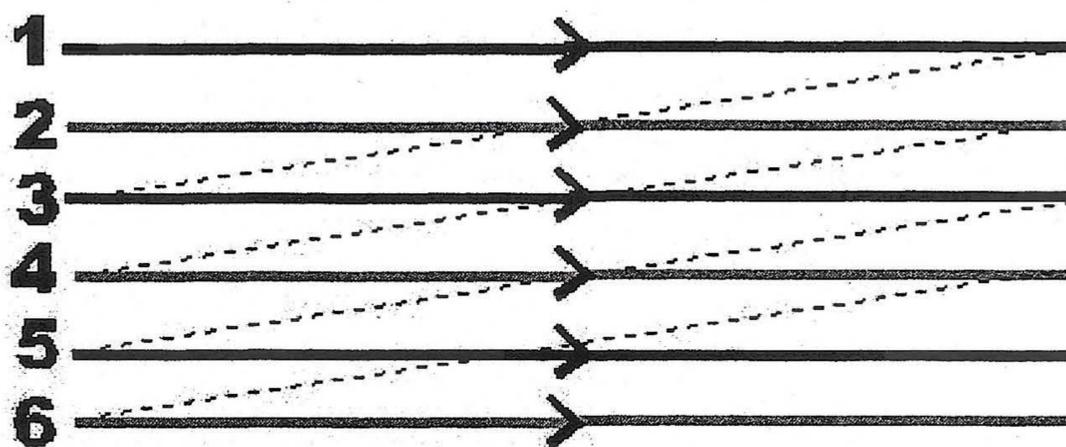
When the security camera footage is run at normal speed on a VHS recorder, it is played back at approximately 9 times the real speed and the change of shape then appears to happen about once per second which could correspond to the frequency of birds flapping their wings.

However, after careful analysis of the footage, I have discovered a video fault which accounts for the change in shape. Before explaining this fault, I need to tell you how a single frame of video is produced.

The British TV system uses what is known as the phase alternating line (PAL) system and the way it produces colour pictures is quite complicated so it will not be described in full here. However, it is essential to know a little about the PAL system to understand the fault I have discovered in the video footage of the LITS.

The normal PAL system produces a raster of 625 lines in a single frame of video and this is produced in 1/25<sup>th</sup> of a second. However, the frame is produced in two halves with all of the odd numbered lines produced first in 1/50<sup>th</sup> of a second followed by all of the even numbered lines in the next 1/50<sup>th</sup> of a second. This interlacing method helps to reduce flicker which might be apparent if the whole frame was made in a single pass in 1/25<sup>th</sup> of a second. A raster diagram is shown below (fig 6) with only 6 lines for simplicity, instead of the usual 625. The raster is formed by an electron beam which draws line 1 from left to right and then "flies back" to the left along the dotted line where it then draws line 3 from left to right and so on until all of the odd numbered lines are drawn. The process is then repeated with the even numbered lines. During the flyback process,

the electron beam is blanked so that no picture is drawn during flyback. The timing of the lines is crucial as the video information is held in the form of

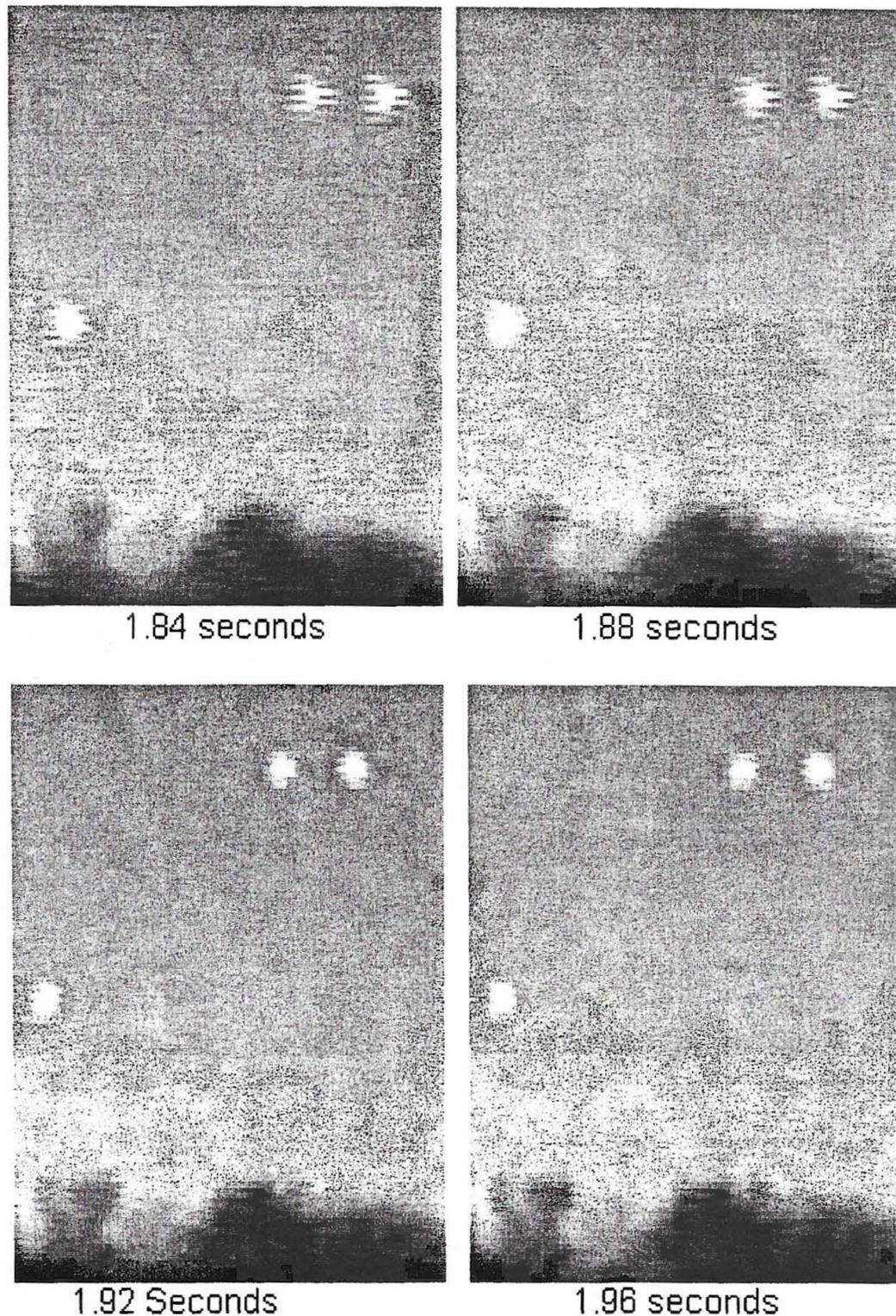


**Fig 6: Simplified raster production in a PAL system**

luminance and chrominance signals along the length of each line. Small errors in the timing are acceptable because the human eye will make good these small errors by interpolation. But if the TV screen is used as an analytical tool to examine tiny details of a video, then small

timing errors can be problematic. This is a classic case of someone using an instrument for something that it wasn't designed for and coming to the wrong conclusion, when an anomaly is observed. There are small timing errors between the odd and even lines in the

The frames at 1.84 and 1.88 seconds show the problem while the frames at 1.92 and 1.96 seconds do not have the problem or suffer it to a much lower degree. This change in shape of the objects when going from frames with the problem to frames without the problem is what



**Fig 7: Individual frames from the video show synchronisation problems**

video of the LITS.

When individual frames are analysed, it is obvious that the recording equipment suffers from a synchronization problem when going from an odd numbered line to an even numbered line in the raster. Zoomed-in sections of four consecutive frames are shown (fig 7) with times of 1.84, 1.88, 1.92 and 1.96 seconds respectively, i.e. 0.04 seconds apart.

gives rise to what some have interpreted as the flapping of bird wings. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that it is not even consistent within individual frames. For example, in the frame at 1.84 seconds, the problem is evident in the LITS but not evident in the tree top at the bottom of the frame, but by the time we get to 1.92 seconds the problem has largely disappeared from the LITS but shifted to the tree top at the bottom left of the frame.

**Illumination analysis in frame at 39:07 am**

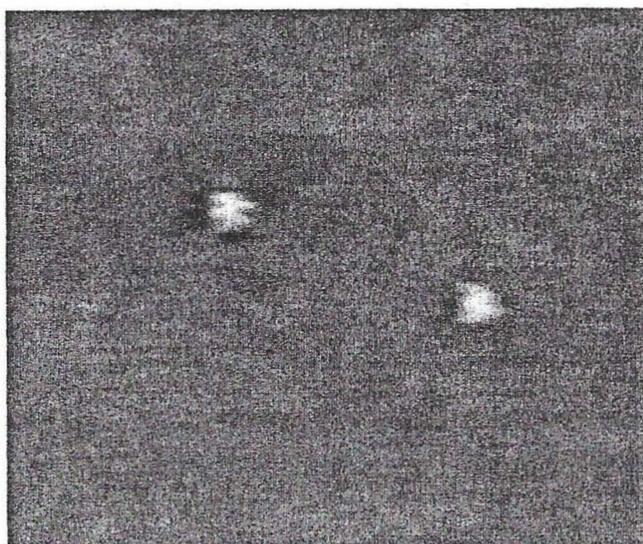
Another reason that the LITS could not have been caused by birds is that they are far too bright. If the LITS had been caused by birds, they would only be reflecting street lights so I have chosen a frame at 39:07 am in the video shown in the figure below to demonstrate that this is impossible and that in fact the LITS have their own illumination.

Looking at the two leftmost LITS in this frame, it

is obvious that they are some considerable height above the street lights and yet they are brighter in illumination than the roof barge boards in the bottom left of the picture which are obviously painted white. The barge boards are very close to the streetlights and so they should appear to be much brighter than any birds which are much further away. I believe this proves that the LITS have their own source of illumination and hence they cannot be birds. See the zoomed in sections of the frame (fig 9).



**Fig 8: A frame from the video footage from Halewood train station at 39:07 am**



39:07 am, Leftmost LITS



39:07 am, Roof barge boards

**Fig 9: Zoomed-in portions of the 39:07 frame**

## The next winter

The LITS reports ceased after the winter of 2002/2003 and we thought we would hear no more about them until reports started to come in starting on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2003. We received several reports describing 5 LITS moving slowly south over the Halewood area. All of these reports were from residents of Halewood who were familiar with aircraft using John Lennon Airport at night and they also stated that they saw aircraft on the same night which looked completely different to the LITS.

The next set of reports came in from sightings between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December 2003 and there were so many, that it would fill about 10 pages if they were all described here. Sightings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December described a total of 12 lights in 4 groups of 3. At times one group would slow down to allow another group to catch up then they moved off together getting higher in the sky where they eventually blinked out. One witness called John Lennon Airport and the control tower said that they had witnessed them but not seen them on radar. They told the witness that lots of other people had also called in reporting them.

Reports from the 3<sup>rd</sup> December described 8-10 LITS moving slowly from east to west with 3 slowly breaking away from the main formation to make a triangle and then all of them moving away and gradually disappearing.

Many reports came in from sightings on the 4<sup>th</sup> December and one of them is given below.

Hello Bill,

Further to the postings on your site. I too witnessed the lights in the sky (in Halewood) on 2/12/03 and on 4/12/03 and was totally astounded and baffled by what I saw. I have decent video footage of the second sighting on 4/12/03. Glad I did because I found the whole thing unbelievable. It lasts approximately 2-3 minutes. I would like to send the film in to you to see if you can confirm their/it's origins. How can I get it to you? I copied the film onto DVD, is that OK?

Snapshots from the DVD footage are shown on this page (fig 10). MARA is very grateful to the witness who sent this footage which is of excellent quality.

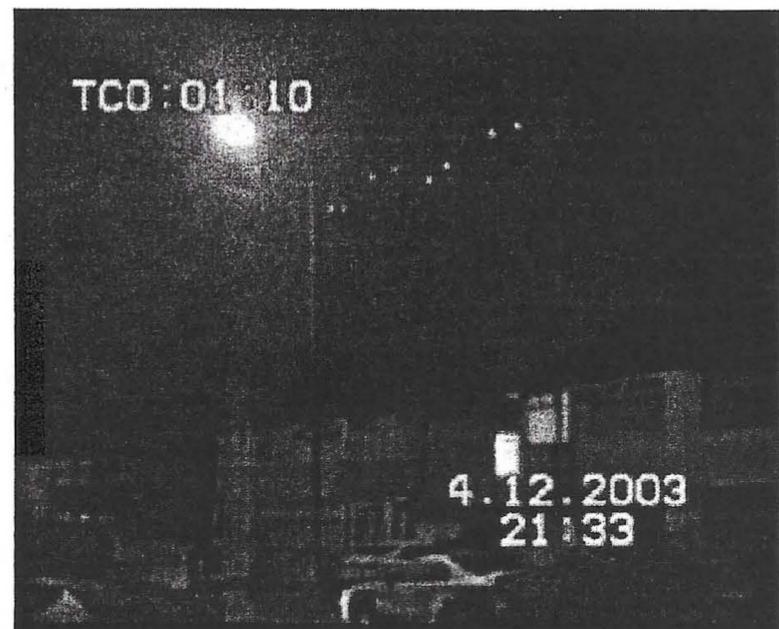


Fig 10: Snapshots from the 4/12/03 footage

The witness wanted to remain anonymous so we do not have a report form from him

Several other reports came in from sightings on the 4<sup>th</sup> December, many of them from the Hunts Cross Asda car park, but they are too numerous to mention here.

After the reports on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December, I decided to go to Halewood myself on a freezing cold night of December the 5<sup>th</sup> armed with a camcorder in the hope that the LITS would appear for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive night. I spent about 3 hours waiting at Halewood train station platform as that is the highest public access point in that area, but the only lights I observed were attached to conventional aircraft landing at John Lennon Airport.

## The 29<sup>th</sup> December flood of reports

There were no further reports of the LITS until the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2003 when we were lucky enough to obtain video footage from two independent witnesses. The footage taken by

the first witness is clearer because it was taken with a digital camcorder, but the footage only lasts for a couple of minutes whereas the footage taken by the second witness lasts for about 20 minutes and shows clearly how the LITS move relative to each other. This latter footage proves that the LITS have their own propulsion and are not simply carried by the wind.

Here are two snapshots from video footage provided by the first witness of the Halewood LITS on 29th December 2003 (fig 10). The top one shows the LITS while the camcorder is in ordinary daylight mode whereas the bottom one was taken a few seconds later after switching the camcorder to Nightshot (0 LUX) mode.

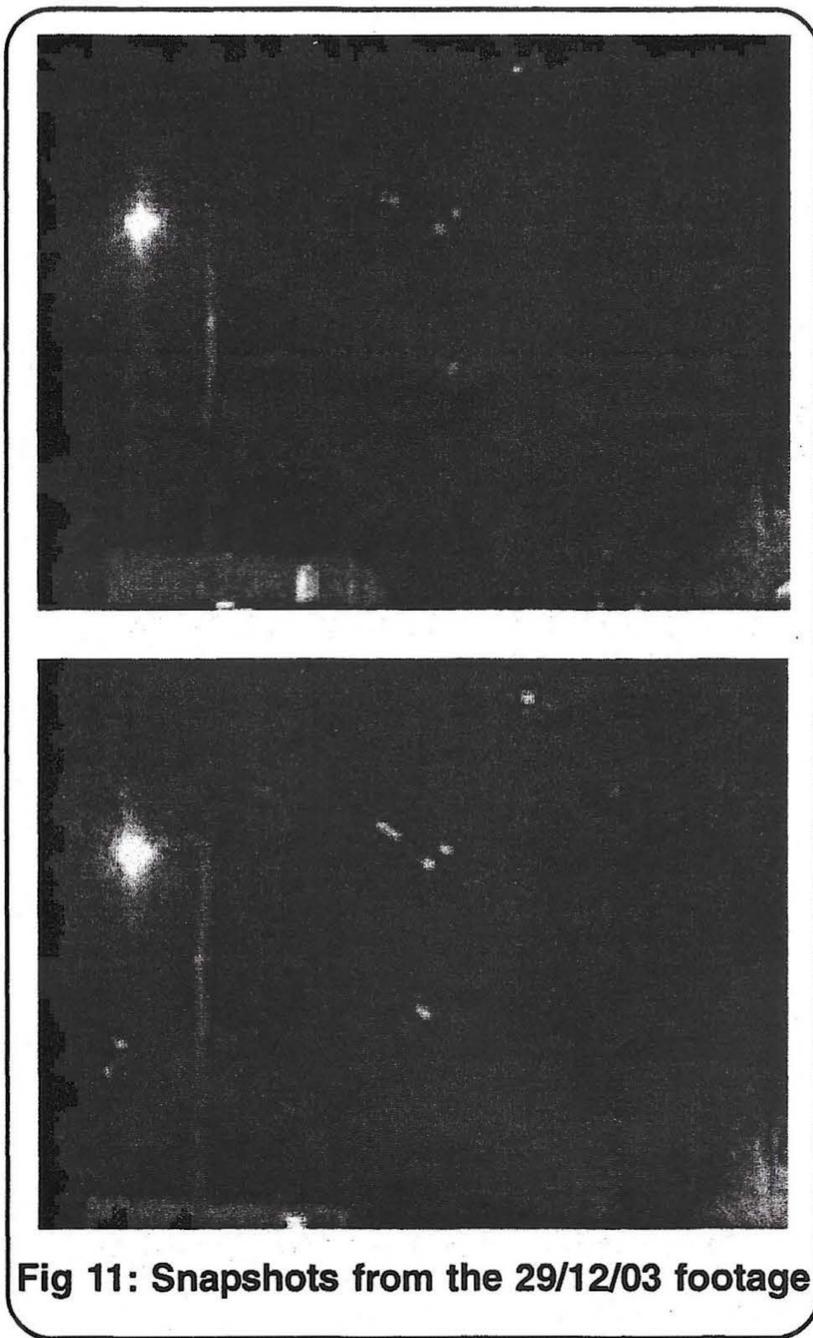


Fig 11: Snapshots from the 29/12/03 footage

The second witness on this night agreed to fill in a witness report form and was interviewed by 3 MARA members. He gave a very credible account of the incident and described how he was unlucky not to have captured a rather special light. After videoing the LITS for about 15 minutes, you can hear one of his relatives on

the tape say in a startled voice "look at that one over there". The witness then makes an exclamation and swings the camcorder to bear on the special light and at the same time presses the record button because he is so shocked by what he has seen.

Those of you with camcorders will know that if you press the record button on a camcorder when you are already recording, you pause the recording. This is a mistake I have made myself on more than one occasion. Unfortunately, we do not have any video footage of the special light. The witness drew a picture of the special light on the report form which I have reproduced below (fig 12).

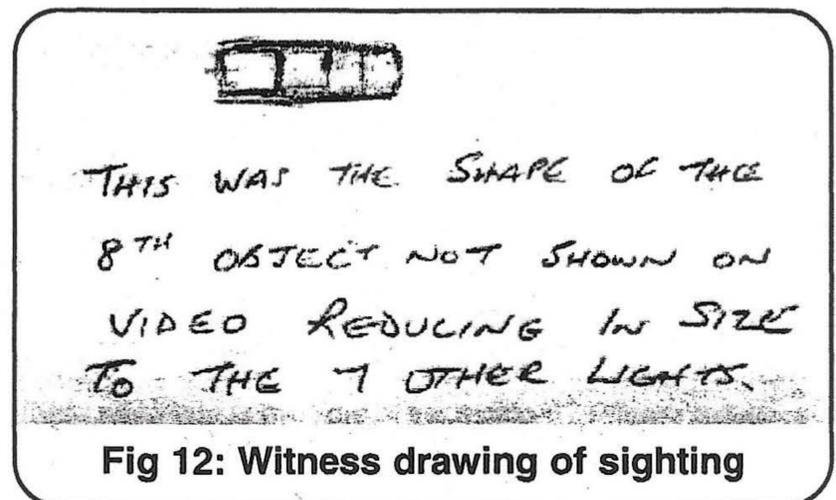


Fig 12: Witness drawing of sighting

The witness stated that this special light contracted in size to the same size as all of the other LITS, so it is possible that all of the LITS start off in this larger size and shape before contracting to form a small light in the sky. He describes 3 lights over the Woolton area which move slowly in a north-west direction which then stop in a vertical line. A few minutes later they were joined by a further 4 orange lights, then they were followed by a much larger sausage shaped light as described above.

They joined up with the other lights and then disappeared one by one. The whole event lasted for approximately 20 minutes. This was the third time that witness had observed this kind of activity.

Overleaf are 6 snapshots taken about 5 seconds apart from the second witness's video footage (fig 13). They show how the LITS move relative to each other. It is obvious from this that they are not all moving at the same speed and hence it is not just the wind that is driving them.

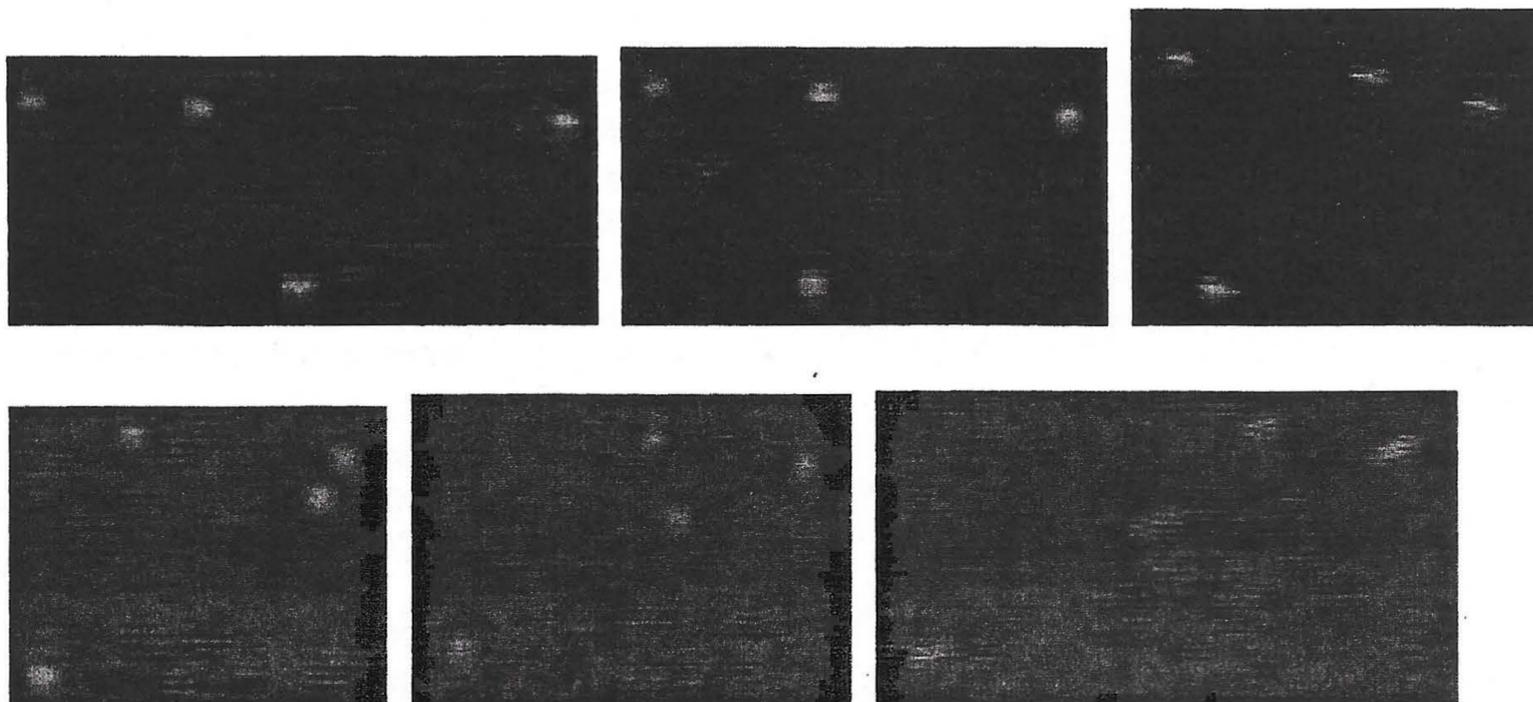


Fig 13: Frames from the second witness video 29/12/03

### Further reports from 29th Dec 2003

One witness managed to get very close to the LITS and was right underneath them at one point. He described one of the special lights as looking like a fairground carousel. He also described the other LITS as inverted light bulb or parachute type objects (fig 14). His initial enquiry is given verbatim below.

Dear Bill,

On Monday last 29/11/2003, I came out of my drive in Hunts Cross and looking up the road due west, I saw a formation of what looked like six or seven bright orange stars low down in the sky. I called to my wife and we both stood in the road and looked at them. What happened next has had me both baffled and euphoric in equal measure. As we were looking at orange lights, a movement in the sky to my right caused me to turn and look, just above roof height and a little way off was what looked like a fairground carousel in the sky. The object was circular and glowed with a very bright white light, the bottom of the object was made up of about 10 or 12 orange lights which seemed to pulse. The object was either

spinning or the white lights on the upper surface were in some sort of sequence to give it that effect. This object moved in a westerly direction and seemed to be heading for the orange lights that I have already mentioned. I drove my car to the top of the road to have a clearer view across Woolton golf course, at that moment I looked directly above me and saw

what looked like 3 lit up parachute shaped objects heading in the same direction. After a few seconds, a further two similar objects appeared and they headed to the west. What did I see?

There are too many reports from the 29<sup>th</sup> December to mention all of them so I have summarized some

of the more important points and witness statements.

\* The LITS were moving in a westerly direction and one of them completely circled and went around another. They are the colour of street sodium lamps.

\* One witness describes them as an old friend having seen them 3 to 4 years before the sighting in 2003.

Please use this space to sketch what you saw

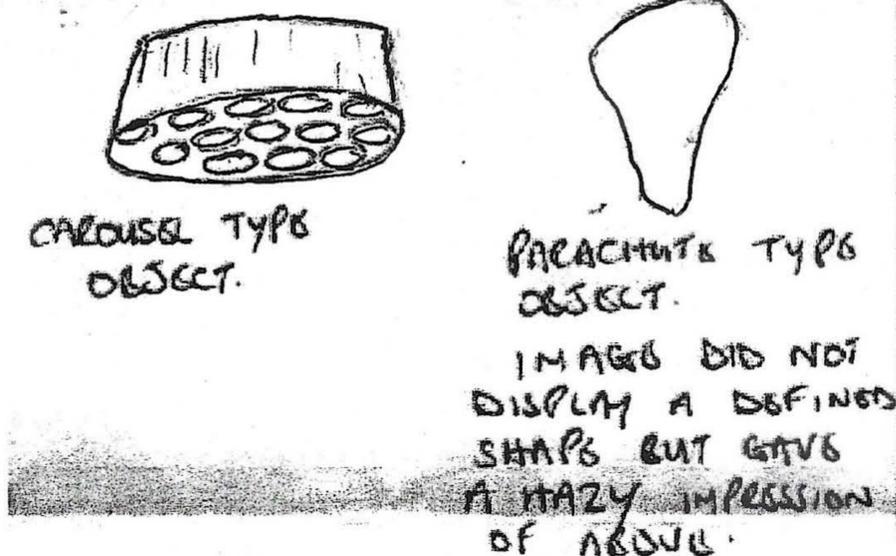


Fig 14: another witness drawing from another 29/12/03 sighting.

IMAGES DID NOT DISPLAY A DEFINED SHAPE BUT GAVE A HAZY IMPRESSION OF ABOVE.

\* One group of slow moving LITS came to a stop all at once until a second group of 5 or 6 faster moving LITS caught up with the first. A third group of 6-8 appeared and did the same thing.

\* Everyone in Asda car park was watching them.

\* One light was huge compared to the others and split in two with the two LITS moving in different directions.

\* My family and I witnessed LITS on a total of 3 occasions since the end of November 2003, but on 29th December, this event was on a much larger scale.

### Sightings in 2004

The most recent sighting report was from the 29th February 2004 and the witness statement is given below although the location is several miles from Halewood.

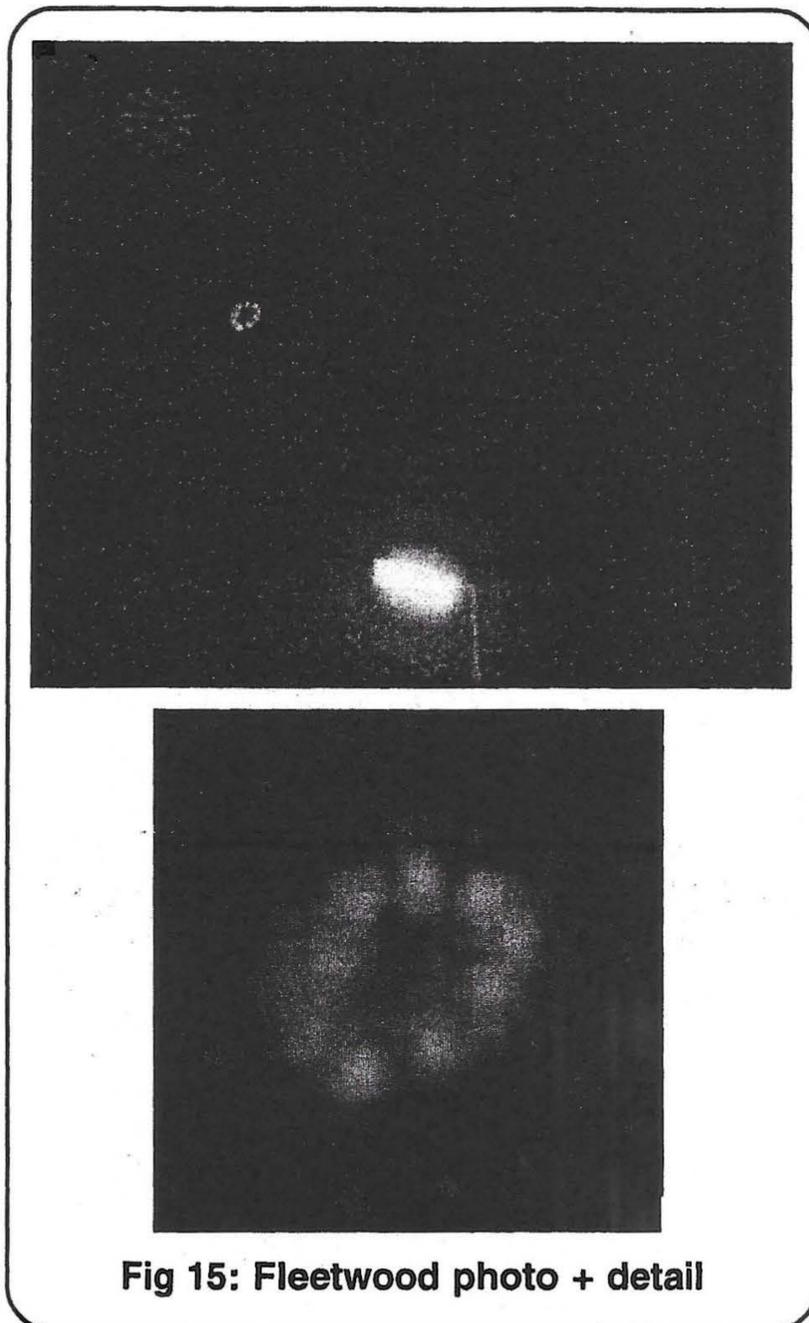
Further to other items on your website - on morning of 29th February 2004 (12.10 am) Childwall - witnessed orange lights in sky flying in a formation of 3 lights in a horizontal line traveling from east to west - (Broadgreen M62 towards River Mersey) fourth light seemed to be following at a different angle - lights then moved in to a triangular formation - again with fourth light slightly behind - low in sky and completely silent - seemed to have the ability to stop and start immediately and hang in the sky - through binoculars they seem to be the shape of an ice cream cone (appeared to be a solid structure) - bright orange with a halo around them - it was a stunning sight and we hope to be able to have a further sighting - gradually moved towards the river and eventually out of sight.

### Lack of LITS in 2005

After the bumper crop of LITS in the previous two winters, we were hopeful that the winter of 2004/2005 would produce more LITS reports and the possibility of MARA members catching them on their own camcorders, but we did not receive a single report last winter. We have not given up on the idea of seeing these LITS for ourselves as several witnesses have discussed the phenomenon as being one that has gone on for many winters. (Editor's note: since the writing of this article there have been further sightings in the Halewood area early November 2005. See MARA website for details.)

### The Fleetwood connection

The only other place that we know of that has experienced these LITS in the UK is Fleetwood on the Fylde coast. We have had e-mailed reports from a couple of witnesses and one photograph (fig 15).



**Fig 15: Fleetwood photo + detail**

The photograph shows a street light and above it to the left what looks like a ring of LITS (zoomed in on the right hand picture).

The witness who supplied this photograph refused to communicate with us after we asked further questions so it is possible that this photograph could be a hoax.

On the other hand it might be the first photograph of the carousel type of light in the sky.

We know that a Lancashire UFO group has some excellent camcorder footage which they showed at a conference they held around about 1999 or 2000 so there is a genuine phenomenon in that area.

## Conclusions

The LITS are too bright and slow to be birds. They are not astronomical objects because of the way they move and appear and disappear. They are not aircraft because they carry none of the normal anti-collision lighting of normal aircraft such as strobe lighting or red and green lighting. In addition, the proximity of these LITS to each other would make it extremely dangerous for aircraft especially at night and so close to a major airport. They are not a meteorological phenomenon because they have their own propulsion and are able to stop start and change speed and direction. They are not earth lights because of the reasons given by geologists and their high altitude in some sightings. Despite the high strangeness of these LITS, there is still no evidence to indicate that they are of extraterrestrial origin. No witness has seen any aliens or any indication of a structured craft, so they remain as unidentified Lights In The Sky (LITS).

It is unfortunate that the pictures taken from the video for this article will not do the video footage justice and there may be some reduction in the quality of the printed pictures. This can't be helped, but you will find many of the pictures in this article on-line at [www.mara.org.uk/Halewood\\_LITS.htm](http://www.mara.org.uk/Halewood_LITS.htm) I find that pictures taken at night time often look better on a computer screen than they do on normal printed paper.

## Potential ways forward

We need more help from the public to help us identify this phenomenon. The public has already been fantastic in helping us, but we still need their help. You can help by letting MARA know if you have any further sightings and if you have a camcorder and live in the Halewood area keep a look out during the winter months for the LITS. Learn how to use your camcorder at night time before you have a sighting. You can practise this by trying to video conventional aircraft over the sky in the Halewood area (there are plenty of them). It is probably more difficult than you think to get good footage at night-time. Try using your camcorder on manual focus, because auto-focus mechanisms have a habit of not working at night time on distant lights in the sky. If you have a tripod, and you use it, you will greatly improve the quality of your footage as you reduce camera shake which often spoils footage when the camcorder is zoomed in.

We would like to get professional help in analyzing our video and photographic evidence, so if anyone knows of any academic institution that is willing to investigate these LITS, we are willing to provide a copy of all the video footage we have for them and give any information that the institution requires subject to our clause on witness confidentiality. If anyone has any further information on the LITS sightings, please contact Bill Bimson [billbimson1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:billbimson1@yahoo.co.uk)

Finally, MARA would like to thank the public who have helped so much in this investigation by filling in report forms, e-mailing details of sightings and most of all, supplying video and photographic evidence 

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# The Peel Ghostwalk

Isle of Man's very own spooky tourist attraction

By John L Hall

*Continuing his gazetteer of all things spooky in the Isle of Man, John Hall takes us to Peel for an interview with ghostwalk guide Alan Shaw, and digs deep into the mystery of the Moddhey Dhoo, Peel's resident black dog legend.*

**G**hostwalks are now a regular feature of many towns and cities, three of the best known are York, Edinburgh and, locally, Chester.

Tom Slemen has been doing a version here in Liverpool for some time, so on the Isle of Man, with its folklore and history, a ghostwalk is a must.

The Tourist Board and Isle of Man coach trips used to point out various well-known ghost and mythical tales on routes around the island, and fairly recently while staying in Peel, I was intrigued to see a ghostwalk advertised and arranged an interview with the organiser to find out more.

We met in June 2004 outside the ~~Creg~~ Malin Pub in Peel (on the Marine Promenade). The walking tour is organised and run by Alan Shaw, originally from Morecombe, Lancashire, who moved to Peel ten years ago. He is 37 years old and works as a taxi driver operating out of Peel.

The ghostwalk started as a one-off event on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2001, but has continued to grow and grow into regular tours, with additional tours for groups outside the usual tour dates and times if and when Alan can fit them into his schedule. The current number of ghostwalks done stands at 120!

I started off with the obvious question that anyone would ask:

Q) How did you get interested in the subject?

A) I always had an interest as a boy. Coming from Morecombe there were not

too many stories known to me, but Lancaster and its castle had a few interesting stories, e.g. the Lancashire Witches. That's how I got interested, from a school trip probably, around the castle. I came over to the island and realised after pub-talk that there are stories to be discovered in Peel.

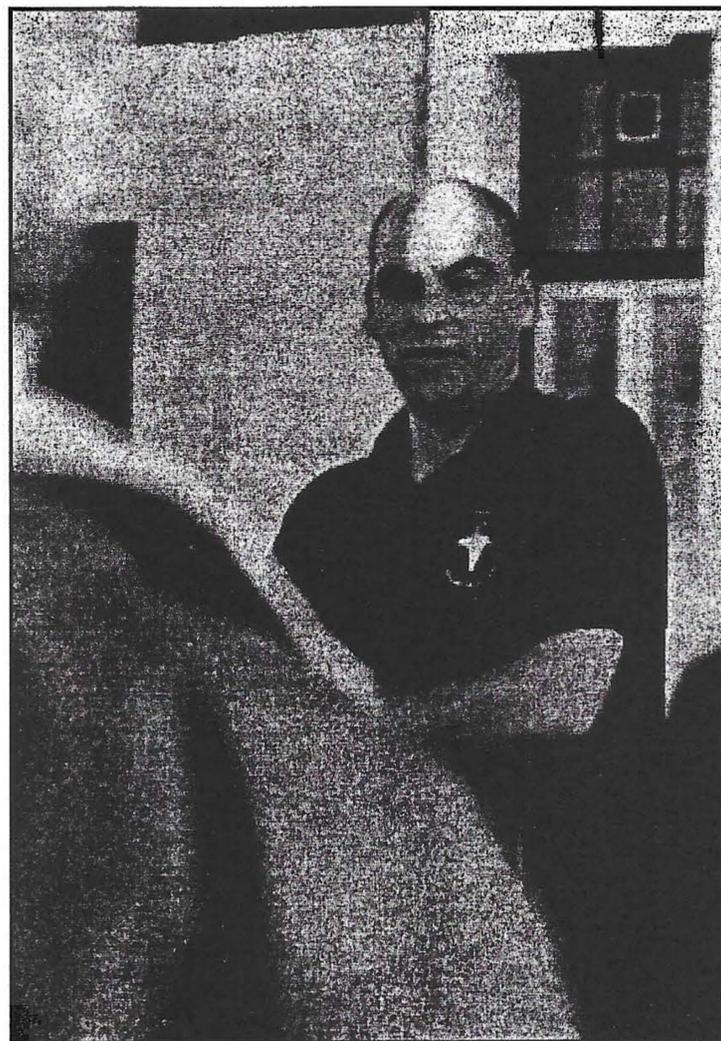
Q) How did you set up the walk?

A) I went to York and took part to see how it was done there, came back to the Isle of Man and organised the one-off event, then advertised for stories to talk about on the walk. They didn't come in at first, only a while later.

Now what we are doing is here to stay. The rest of the time I research in the library for stories, etc. for the walk. Especially useful were locally produced Peel (1) and Peel (2) books.

Q) Have you had any experiences of the paranormal yourself?

A) I haven't, but some people on the walk



Alan Shaw - Peel Ghostwatch guide

have! For example, in Castle Street, Peel, at about 11 p.m. at night, people have heard footsteps walking down the hill, resembling clogs or horseshoes. I could find no evidence of this whatsoever!

At Christmas 2003 I took a party of staff from The Gaiety Theatre, Douglas on the walk. There were about 20 that night, as a car came up Castle Street. The road is open to traffic although it is a narrow lane faced by houses and 16<sup>th</sup> century pubs. (Tunnel legends also exist under the houses and road and were used for smuggling. Part of the tunnel complex can be viewed from the Smugglers' Cave Chip Shop on the quayside).

As the car came up people had to step aside to let it pass. Three stood to one side, three the other side. The car passed and went around the corner. Two people on the walk were laughing nervously. One said, "Someone just walked passed us and we never saw anyone though". When asked what it sounded like she answered, "It sounded like clogs". The time was 8.05 p.m. even though all the stories in the books said 11 p.m. The people have heard it at 8 p.m. approximately. This is supposed to be a regular repeater on certain evenings, but being opposite a lively bar/pub and houses, it's possible it may be something else. A few months later on a separate walk, staff from Ramsey High School experienced something similar.

This time a bike passed. I noted the time we went to walk forward. One laughed and one screamed (two ladies). I asked, "What's the matter?" They said someone had walked past. They had almost exactly the same experience as the Gaiety Theatre people. At that point the lady screamed and left the ghostwalk. She returned a few months later to finish it. (The footsteps were heard to walk down the hill!).

Q) Was that the upper end of Castle Street, opposite the Central Pub?

A) It has to be down at the bottom of the Inn I'm aware of (outside). On the walks people look at us strangely and take the fool sending up the ghostwalk.

Generally, people have to get used to the idea of the ghostwalk before they'll come forward to add new/old stories or corroborate or dispute any known ones.

Q) What is the timed length of the ghostwalk?

A) The first walk was only 35 minutes as material was limited. Now, with expanding incoming stories it can go up to one and a half hours or two hours, but as a rule it's too long for most people to retain interest.

Q) Could you do a two parter, say, to include different aspects of the ghostwalk?

A) Yes, I could split it in two – a) a general, low key ghostwalk, and b) a more frightening and grisly, more adult in nature. When children are on the walk I have to be careful and inject more humour to lighten it up so they don't have nightmares. With the adults you can give the whole experience with more detail.

Q) Have you thought about writing a book on the stories?

A) Yes, the outline of a book is in preparation now. Every story is logged into a PC and I have several stored now. Hopefully, in the near future, we can do a Peel Ghostwalks book.

Q) Can you cross-check any of the stories for confirmation, hoaxing, etc.?

A) Yes – no problem.

Q) Any other sources?

A) Yes, the witnesses who are the main source are quite happy to tell us you know and to have their names used as a reference.

- Q) Do you have any first-hand witnesses?
- A) Yes, on quite a lot of the stories. That is important to authenticate it, Peel being a place where numerous legends and folklore abound. Stories have different versions and get entranced, like a shaggy dog story or Chinese whispers, more exaggerated and exotic with each retelling over the years, as every storyteller adds his or her own nuances. The oral tradition keeps the stories alive but gets further from the actual events.
- Q) What is the current favourite on the ghostwalk?
- A) The Castle Street footsteps is the most active on all the walks done, that's what people have experienced more than any other. The undoubted favourite is the MODDLEY-DHOO at Peel Castle Gatehouse, the most famous ghost in Peel and the Isle of Man.
- Q) What about the Arcade Nitespot on the Marine Promenade?
- A) This is Kate Corrin at the Ragland Arcade. She was killed by a horse and cart while trying to escape from her brother. The story involves Kate Corrin, 32 years old, who lived at the Ragland House with two older brothers and an older sister. She was in love with a man 40 years old and her father didn't want to lose his last remaining daughter and refused permission to marry. One night she decided to elope from the top right hand corner of the building. She packed her bags, put on her brown coat and shawl and made her way down to the front door. Her plot was discovered by the brothers and she was caught by the door, taken back upstairs to the bedroom and locked in. Her father was furious and insisted that the only time she was to be allowed out would be when escorted by her brothers. One day a witness who was out shopping saw her run across the road in Michael Street. She collided on a blind spot with a horse and cart. She was trying to elope with her lover who was close by. A tragic story. She was

brought back to the room in the back of the Ragland House, now Arcade, and died of her injuries there.

She was laid out on the, then, kitchen table. Today the room at the back is used for pool. People have said they feel an icy-cold presence as if Katie is in there. The building is alarmed for security purposes and the alarms are often triggered by something unexplained in the middle of the night. No matter how many times the alarm company have tried to rectify the problem it seems they cannot. The motion sensor keeps being activated so triggering the alarm.

At this point Alan reads a letter – provided kindly by the owner - from Securicor concerning the alleged haunted room in the Ragland Building. Alan allows me to copy this down as a form of evidence of the strange activity in the room:

'With reference to the alarm activations. Further to our recent conversation regarding the intermittent alarm activation, we have identified the cause yet again as being the movement detection device, ground floor, rear room (pool room). Over the many years it has been installed, our engineers have investigated the activations. Although the motion detector has been replaced in that room, we are still getting false alarms. Head room detectors are designed to detect infra red energy and any changes.

There does not appear to be anything in the room to activate the alarms. It has always been our intention to find the cause and rectify the problem, but on this occasion, having checked the systems thoroughly, we are at a loss to provide an explanation!

I hope you will bear with me while we investigate it and should you be aware of any reasons why the energy levels change intermittently, please let me know.

Sincerely, Robert Hammond

(The last sentence thinly disguising a get-out clause to the owner if paranormal activity or other is setting the alarm off – JH)

Alan likes to read the letter out on the tour outside the building. The letter has had its own mystery in being lost (fortean like) as well as the original. Is Kate trying to hide the fact that Ghostwalk is on to her phantom whereabouts? It's a well known fact that any paranormal activity never likes to be observed and recorded by investigators. The ghost goes out the back door when recording and measuring devices are in situ!

- Q) What job do you do apart from Ghostwalk?
- A) Taxi-driver – originally to help out, but have now been doing it for seven years. I'm actually a joiner by trade.
- Q) Any plans for a Ghostwalk website?
- A) Definitely. It will be up soon as [www.ghostwalks.com](http://www.ghostwalks.com) The idea is to put it on the Isle of Man online, with links to the tourist centre, including the different stories and log in so people can send in stories and experiences.
- Q) It's possible MARA could do a link with your site when you have Ghostwalks site up and running. Otherwise, if visiting Peel and the Isle of Man and would like to go on the Ghostwalk, contact - Alan Shaw, mobile 07624 – 416824 or Peel Ghostwalks @hotmail.com, or write: Alan Shaw, 12 Athol Buildings, Derby Road, Peel, Isle of Man, IM5 1HH.

Recorded 7<sup>th</sup> June 2004.

Alan said the owner of the Ragland Building had heard the stories and always heard movements upstairs, banging, etc. in an otherwise empty building, and often felt being stared at, icy cold when going to look for the source of the sounds.

Since this was recorded the Ghostwalk which started and ended at the CREG-MALIN has now moved to a start point outside the Mannanagh House in Peel the Heritage Centre.

I will include the transcript of the actual ghost walk in a future issue 

#### UPDATE:

Isle of Man ghostwalks 2006 season now at:

Douglas - Tuesdays  
Peel - Wednesdays  
Castletown - Thursdays  
All start at 8pm

#### Afterword:

##### Recent Peel Ghost Sighting

Musicians parked outside the Creek Inn, Peel, got a close encounter of the ghostly kind in August 2003

Sitting in the front of their van after loading up their gear, they noticed an old woman dressed in white approach them.

At first they thought nothing of her, idly watching the old lady as she walked behind the rear of their vehicle. Once out of sight they could hear her shouting out, apparently pleading for her children.

Since it was very late, and the boys were eager to get home, they started up the van and then suddenly remembered the old lady, who had not yet reappeared on the other side.

Not being able to see her in any of the mirrors, one of the musicians got out and walked to the back of the van, but the old woman had mysteriously vanished into thin air.

# The Moddhey Dhoo

## The legend of Peel Castle's Phantom Black Dog

By John L Hall

No Peel ghostwalk could ever miss out Peel Castle's most famous ghostly visitor, the tale of the Moddhey Dhoo, the Isle of Man's very own Black Dog legend. Moddhey Dhoo plays a prominent part in the island's tourism industry, as a featured stop off on the island's coach tour, and also features heavily in Manx heritage literature. In fact, Moddhey Dhoo has become an indispensable part of the Manx Experience.

In this article I have taken the story, as told on the Isle of Man Heritage Site Folklore website, and added my own research into this fascinating tale.

The story begins in the Peel Castle Guardroom during Charles II reign (between 1660-1685).

Peel Castle was built upon St. Patrick's Island and linked to Peel by a causeway. The Island has a long history with Iron Age remains, also many ruins, St. Patrick's Church, an Irish-like round tower and St. German Cathedral, now a ruin within the castle walks.

During part of its long history, the castle was a garrison for the soldiers under the Earl of Derby. Within its stout walls the troops went about their daily duties with military precision.

The guardroom itself was (and still is!) situated just inside the main entrance to the castle and a passage (now bricked up) used to lead to and from it through one of the old churches occupying the site. (Part of the old church basement and other side of the passage is,

however, accessible and so the route can be imagined).

At the end of the day the keys to the gates would be left in the connecting room belonging to the Captain of the Guard.

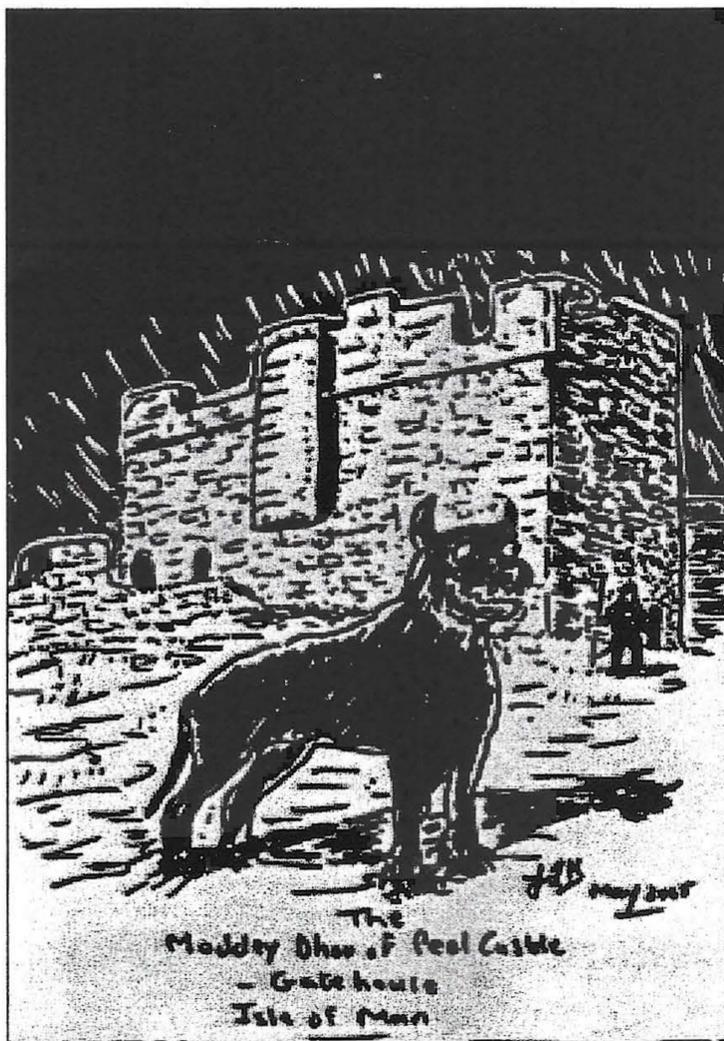
Around that time, the Moddhey Dhoo, a large black dog was frequently seen in around the guardroom. Described as a ghostly black spaniel, the dog was not part of the castle guard

and not known to any of the soldiers. Each night the dog would arrive as soon as the room was lit with candles, and would proceed to lay down in front of the fire, making no sound! It lay by the fireside till daybreak then disappeared back up the passage in the direction of the church, a very regular occurrence for the guardhouse troops. As ghosts or apparitions go, the Moddhey Dhoo was a passive one, content to go through its nightly routine, unhindered or challenged by any of the guards for fear of other worldly retribution.

The soldiers, although scared of the black dog, gradually got used to it's

regular nocturnal comings and goings, although they knew perfectly well it was not a flesh and blood being by it's strange demeanour.

Normally, the guards went in pairs when taking the keys down the passage, however one night a guard who had had too much to drink challenged the black dog, took the keys down the passage alone and dared the dog to follow him.



The Moddhey Dhoo - Peel's Black Dog

The black dog, of course, followed. At first there was silence, but a few moments later a series of terrifying screams came from the guard room.

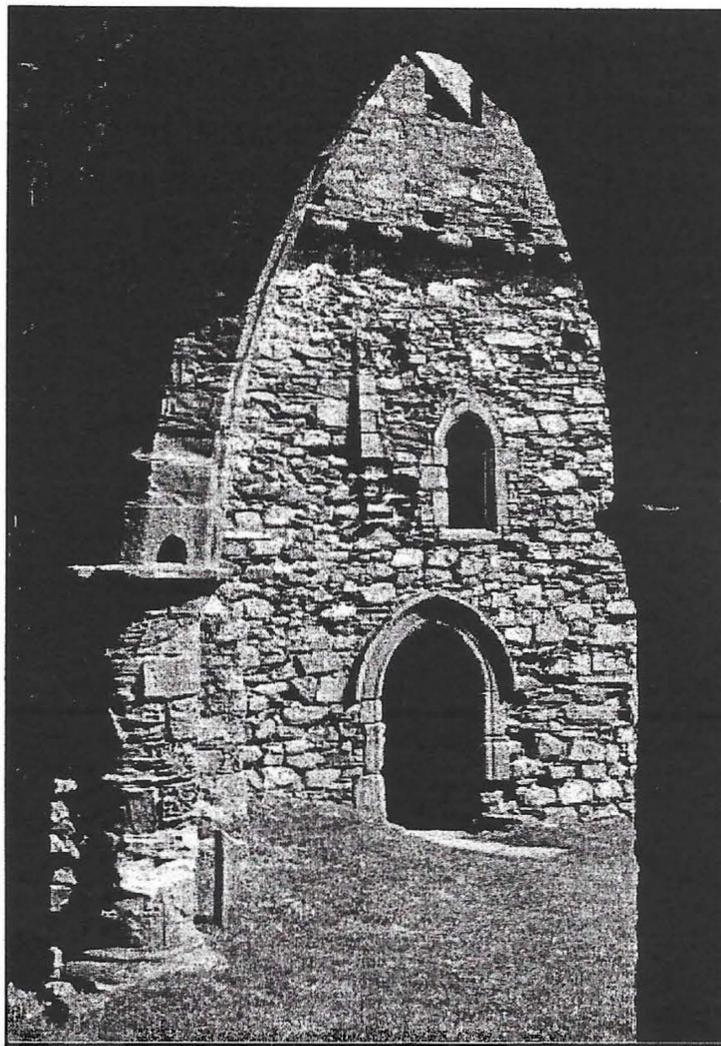
The other guards listened in horror unwilling to go to his assistance through fear, which rooted them to the spot.

Then there was silence again, a long ghastly silence which seemed to last forever. The guards, still in fear of their lives, strained to hear any noise from the passageway, when suddenly they all heard the unmistakable sound of footsteps approaching them from down the corridor. The drunken guardsman emerged alone, his face ghastly pale and twisted with fear. He was unable to speak to his companions and was dead within days. No one knew what happened to him and, according to legend, the Moddhey Dhoo was never seen again!

Interestingly, a dog's skeleton was found in the church near the guard room passage when repairs were taking place in 1871. The burial shows all the hallmarks of the sacrificial burial of a guardian of the corpseway. It was thought that the sacrifice of a dog without a single white hair would, when laid to rest in the foundations of the church, would ensure that the spirit of the dog would haunt the area to protect subsequent persons buried there. These canine spirits were known as a 'church grim' or 'kirk o grim'.

Of course, this particular shaggy dog legend (sorry couldn't resist! – ed) may have its basis in older folklore. Fortean Times (the journal of strange phenomena) recently ran a feature on the Black Dog Phenomena, written by Claire Stubbs, who put much of the Black Dog sightings down to the presence of the invasion of the Norsemen, Danes and Vikings, as many

sites where legends abound have Norse and sea-links. Her theory is that the black dog legends are in fact a memory of the ancient past when Anglo-Saxon Britain was under constant attack from pirates of the sea. However, this doesn't explain the pre-Norse Celtic folklore myths of Black dogs that predate the Danes and Vikings by a considerable amount of years.



Inside Peel Castle

The Isle of Man is not alone with its black dog legend. Black dogs appear all over the UK under many different names, some stories go far into ancient history. Here are some of the names given to these enigmatic hounds from around the country: Suffolk – 'Old Shuck', Somerset – Gurt Dog, Cornwall - Devils Dandy (or Dando) dogs, Devon – Yeth (Heath) or Wisht Hounds, Barquest - Black shag, Padfoot or Hooker, Lancashire – Trash or skriker, Wales – Gwylligi – spectral dog of darkness hellhound, Ireland – Pookha.

Black dog legends are not just a UK phenomenon. They are worldwide, and come from many different cultures. One modern legend has it that, apparently, blues musician Robert Johnson made a pact with the devil at a crossroads to be a better musician, always had to keep on the move because he believed a hellhound was tracking him down.

Black dogs are said to be large with yellow or red glowing eyes who roam the countryside. Any who see them are supposed to die shortly afterwards. They lurk at gates, stiles, on roads etc and of a huge size that no one dare pass them.

Some are said to be headless or invisible with just the red eyes showing. According to legend they act as guides to departed souls on otherworldly paths, and are seen regularly at

crossroads.

Ancient Egypt and Greece also had dogs closely associated with the dead: Anubis the Egyptian Dog headed God of the dead and Hecate, the Greek Goddess, also depicted with the head of a dog who was also the master of Cerberus, the watchdog at the entrance to Hades.

Recently Fortean Times produced a guide to the black dogs of the British Isles, describing where best to view Black Dogs in their unnatural surroundings. Included in the breakdown of the legends were the types, appearance and behaviour, names, haunts and even details of the boundaries by which the sightings seem to be inextricably bound. One peculiar fact about the black dog legends is that the locations where these mythical beasts used to haunt have now become the stomping ground for another mysterious creature – phantom black cats. Trans-mog-rification at work?

Whether the Moddhey Dhoo legend has its roots in race memory of offshore invaders or was a genuine apparition in its own right, one thing is for sure – the Moddhey Dhoo has plenty of Peel appeal, and visitors from far and wide flock to see the places where its appearances were once so common that the soldiers of the castle took it for granted 

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### Notes/extras

1. I could have included more but this is a reasonable tourist trail of the supernatural folklore of the Isle of Man.
2. Peel has a motorcycle club named after the Moddhey-Dhoo with a suitable logo of a snarling head and dripping fangs on a tris Design.
3. A TV film of Conan-Doyle's classic Sherlock Holmes and Watson on the trail of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' was shot on location on the Isle of Man a few years back and screened over Christmas with a huge CGI Black Dog now on BBC DVD. The Isle of Man locations doubled as the moors of Bodmin in England.

### Footnotes

When the remains of Simon, Bishop of Sodor and Man (died 1247) were found, a dog's skeleton lay at his feet.

The origins of the legend of the Moddhey Dhoo, however, could have other explanations.....

Smuggling was rife in Peel during that period. Using ghostly tales as scare tactics, such as tales of phantom black dogs and phantom coaches (which are also prevalent in Manx folklore) to keep the guards at bay, smuggling could take place in and out of the castle passageways from boats and into the town and tunnels under the houses in Castle Street.

In support of this idea many of the island's phantom coach routes cross the countryside from port to port. Could this be how contraband was distributed around the island?

Another possibility is that the Black Dog was a corpse way guardian, as the route from Patrick via Peel Hill with its St. Patrick legend and tumulus was a corpseway. Coffins were carried over this route to or from the castle.

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**BLACK DOG SURVEY FROM LITERATURE ON FOLKLORE OF THE ISLE OF MAN - Compiled by John L. Hall, May 2005**

| LOCATION   | HAUNT  | DESCRIPTION  | WITNESS INFORMATION  | OTHER DETAILS  | DATES   |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| Peel Castle, Peel Hill, Peel Harbour             | Guardhouse, Corpse Road, Guardian                        | Large, black, red eyes, silent. Another says 'like a ghostly black spaniel'. | Story based on guard's death challenge to the dog. (Tumuli burial site, church).   | Gatehouse/Guardian: Church Gray skeleton of dog found in castle walls, 1871.                         | 17 <sup>th</sup> century (dog buried in wall with bishop, 1247) |
| Ballaskelia Wood Farm, Sulby Glen                | High on east side of glen on steep zig-zag road/path     | None   | Blocked path of witness to and from farm   | Met 2 a.m. in foggy conditions   | None  |
| Hango Hill, nr. Castletown                       | On coast road, ancient monument, gibbet and folly.       | Headless and other   | Chased people from town to site  | Other ghost stories also on site   | None  |
| Balladoole, large country house, near Castletown | Near burial site on coast and religious site             | None   | None   | With other ghost, white lady   | None  |
| Ballamodda Malew                                 | Crossroads and farms<br>ACCIDENT BLACKSPOT               | Large  | None (Methodist chapel built right on it)  | Suggestion of movement along ancient routes and also other ghost stories                             | From 1649 – Parish Register                                     |
| Robin-Y-Gate and Clyur Malew                     | Crossroads and farms                                     | Large – changes to cat! (fiery eyes)   | None. All close together on same site and road   | Connection – able to find route across the area via maps and fieldtrip                               | From 1649 – Parish Register                                     |
| Ballagilbert Glen, Kin Lynes Glen, Malew         | Boundary stream, east side                               | Large, headless,   | In a lane leading to Balla Gilbert Farm  | All these may be connected. A patrol of the BallaModda B/D   | None  |
| Ballahutchin Patrick                             | Near main road to Dalby, in a barn                       | None   | Treated with respect. Seen in barn   | Field trip put it near to crossroad track to coast and GEF's at DALBY                                | None  |
| Clough Yn Baney                                  | On main road on south Barrule - MT                       | N/D  | With fairies and other entities  | Leaps into pool stream boundary MT and coast. Leaps into 'Saunters Chambers'. Can't find on map O.S. | None  |
| Glen Maye  | On main road over stream                                 | Large black headless with chains. Linked with Buggane/waterbull.             | Leaps across road into Bulls Pool  | Maybe one entity being many of the huge amount in small area   | None  |
| Glen Auldyn Leazyre, Milntown corner             | On corner of main road over stream (crossroads boundary) | Large, size of calf, eyes like red saucers, long shaggy coat                 | With multiple other entities, seen by doctor on call twice, and before great storm. (Attempted exorcism by Ewan Christian, 1805) | Waterhorse seen – water bull gnome with light / Manx and Norse Battlesite                            | 1927, 1931  |

| LOCATION  | HAUNT   | DESCRIPTION  | WITNESS INFORMATION  | OTHER DETAILS  | DATES  |
|---|---|--|--|--|--------|
| <b>Ramsey Mooracahave (Ormly Hall)</b>                                      | Moorash Broughes, the Garey coast road  | None   | Seen many times, feared, spot (linked with a taro ushtey same site!) Buggane and ghost.                        | Even when cottage built over sea boundary gibbet ancient seafort                               | ?????? |
| Glen Mona and Cornna Glen   | Rhenab Road near Ballagory Chapel runs from stream by road Glen Monato Creg Nymuilt   | Black, size of calf or Newfoundland dog  | Seen by two miners, 2 a.m. in moonlight (ditch to ditch) travels   | In conjunction with Tarro Ushtey Maughold witches/fairies and other entities.                  | 1800s  |
| <b>Ballaugh Glen Michael</b>  | Stretch of road between Scoundral Mill and Ballathor House                            | .  | Seen by Gaateway, suddenly appears and disappears at your feet. (Other says may be real stray dog)             | Whole glen haunted by various entities. Exorcism carried out/Tum???Ancient stones removed.     | 1800s  |
| Dreem-Y-Jess Kaig, Ramsey-Laxey main coast road                             | On main coast road, 'Cliff Edge' where roadrail cliff and water meet                  | Large, terrifying, lurking by same spot  | Pursues people on horses or pony and trap wagons, then jumps over cliff to sea. Seen by man driving pony ????? | Boundary area with Maughold. Exorcised by Ewan Christian, local ??????? scientist.             | 1805   |
| The Dogmills, Ramsey-Bride main road  | Crossroads  | None   | None   | None (Place Name)  | None   |
| Carrack-Y-Voddey  | Just north of <del>Deon</del> Bay   | None   | None (Rock of the Dog)   | OS maps coastal area   | None   |
| Cronk-Y-Voddey  | Crossroads TT course straight   | None   | None   | Placename (Hill of the Dog)  | None   |
| Port St. Mary Gansey Point  | Coastal Path Strip  | None   | None   | By Gansey Pottery, near burial sites and standing stones                                       | None   |
| Clough Height Mt. top opposite Snaefell Mt.                                 | Snaefell Mt. road, between Ramsey-Douglas TT course. (Runs towards Ramsey down road). | Donkey-like appearance, then changed into a great black dog with connection?- Glen Auldyon connection? | None   | A place of uncanny manifestations, fairy music, where 2 parishes meet, voices heard, and more. | None   |
| Incomplete data, to do more – or no recent sightings, last 1937 Glen Auldyn |   |  |  |  |        |

# Williamson Tunnel Spooky Sleepover

A special report on the Childline charity event

By Mark Rosney

Last November, MARA were delighted to be asked to help out in a spooky event for Childline North West; a sponsored Spooky Sleepover. During the course of four months, MARA Coordinator Mike Jaega liaised with Childline Official Karen Swale in order to plan the event with meticulous precision. However, things didn't go totally to plan, as a cellar fire in the original venue, 48 hours before the event was due to take place, caused the event to be postponed until an alternative venue could be found. Upon an excellent suggestion by MARA member Eileen Shaw, an alternative venue was soon secured: the enigmatic Williamson Tunnels at Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, UK



MARA members with Karen Swale (centre)

Since this was our first involvement in a charity event, we were quite excited at the prospect of using our skills and knowledge to help raise (hopefully) a lot of money for a very worthwhile charity.

Our task for the evening was to represent the scientific side of Paranormal Investigations, showing the sponsored guests how we work as a group and presenting our findings based on almost 10 years of science based paranormal investigation and research.

On the night, MARA started off the proceedings with two presentations on the allegedly haunted Chingle Hall, ably delivered by Peter Tiernan, Rob Bethell and Mark Rosney. Peter concentrated on the History of the hall, illustrating his talk with photographic evidence and classic sound recordings from the Hall, including the infamous Chingle scream.

Rob and Mark related their first hand experiences of things that happened to them and the team during their many visits to the hall, culminating in a review of the groups own spooky recordings from the hall. Both presentations were

well received.

After a short break, it was time for the invited psychics to demonstrate their skills, while MARA members prepared for their group 'show and tell' sessions.

Unfortunately, due to the inescapable laws of physics, the wireless camera that we installed in the tunnel entrance failed to work, as the thickness of the natural stone walls prevented the signals being transmitted from the camera to the base station. However, totally undaunted by this, Peter and Rob gave a more in depth description of how we go about our investigations/research to a very keen audience, showing

off other bits of kit that we use in our work. This was well received by all, and Peter and Rob were kept busy with countless questions!

The rest of the team were on hand throughout the night to field questions and represent all aspects of the group's research which, to a person, they did extremely well.

Alan Houghton did a Stirling job all evening making a video record of the whole night for the MARA archives, and even arranged to do an impromptu tribute to Alfred Hitchcock by appearing as a cameo in his own film! Well done Alan!

As the night progressed all team members showed their worth by participating fully and ensuring that the whole night was an outstanding success. It is times like these that MARA show their true worth by acting as a very professional unit in a very professional manner throughout.

Most importantly, the guests at the event are estimated to have made in excess of £6000 in sponsorship money for Childline. MARA congratulate the guests and Karen Swale on this extremely successful event 

## Some thoughts on Normality v Paranormality

UFOs, ADEs, OOBES, WMDs - and Lighthouses!

By Eileen Shaw

*Sometimes the most bizarre thing about having paranormal encounters isn't the actual incident, but the explanation given to account for the experience. Eileen Shaw takes a look at the excuses officialdom have used to keep the normality 'boat' afloat.*

**W**hen I was asked to write something for the Researcher, my first thought was that in spite of all I had read, heard and experienced throughout a fairly full life, it appeared that, unlike most subjects, study of the paranormal produced more questions than answers!

In the run up to Halloween there has been no shortage of 'spooky' programmes on television.

Now; it seems OK to watch endless football, soaps, movies, etc., but to watch programmes about the paranormal seems to place one directly in the firing line: 'how can you believe in all that?' or 'people only believe because they want to' (which, conversely, must mean 'people only disbelieve because they want to'). There's the suggestion that an interest in the paranormal indicates a degree of naivety or gullibility. Maybe that's a fair assumption; an interest in all things paranormal may suggest a certain belief system to some people. But I've been known to watch Superman and James Bond movies too, and no-one ever accused me of believing in those.

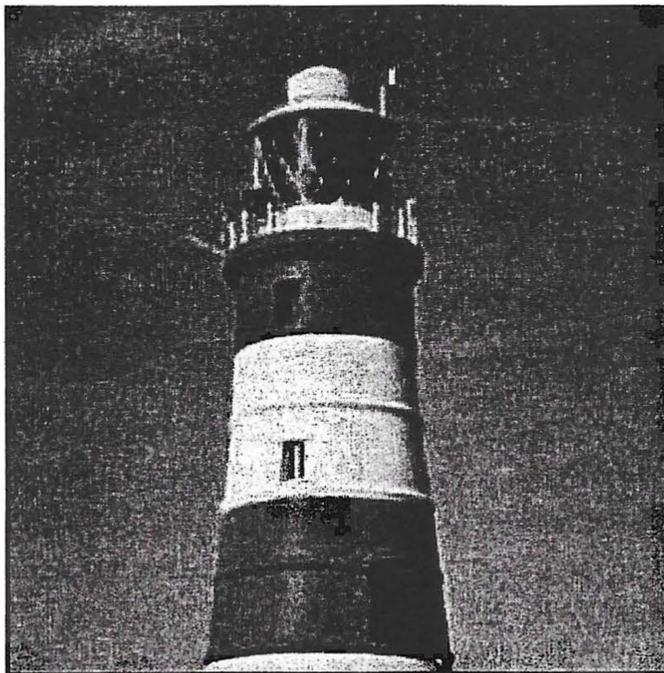
I believe that many people experience varying degrees of unexplainable incidents at some stage of their lives; seeing a UFO or witnessing poltergeist activity, thinking or dreaming about someone and then meeting them or hearing from them. How many witness reports do we need before we begin to open up our minds to the possibility that the inexplicable is worthy of consideration? When does a coincidence cease to be a coincidence?

Those of us familiar with the Roswell and Bentwaters-Woodbridge (Rendlesham Forest) incidents will be aware that there was no shortage of witnesses to these events, some not only making reference to alien craft but also to extra-terrestrial beings.

Speculation continues with regard to these occurrences and is likely to continue indefinitely as reports of sightings continue to be received from all over the world. Are we really to believe, in the case of Roswell, that so many witnesses could become excited by the arrival of a 'downed' weather balloon? And how often do we look at a dummy and wonder if it arrived from outer space? It's surely not a thought that instantly crosses the mind! The official explanation for these was that they were crash-test dummies. Perhaps, if these

explanations had struck a chord with witnesses 60 years ago, then we would have forgotten about these incidents by now.

Anyone remotely persuaded by the account provided by Larry Warren (Left at East Gate, Michael O'Mara Books Ltd., ISBN 1-85479-231-8) of the extraordinary events which, allegedly, occurred in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in late December, 1980 must find reports by sceptics that the lights in the forest were caused by beams from the Orfordness Lighthouse, bizarre to say the least. So much activity in the forest, reports of farm animals and deer being disturbed during the night, high-ranking officers, including the chief of security police, a flight commander, disaster-preparedness officers



Orford Ness lighthouse

from two USAF bases as well as English police officers and locals, all congregating in the forest, mesmerized by the beams from the Orfordness Lighthouse!

It would be unreasonable to accept all unusual experiences as paranormal, and a good researcher explores all natural possibilities and probabilities in an effort to rule out anomalies. But at what stage do we find our minds beginning to open up to the possibility that there is more going on around us than we could ever begin to understand, and the boundaries of our belief systems becoming broader and broader, almost without our being aware of it?

Most reported UFO sightings have natural explanations – planets, meteor showers, planes, birds, satellites, etc. Many ghostly sounds can be attributed to hot water systems and creaky floorboards. The examples go on and on. However, some sightings can't be written off so easily, except, perhaps, for anyone out there who is not exactly sure what lighthouses, weather balloons and dummies actually look like. Next time we think we've seen a UFO, we must remember to consider the possibility that we may have stumbled upon a wayward lighthouse! Sometimes the counter-claims appear to do more to support the paranormal aspects of the sightings than the reports of the sightings themselves!

I recall hearing a parapsychologist suggest that a father and son had been hallucinating following their claim to have seen a ghost-like figure of a monk passing by on the opposite side of the road. Seeing a ghost just pales into insignificance when I'm presented with such a theory. I know people can hallucinate in certain circumstances: illness, drugs, stimulation of the temporal lobe, but was the psychologist suggesting that the pair had just lunched on magic mushrooms? Can two individuals really have the same hallucination at the same time, on a quiet country road on a rather typical cloudy English day? I'm really struggling with this one, but if it is possible, maybe George W. Bush and Tony Blair have shared a similar experience.

This leads to more questions. Logically, why shouldn't there be life on other planets? And if there's life, why shouldn't there be visitations? And if all the world's religions teach that there is an afterlife, why are we surprised to hear about after-death experiences, (ADEs), out of body

experiences, (OOBEs), or to hear that mediums communicate with the spirits of the dead? Didn't the ancient Greeks consult the oracle? Was this a form of mediumship? Was Jesus a clairvoyant? Maybe John the Baptist and Moses too?

Most people are entertained by stories of extraordinary/paranormal incidents, some don't care too much about whether they stem from truth or fiction, and many don't even want to consider that there could be truth in any of these accounts - and they may be correct in their disbelief. They are, after all, largely supported by what we have learnt from science and physics.

There are hundreds of thousands of eye-witness accounts of UFOs, but our governments don't want to talk about them. Can all of the witnesses have been mistaken, gullible, drunk or hallucinating? We went to war because of WMDs – and we didn't have any witnesses for these!

If just one sighting of a UFO, or one abduction, or one cattle-mutilation, proves to be extra-terrestrial, this must change our perception of our place in the universe totally and irreversibly. How can we afford to be indifferent when the sheer weight of numbers of sightings is loaded against us? Natural or otherwise, there seems to be a lot of strange stuff in our skies and I, personally, would be very interested in knowing what some of it is!

If such vast numbers of sightings have been, and continue to be, reported, at what stage does the paranormal become the normal?

The questions go on and on. So – what have I learnt from my studies?

I've learnt that I know very little and that the more I study, the more aware I become of what I don't know. I've learnt that many of the people who think they know, also don't know. I've learnt that 'paranormal' is a word describing anything at variance with existing scientific paradigms; but those paradigms change from time to time too.

I believe that the concept of things 'paranormal' is personal and dynamic, dependent upon experience and interpretation, and as difficult to define as the concept of 'normality'.

And, oh yes - I've learnt to be very suspicious of lighthouses 

# The Legend of the Werewolf

By Colin John Veacock

**E**ven a man who's pure of heart and says his prayers at night can become a wolf when the wolf bane blooms and the moon is full and bright. So said the elderly gypsy woman to Lon Chaney Junior in the original black and white *Wolf Man* movie after he had been unfortunate enough to be bitten by a werewolf. Of course, he didn't heed her warnings and at the next full moon off he went in his brown pyjamas terrifying the neighbourhood and howling at the moon from the shadows.

The moon has always held a morbid fascination for man, and there is no doubt that at the time of the full moon instances of violent crime, suicide, and aggressive behaviour rise dramatically. Ask any police constable, nurse, doctor or fireman who has had to work the nightshift during the new moon and they will tell you stories every bit as terrifying as the werewolf legends. This strange rise in antisocial behaviour during the full moon is often referred to as the Transylvania Effect. It is not by accident that the word lunatic comes from the Latin word *Luna*, which means moon. But can the full moon actually turn an honest man into a snarling savage beast?

Although there's no reliable documented evidence of anyone actually witnessing the physical manifestation of a man transforming into a wolf, there is a delusionary state known as lycanthropy where the afflicted will actually describe and feel a physical change taking

place. They will hallucinate, seeing their fangs, fingernails and hair growing, and if they are not restrained they will become violent and attack innocent people.

Lycanthropy comes from the Greek word *Lykoi* meaning wolf, and *Anthropos* meaning man, and first turns up in Greek mythology when the god Lykaon was turned into a wolf after daring to serve human flesh to Zeus.



In France during the Middle Ages werewolf sightings and belief reached epidemic proportions. From 1520 to 1630 over thirty thousand people were accused of being a werewolf, most of who were executed after admitting under duress their extra lunar activities. The initial spark which appears to have heralded this disturbing period occurred in Paligny when three werewolves were

executed after they admitted eating the flesh of children. When the French colonised Canada they took with them their werewolf beliefs which is evident in the newspapers during July and December 1767 when reports of a large savage werewolf terrorising Saint Roche in Quebec caused pandemonium.

One can only attentively assume that these people were honestly reporting what they were experiencing, so is there any credible explanations to cast light on the legends?

There is a genetic disorder which is passed on in the X chromosome which is referred to as the werewolf disorder. Those afflicted with the

condition are covered from head to toe with a fine hair that gives them the appearance of a wolf man. Another explanation for the werewolf is Porphyria, a genetic condition caused by interbreeding. Among its symptoms is an aversion to light and ulcers which could cause the hands to become claw like. Another recent theory is ergot poisoning... The ergot fungus lives on the ears of wheat and if digested can cause severe hallucinations. It is feasible that during the Middle Ages whole towns could have been affected by ergot poisoning causing them to collectively believe that a werewolf was stalking them. In the 1950s France became the centre of an ergot outbreak causing those affected to hallucinate. Most believed hairy monsters were chasing them while others reacted to the poison by having lengthy bouts of vomiting and diarrhoea, violent fits and severe dizziness. One man who was hallucinating bit his way through his straight jacket, losing all his teeth in the process, and bent two iron bars in the hospital window in his efforts to escape a tiger which he believed was stalking him.

Slavic tribes who believed they could transform themselves into savage wolves were almost certainly suffering from a similar hallucinogenic which grew in the form of a green mould on their potatoes.

So you can imagine if those already suffering from ergot poisoning also had a psychopath in their midst, and the villagers were coming across the mutilated bodies of their friends, then they could very easily connect the two and put the murders down to the supernatural beast.

In 1521 two French peasants, Pierre Burgot and Michael Verdun, were executed for being werewolves after they confessed their story. Burgot had made a deal with three black garbed strangers who said that his sheep would always be safe as long as he denounced his baptism and confirmation. He readily agreed but a year later he began to regret his agreement. It was now that Verdun visited Burgot and demanded that he strip naked and rub an ointment made up of wolf bane, opium, foxgloves, bat blood and the fat of a murdered child into his flesh. Burgot reluctantly did as he was told and was instantly transformed into a ravenous beast. Verdun also used the ointment, and together the two of them began to prowl the countryside in search of victims. In one instance they ripped a seven-

year-old boy to pieces... Before they were caught they went on to kidnap, murder and eat a four-year-old girl as well as devour an elderly woman.

In 1584, Pierre Gandolin and his son, George, also killed and ate many children after they had rubbed a similar balm on their skins, and in 1598 Jacques Rollet, known as the Werewolf of Caude, was discovered half naked hiding in undergrowth holding a lump of human flesh which had come from the corpse of a fifteen year old boy who lay nearby. He readily confessed to eating attorneys, lawyers and bailiffs and was accordingly sentenced to death. However, Rollet escaped the executioner and was placed in a madhouse for two years after which he was released.

Another infamous werewolf was Jean Grenier of Aquitaine who, in 1604, was kidnapped and taken into dense woodlands by another boy named Pierre La Tihaine, where he was to meet a tall dark clothed man on horseback who was known as the Lord. In an attack reminiscent of a modern day paedophile abuse, the man gave them a strong wine to drink before he kissed the boys and scratched tattoos on their inner thighs. Then the boys were told to rub an ointment on their bare skin before wrapping themselves in wolf skins. Up until the day he was caught at the age of fourteen Grenier had eaten fifteen children. Because he was considered retarded and not responsible for his crimes, he was sent to live in a cloister where the boy refused to eat normal food, instead he preferred to dine on offal. Not surprisingly, after only a year he died. Grenier's case is identical to the 1573 case of the Hermit of Dale, Gilles Garnier, who lived on the French Compté Province. He ate the raw flesh from the thighs, legs and belly's of dozens of children who were all aged between nine and twelve. So can the werewolf myth be satisfactorily explained by ergot poisoning, early deranged psychopaths and antiquated beliefs? The amazing answer is no.

There are people who still believe in werewolves, like the Indian shamans who still claim to be able to shape shift, and some Siberian tribes who hang on to the belief that they can change into a beast by simply jumping over a fallen tree and stabbing it with a small ceremonial copper knife. They also believe that drinking water from a wolf's paw print or eating the brains of an animal killed by wolves also has the same desired effect. But what about those

disturbed individuals who live among us who sincerely believe they can change shape at will. *Therianthropy* is the ability to shape shift, and those who claim to have learned this skill in effect have reinvented the werewolf legends of old so it appeals to the ordinary man in the street. Modern day werewolves call themselves *The Children of the Moon* or just the children. No longer do they need the influence of the full moon or an ointment as they can now change at will. And no longer will the bite of a werewolf cause the victim to become a monster. Werewolves are born not created! Born of parents, one of which has to be werewolf. They also have their own language, *d'Unaidan*, which is said to sound like German, and they also have an Adam & Eve like story to legitimise their existence, which is called "The Tribes Of The Moon."



*Mother Moon took two examples of each earth bound creature that existed on Earth and transformed them into her own human image. Instantly the bears, horses, dogs and of course, wolves stood upright on two legs. After a while all the animals agreed that they missed their old forms so the Mother Moon granted that they should have the best of both worlds. The apes human form were known as Adam And Eve while the wolves were named Zaneth and Needa, and it is from these that all werewolves originate...*

Although it is hard, if not impossible, to believe the claims of the new trendy Therianthropes, it is a fact that decent sincere people still report sightings of werewolf like creatures.

In 1936, in Jefferson, Wisconsin, Mark Schackleman reputedly saw a six-foot tall hair covered animal which had a dogs muzzle and ears and stood upright as it dug into an Indian burial mound. The significance of the burial mound should not be over looked as many mythical creatures appear in conjunction with

pseudo religious artefacts and earthworks such as the Moth man of Mawnan in Cornwall. Hairy wolf like creatures seen under poor conditions is one thing but spare a thought for Mrs Delburt Gregg of Greggtown, Texas, who, in 1958, awoke to find a shaggy wolf like creature with yellow glowing eyes scratching at a window mesh screen that covered her living room window. As she jumped off the couch the creature turned and ran across the porch and disappeared into a group of small bushes. When it emerged from the other side of the bushes the animal had changed into a tall man who casually walked down the lane.

And then there is The Beast of Bray Road, who terrifies people to this very day in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. Sometimes it is seen running on all four legs, sometimes on two, while at other times it is seen

feeding on road kill. In August 1999, a young lady identified only as J, along with her family, watched a wolf like creature appear out of the shadows at the side of the road and slowly pace towards her car. Before she could accelerate away the animal described as wolf like with sharp yellow fangs and pointy ears put its face up close to the passenger side window and peered in. She wasn't the only one to have a sighting of this animal as in October an unnamed woman driving along Bray Road at night braked sharply after she thought her car had struck something on the carriageway. When she got out to take a look she came face to face with a huge hairy wolf which stood upright before chasing her back to her car. As the car raced away the wolf clambered onto the boot of the car but slipped off as the car gained speed.

In 1971 the Alabama police force tried unsuccessfully to capture a creature described as half woman, half wolf, and Ohio residents still report seeing a six to eight foot tall animal described as a hairy human with an oversized wolf like head, elongated nose, huge hairy feet

and fangs, which has attacked and hurt railway workers.

It is impossible to believe in the werewolf legends of old never mind the claims of the Therianthropes who apparently have overcome their animalistic desire to kill. It is far more likely that the werewolf hysteria in sixteenth century France was caused by ignorance, superstition and a blood thirsty creature which is definitely alive and well, lurking in the shadows ready to pounce and kill. A creature which by day can merge with normal people but by night becomes a voracious killing machine. Not a supernatural beast but ordinary everyday people who silently slip into insanity and become vicious killing machines.

Richard Trentin Chase, the Vampire of Sacramento, ate his victims organs because he believed it would stop his body disintegrating, and Albert Fish, the Bogey Man, ate fifteen children during his reign of terror in the 1920s. Before he was executed in 1936, Fish admitted that in one instance it had taken him nine days to eat the entire body of a child.

Karl Denke of Silesia, Germany, dined on sausages made from the flesh of his victims and Andrei Chikatilo, the Soviet Hannibal Lecter, admitted to eating the sawn off testicles and nipples of those he butchered. In court he said he was a *"mistake of nature, a mad beast"*. And then there's the disturbing case of Jeffrey Dalmer who ate his victims because he needed to feel them inside him, and Nathaniel Bar-Jonah, the Montana born paedophile who served the remains of the children he slaughtered to his friends and neighbours in the form of burgers...

In the distant past life was simple and fragile. Wild animals such as bears and wolves roamed the deep forests feeding on the odd traveller who strayed to far from the relative safety of the road but these incidents were a rarity. When a psychopath began his or hers reign of terror, leaving the mangled remains of their victims behind, the people needed something, anything to blame. That is when fact and fantasy merged and the legend of the werewolf was born **R**



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# MARA News

## Association News Round-Up

### Three ongoing vigils

MARA members are currently conducting three long term investigations of premises in Liverpool. Due to confidentiality issues we cannot, as yet, reveal the locations. However, we can tell you that one is in a pub, another is in a community centre and the third is above a business premises. Each venue has a history of reported paranormal activity, ranging from apparitions to strange sounds and eerie lights.

At the business premises, MARA member Maureen Kidd managed to capture a weird light anomaly in a deserted store room. The light was not visible to the naked eye and, because the picture was taken without flash, is a complete mystery to the group. The photo is currently undergoing analysis. Top marks Maureen!

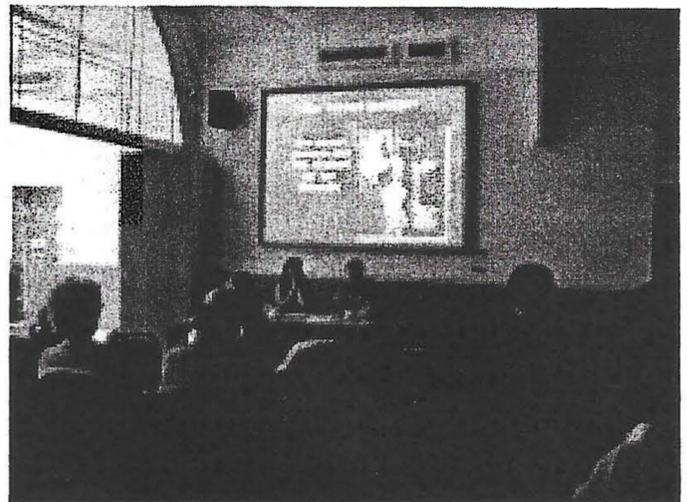


### Conspiracy talk at Widnes Library

As part of MARA's ongoing programme of monthly talks, Mike Jaega teamed up with Janette Fleming to give a talk about conspiracy theories. The talk featured classic conspiracies such as 'Was Marilyn Monroe murdered?', 'Area 51' and 'Did man land on the moon?'.

Arguments, both for and against were delivered and the audience were then asked if they believed or disbelieved the particular topic. Mike and Janette did a sterling job, despite an intermittent fault on the digital projector which

was going on standby at critical moments. Perhaps this was a conspiracy theory in the making? Hmmmmmmm.



### Tennantspin broadcast

Last November MARA members John Hall, Rob Bethell and Mark Rosney were invited to take part in a discussion show about the paranormal for The FACT funded Tennantspin project, a TV station located in a high rise in Sefton park. The programme was beamed into the homes of the tenants and simultaneously beamed, via broadband, over the world wide web. John, Rob and Mark talked about a wide range of phenomena from folklore, myths and legends to the recent Halewood LITS sightings on Merseyside.



# MARA News

## Association News Round-Up

### Halewood Skywatch

During the height of the last spate of sightings over Halewood, MARA members, Rob Bethell, Peter Tiernan and Mark Rosney decided to spend an evening in Halewood in the hope of observing the LITS phenomena for themselves. Using Halewood station's platform as a vantage point they commanded clear views of the sky in most directions. However, luck was not on their side. Within half an hour the rain began to pour and our intrepid observers were forced to call it an evening. UFOs: 1, MARA: 0.



**A raindrop caught in the camera flash. The first of many that fell on that night!**

### 'Life After Death?' talk

MARA got off to a good start on this year's programme of talks for Halton Libraries, with Mark Rosney giving an interesting talk on the evidence for and against life after death being a reality.

Tackling the big question, Mark discussed everything from Mediumship, reincarnation, past life regressions, ghosts, out of body experiences to near death experiences, in order to show our current understanding of these phenomena, leaving the audience to ponder on the possibility of survival after death. The talk was well received.

### Thurstaston Hill Skywatch

On the evening of 15th October 2005, a team from MARA visited Thurstaston Hill on the Wirral to conduct an impromptu skywatch. When planned late that afternoon, conditions seemed ideal, promising a very clear sky. However, once we had set out, it became apparent that the sky was not that clear after all, with a low lying mist that was hampering skyward viewing from the horizon to about 35 – 40 degrees up. The view overhead, however, was relatively clear and so we unpacked the equipment from the cars and climbed up the hill, trekking along the precarious sandstone path by torchlight. At the summit we set up the equipment: a telescope (NB: used purely to look at astronomical objects!), a pair of binoculars mounted on a tripod and a camcorder equipped with night vision - also mounted on a tripod. The team then got their own personal binoculars, cameras etc at the ready. After a few minutes, some members had spotted a few familiar constellations in the sky with which to orientate themselves, and then the team settled down for a few hours of observing.

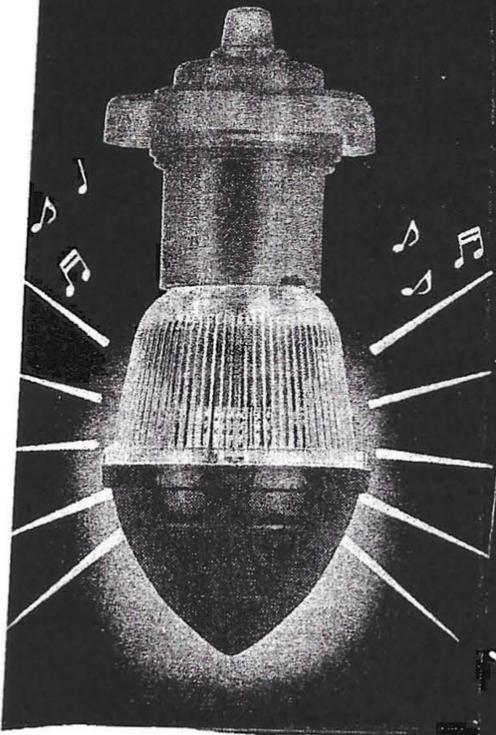
Mars was highly visible, as a bright red 'star' to the south east, and displayed as a pale orange disc through the telescope. A nearly full moon cast a handy glow on the ground, preventing members from falling over the edges of the rocky summit!

Throughout the night several aircraft passed overhead, but alas nothing was seen that could be described as a UFO.



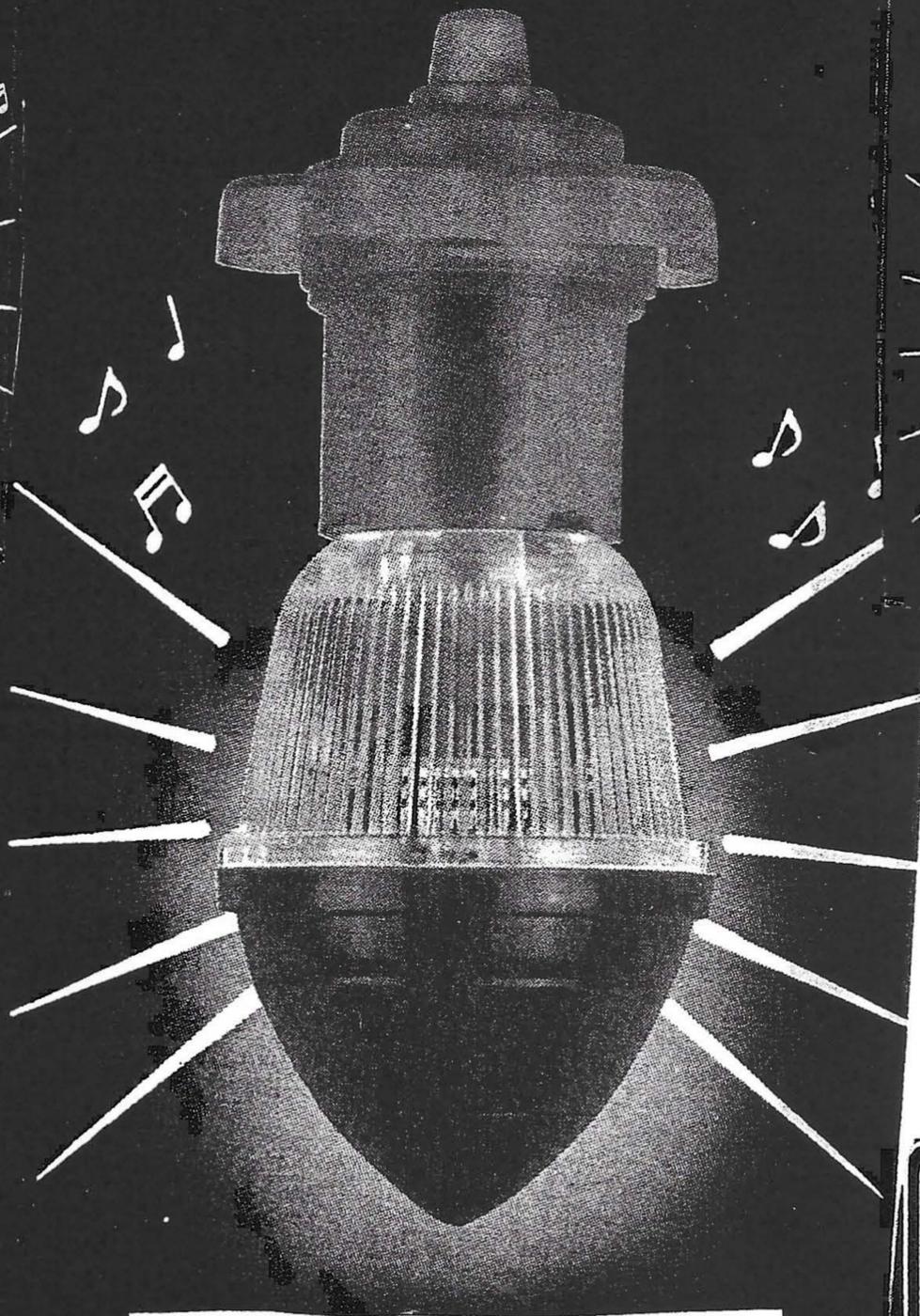
# UFO TOP

Sounds & light up  
in turning



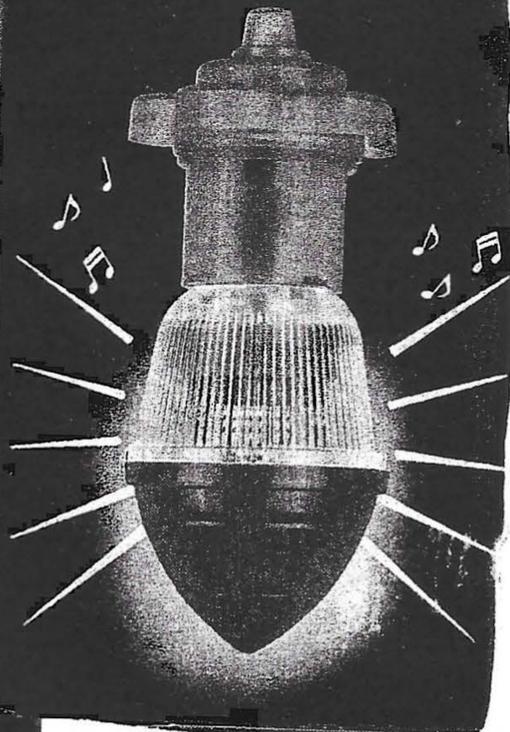
# UFO TOP

Sounds & light up  
in turning



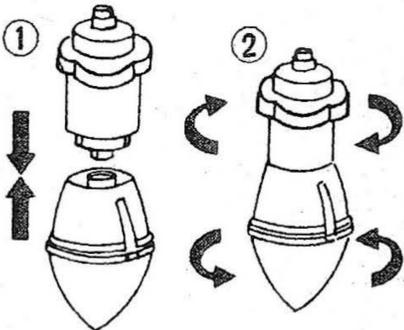
# UFO TOP

Sounds & light up  
in turning



## A) OPERATION DESCRIPTION

- 1) JOIN BOTH PARTS
- 2) WIND SPRING (ABOUT 4-5 TURNS)



3) PRESS IN

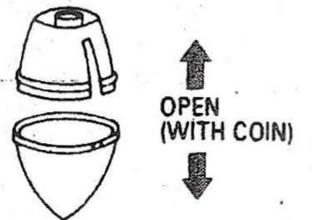


### CAUTION:

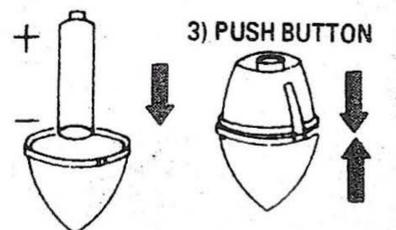
1. Do Not Overwind.
2. Wind Clockwise.
3. Pull trigger release...Blast Off!

## B) BATTERY REPLACEMENT

1) OPEN MAIN BODY



2) INSERT BATTERY



4) PERSPECTIVE DRAWING



## Lights in the Sky

By Blair Wilkins

*In recent years, it appears, the skies above South Liverpool have been playing host to a wide range of strange phenomena; from eerie balls of orange/pink light which amble aimlessly across the sky, to impossibly huge black Flying Triangles hovering over the parks. So it came as no surprise that there are earlier accounts of 'aerial high strangeness' in the area coming to light. Blair Wilkins takes up his story.....*

**J** anuary 31<sup>st</sup> 1985

On this day Liverpool was exposed to a most incredible visitation. It was at about 1800 when something very exotic arrived above our city in a welter of multicoloured light.

I was at my friend Neil Bancroft's flat – which was a virtual paradise of Art Deco - about a mile away from my own dwelling place (34, Devonshire Road where I was living then) on the eastern side of Princes Park. Neil walked into the bay to adjust the window blinds, and for some reason looked out into the early evening darkness, which was stealthily infiltrating Linnet Lane with clammy damps; but that wasn't all that was abroad that night. Neil exclaimed loudly and threw the window wide open staring up into the thickly overcast skies. I was at his side in moments, crammed into the window alongside him, and what a strange sight met our eyes!

***'Neil exclaimed loudly and threw the window wide open staring into the thickly overcast skies'***

To the south beyond Lark Lane, an inverted cone or fan-shaped expanse of magnesium-white light extended upwards into the sky over the rooftops to an altitude of about 15 degrees. It was perhaps 8 degrees across its upper widest part and it was evenly illuminated and not flickering, it was a steady illumination.

This light-form (which appeared to be somehow projected from the ground), was however quite secondary in strangeness to the vast wheel of rotating polychromatic radiance in the western sky, which we couldn't fail to notice as it was right in front of the bay windows.

The cloud-base was down to maybe about 900 feet.

Light-rays were emanating from around the perimeter of an *elliptical* void within the overcast, i.e. *inside* the clouds, these were the 'spokes' of the wheel.

No features were visible in this void, it was the same colour as the clouds, yet our attention was irresistibly attracted to it.

The entire assembly revolved very slowly above us in a clockwise direction (as seen from below), with long flat blades of pastel coloured light radiating from the circumference of the central lacuna, as described above. There were twelve of these. The light, travelling outwards along these beams, was *slow light*, which changed colour as it spread laterally to the misty horizons, one colour following another in continuous uninterrupted sequencing.

As mentioned above the eye was naturally attracted to that central elliptical area and the attention was rewarded with a most subtle awareness of *sentience*. A very vivid and unmistakable sense of the presence of a communicative and somehow very friendly intelligence made itself felt. Undoubtedly a *mind* dwelt there. The longer I looked into that empty space the more the certainty grew in me that I was about to see something . . .

something *absolutely awesome*. Therefore I looked away. I looked away because I was scared, even though there was absolutely no reason to be . . . and I remember being very embarrassed at this fear.

An old friend of mine, Aidan Lawrence Caldwell had a name for this emotional reaction. He called it *Holy Terror*. This is a very good term, and describes the feeling perfectly – the more exotic the nature of the encounter the more

deeply it moves you.

Some years later I wrote to Neil, who by this time lived in North Wales, asking if he'd be so kind as to write me an account of his own memories concerning that evening, which he duly did. He said that when he looked into the central region of the disc: "It felt to me, as if my soul had been removed from my body, evaluated, perhaps adjusted in some way, and then replaced".

Serious stuff then! We had the good fortune to observe this visitor for about eight minutes of the twelve that it was visibly present in our skies. When it departed the optical dimension it was just as

if a light had been switched off. One second it was there – the next instant it was gone. The famous and very similar Fatima manifestations of 1917 also lasted twelve minutes. This event also produced auroral effects visible over 30 miles away, this is a detail that is most definitely on the record. Next-door to Neil's was a remand hostel. The inmates were on the driveway, cowering under the leafless trees and fearfully watching the flaring skies.

"Are you seeing this?" Neil had shouted down to them.

"Yeah! It's the nuclear war" (sic)

"Luckily for us it's not the nuclear one then, huh Neil" I whispered to my chum.

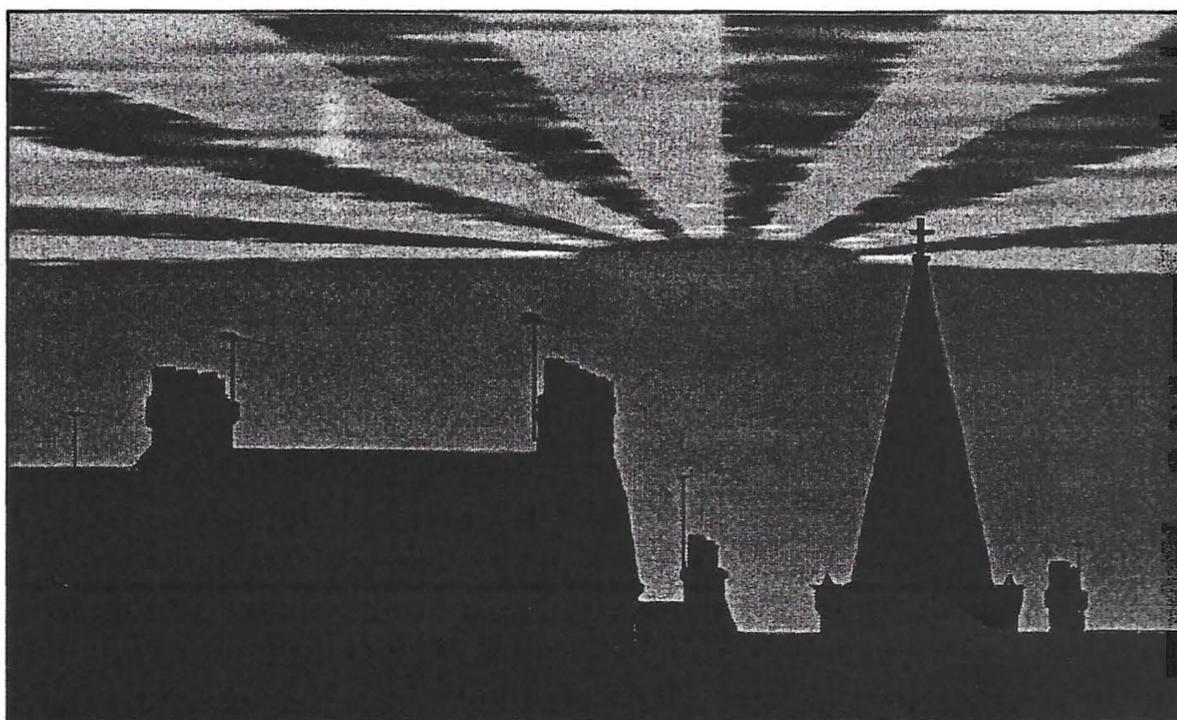
When we tuned-in to one of the local radio stations the studio was in an uproar, full of joy and completely out of control. The switchboards of both Radio Merseyside and Radio City were jammed solid with incoming calls from as far west as Llandudno in North Wales and as far

north as Southport!

The public wanted to know what was going on, whether it was a military exercise; *what were all those rotating multicoloured lights - helicopters?*

No, they weren't helicopters. And no, it wasn't a military exercise.

One of the radio presenters was telling us - in an unabashedly excited and completely candid voice - that it felt like something straight out of



'...It was caused by a short circuit on the Railway Line...'

'Close Encounters of the Third Kind.' The whole studio was live, and you could hear all the other people in there – all equally vocal and nervously happy, but definitely still on the right side of hysteria;

they must've reckoned that they were caught-up in the story of the century!

Unfortunately though, it wasn't to be. Not *this* time anyway. If only I'd had the presence of mind to tape-record that *first* unscheduled radio transmission! The next newscast at 1900 was entirely different in character, and this one I did manage to record when I returned home to Devonshire Road.

The second newscast, which was I think from 'Radio Merseyside' was negatively contrasted with the previous, unscheduled outburst. Now, everyone sounds upset and afraid, as if some tyrannical and scary schoolmaster had told them all off severely, and made them promise to remain silent and play down these events, which of course they did, not wanting to have their jobs put in jeopardy. After all, the modern UFO literature includes many personal testimonials of such intimidation following serious Visitor phenomena. And this had quite obviously been a very major

event, taking place over a very wide area. There must have been literally thousands of witnesses as well as the people who had jammed the switchboards. Such an unexpectable global phenomenon, drawing in reports from Llandudno to Southport, and from far inland as well, would have posed a serious problem to 'Big Bro', but the contingency miraculously contained it using the usual tools and procedures: threat and fear.

The radio stations had received a visit from 'Department X' personnel who brow-beat and frightened them into cooperating with the usual tired old lie, and they have remained silent - ever since . . . it is *that* which scares me.

Threats against honest witnesses to novel and unusual phenomena, that always prevent or drastically delay timely and appropriate disclosures, are far more chilling than the Visitors presence, and speak volumes about the character of the men who think it wise to keep the world in darkness. I believe, along with a great many others that it is these people we should regard as dangerously 'alien' rather than the Visitors.

### **'The radio stations had received a visit from 'Department x' personnel'**

The whole fantastic event was from that moment on, demeaned and downgraded on every following local news programme. Ridiculed and side-lined it evaporated in a few short days, and those thousands of people who had witnessed this astonishing other-worldly apparition had been betrayed yet again. So, with the collusion of the local media the authorities 'asked' us to believe that the event had been caused by vandals. *Three* versions of explanation were offered during the hours that followed the initial typically jocular denial. These 'vandals' had thrown a beer-barrel, then a bedstead, and finally a mattress onto the railwaylines down near Saint Michael's station. So *this* is what was responsible for the electrical effects and the luminous phenomena?

It is worth noting that the 'big wheel's' central disc had been hovering directly above Saint Michael's in the Hamlet church, some distance from the Mersey Rail station, so far as we could see from our vantage in Linnet Lane the wheel was fixed there for the entire duration of the event, completely stationary except for its steady rotation.

The other fan-shaped white light-form, the first one we saw, disappeared at the same time as the main one, indicating the two were connected. I took some professional advice on this quite insane and inadequate explanation from an electrical engineer (he was Test Manager at Plessey's). Colin told me that there was just *no way* a short-circuit down in the railway cutting could produce the effects above Saint Michael's at such a distance, and more than 900 feet up inside the clouds too. The voltage and current used to supply the electric trains is simply not powerful enough. And I fully agree with Colin's assessment.

In any case, these were not at all like any kind of *corona discharge* . . . they were much more like *auroral* phenomena; they were soft and sort of organic - looking. They also gave the distinct impression they were *under control* . . . being *consciously directed*... and I find it difficult to understand how a bedstead (or a mattress, or a beer-keg) on the railway lines could give Neil the impression that his *soul* had been temporarily removed from his body. It was in fact a truly **Awesome** experience.

Neither do I understand how a bedstead on the tracks could cause scores of people to panic and run for cover, (a fact that was reported on the radio, and luckily I do have *this* on tape) some of whom tried to hide underneath motor cars!

It was *Holy Terror* causing that reaction, not a bit of casual vandalism - objects are regularly being hurled onto the lines around Liverpool, but the effects are not observed from as far afield as *Southport* and *Llandudno* for heaven's sake! It would take the genius of **Nikola Tesla** to broadcast power *that* far!

Maybe that was why a secretive cadre of RAF specialists arrived early the next day to inspect the site. Perhaps it was in fact a 'flying bedstead' and that was why the spooks were around. This

technical team initially operated out of the TAVR H.Q. in Alexandra Drive, I know this because my mother told me, she worked in the post-room at the time and therefore knew everything that went on, I have absolutely no reason to doubt her word.

So, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February my friend Nick and I drove down into the 'epicentre' in his Hackney cab to do a bit of stealthy as hell reconnaissance. Using a taxi was a sneaky idea, we would have attracted less attention from the spooks deployed on point. Nick had not been a witness to this incredible phenomenon, but he had heard the buzz on the intercom system running round his fellows and picked-up the evasive and stupid coverage on the radio. He too wanted to learn more about what exactly it was that had happened to generate such intriguing but quite silly reportage. He lived quite close to the station, in Amptill Road at this time. The taxi didn't attract any unwanted attention, at least none that we were aware of, and we saw no military presence in the area. I did not learn about their presence on the scene until the evening of that day when my mother told me of it.

***'He was met  
with a suspicious and  
almost hostile response  
from the staff.  
No one was willing to  
discuss the  
matter'***

However, we did take note of a number of slightly distorted and heavily discoloured lengths of discarded rail track. They looked as if they could have been recently removed from the permanent way – and were lying by the side of the now active lines down in the cutting, approximately where the fan – shaped lightform seemed to have emanated from. We also found out that there had been a train en-route at the time of the events travelling towards Liverpool. Apparently, as the train was negotiating the curve leading up to Saint Michael's the driver applied the brakes and brought it to a stop. He then went to the trouble of carefully ushering the

passengers to the *rearmost* doors and escorted them off the train, a pretty drastic measure . . . it makes you wonder what the hell he saw. The fact that the shuttle was under power before it encountered, whatever it was the driver eyeballed means that there was still power being drawn and therefore no circuit-breakers had kicked-in to cut-off the juice. I remember the time a couple of decades previously when a length of cable was thrown onto the conductor cables of the main rail lines from the Penny Lane bridge. This resulted in a violent explosion and the total breakdown of electrical supply to the local system. Clearly, since the aforesaid train was not denied power, and had to be stopped by the driver, there was no short-circuit in this case. So what did the driver see ahead of the train that caused him to take the action of evacuating it? And why did he decide to deny the passengers a view of what was ahead of it? Was it something that scared him, and if so, why?

Subsequently, probably unadvisedly, I made my own enquiries at Saint Michael's, asking the staff if they had any recall of the events, which they said they didn't. I even posted a notice in the station requesting anyone with any information to respond to the contact address/ phone number listed thereon. Predictably I never did receive any response.

A few years later, our paranormal investigation group decided to see if we could obtain any new information about it all by approaching the local radio stations and also delving into the microfiche newspaper records in the central libraries.

John Hall approached Radio Merseyside in a polite attempt to achieve this, but he was met with a suspicious and almost hostile response from the staff, which rendered this avenue of inquiry quite useless. No one was willing to discuss the matter.

The newspaper records when we found them were also rather perplexing to us. We all agreed that it looked like some further manipulation of the facts had occurred since the events of 31<sup>st</sup> January 1985, and that there was absolutely nothing more we could excavate from the extant, but suspiciously sparse data. No other witnesses have come forward, and even if some do one bright and truthful day, these

events will probably remain a total mystery.

I remain grateful that I was privileged to witness it with someone whose quest for truth has been at least as tenacious as mine, a quest I hope, ultimately will reward him with full justification (in the Egyptian sense of the word). I'm sure it will, because he loves Egypt even as I do, tho' his affaire began much earlier than mine. This event was not connected with Egypt, and it might not have even been anything to do with UFOs. I sensed it as being more . . . angelic in nature, rather than 'prosaically ET if you grasp my meaning. As we gazed out of the window at the majestic wheel of light, crammed into the tiny space together, there in the window frame, I must say that I've never, ever felt *so close* to another human being. It was a sense of deep brotherhood and intimacy unique to my experience in this life. And it wasn't anything to do with fear.

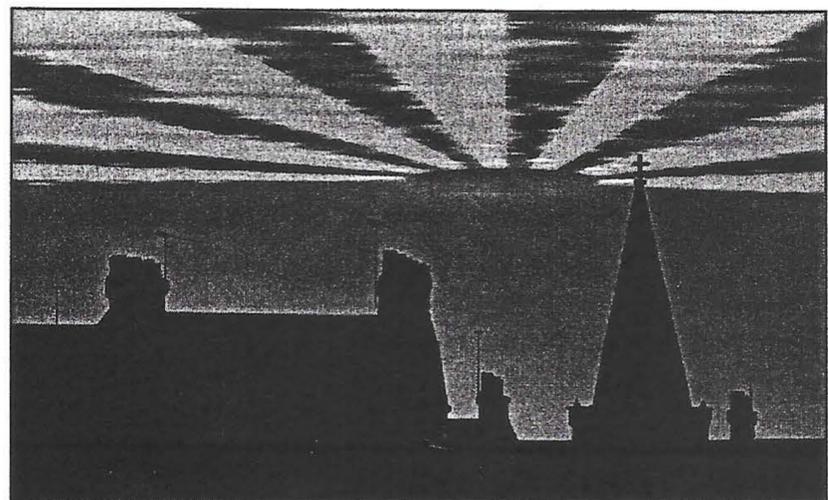
My heart was racing like a jack-hammer – I reached my hand out to check Neil's cardiac condition, and of course, it was pounding fit to bust just like mine.

Encounters with the entirely wondrous tend to draw people together into an unspoken ongoing conspiracy that transcends the mundane forever.

As Dr. Paul Brunton wrote on being asked by the Shade of the Egyptian High Priest while spending his Night in the Great Pyramid: "Are not mortal ways enough for thee?" He replied:

"No. Never could they be".

It was no coincidence that he and I were together for this encounter 



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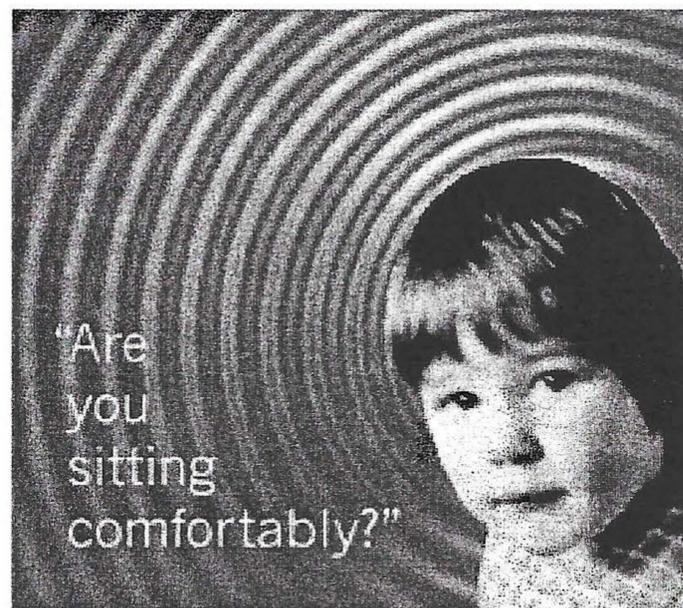
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# About MARA

## Group Co-ordinators

Robert Bethel

Bill Bimson

Mike Jaega

Mark Rosney

Peter Tiernan

## 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 also welcome letters, articles and advertisements from non MARA members. MARA does not pay for articles from outside sources, however it will mean that your article or research will reach a wider audience of people involved in the paranormal.

Please send your letters and articles to:

**Eileen Shaw**  
eileenshaws@yahoo.co.uk

or  
**13f Parkfield Road,**  
**Liverpool, L17 8UG**

**No personal visits please!**

MARA reserves the right to edit all submissions as necessary.

**T**he 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. It aims to collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to anomalous phenomena.

The association will also co-operate with persons and organisations engaged in similar research in all parts of the country. MARA also provides data for undergraduate and post-graduate students who are researching into anomalous phenomena.

MARA consists of an informal group of people of all backgrounds and a variety of ages over 18. The group limits 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 Merseyside. Investigation by members has to be done at their own expense (*something other societies fail to mention*). Association members are open minded and objective in their approach and investigative training is given.

All members abide by a code of conduct, treating information pertaining to witnesses and cases with confidentiality. The Association and its members operate under the Data Protection Act. Membership application to MARA is free and space permitting, is open to any interested individuals. If you would like to apply to become a member of MARA, you will find a membership application form on the next page. Simply take a photocopy and return it to the address on the form.

The Association is jointly run by its group organisers, called co-ordinators. They 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 MARA 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 Society for Psychical Research, and works with the Association for Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena and the UFO Investigator's Network.

# PSYMAN SAYS Heacock

TODAY PSYMAN CO-HOSTS  
MOST HAUNTED WITH LIBBY  
MEADOWS...

WELCOME  
TO MOST  
HAUNTED LIVE,  
LIVE FROM A  
HAUNTED HOUSE  
THAT I GUARANTEE  
YOU'VE NEVER  
HEARD OF...



YES, I CAN ALREADY FEEL  
COLD DRAUGHTS AND COLD  
SPOTS THAT NOBODY ELSE  
WILL FEEL!

LATER, AFTER DAVID WELLS HAS  
FINISHED DOING HIS HAIR AND  
DAVID BULL HAS PUT ON HIS  
FAKE TAN, WE'LL SECRETLY LAUGH  
AT DEREK FOR OVER ACTING

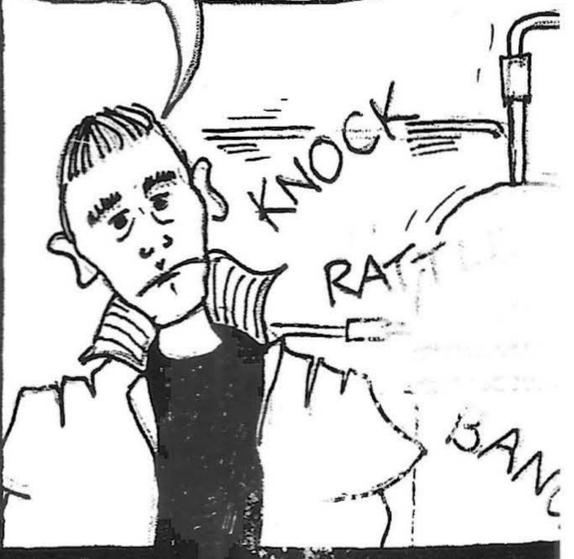
AND MYSELF AND  
SOME OF THE CREW  
WILL TRY AND GET  
KEIRON O'KEEFE TO  
SMILE.

BUT WAIT! FIRST WE HAVE  
TO GO LIVE TO THE CELLAR WHERE  
MOST HAUNTEDS ANSWER TO KENNETH  
WILLIAMS, RICHARD FELIX, IS  
TALKING TO THE BROKEN CENTRAL  
HEATING BOILER

DID YOU JUST  
TOUCH ME?

IS ANYONE THERE?

IT'S ANSWERING BACK, OH MY  
GOD, GHOSTS EXIST! TELL  
YOU, GHOSTS EXIST...



THAT'S GREAT RICHARD AND ENSURES  
THAT LIVING TV WILL CONTINUE  
PAYING A FORTUNE FOR THIS  
DROSS.

NOW IT'S BACK TO THE  
STUDIO SO THAT THE  
AUDIENCE CAN BOO AND  
THROW THINGS  
AT DR MATHEW  
SMITH FOR  
DARING NOT  
TO BELIEVE.

SO YOU DECIDE. A REAL SERIOUS  
INVESTIGATION INTO THE PARANORMAL  
OR A CRUDELY CONCOCTED MISH-MASH  
OF SCOOBY DOO, GHOSTWATCH AND THE  
BLAIR WITCH PROJECT..?

DID YOU HEAR THAT?  
DID YOU JUST TOUCH  
ME? I DONT LIKE  
THIS.  
I LIKE ORBS, I  
DO!



Heacock

