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UFO DATA

MAGAZINE

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UFO DATA MAGAZINE

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UFO DATA
MAGAZINE ISSUE 0



Russel Callaghan
Editor

Welcome to the first issue of the new look UFO DATA Magazine. It's almost three years since the unfortunate closure of Britain's only newsstand magazine dedicated to the UFO subject, but thanks to you great people out there in the UFO community, Michael and I, along with our colleagues, aim to fulfil Graham W. Birdsall's request that the magazine should carry on after his passing.

UFO DATA Magazine is dedicated to the great man who put the subject of UFOs, aliens and all that stuff that the media found hard to take seriously firmly on the map.

You can't buy this magazine in newsagents, so if your friends want a copy, point them in our direction.

Thanks for your support over the last year. You and you alone made all this happen.

Russel Callaghan

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In 1979, Scottish forestry worker, Robert 'Bob' Taylor, stumbled across what he described as 'a spaceship'. He claims he was somehow pulled to the ground by this strange craft and rendered unconscious.

Malcolm Robinson reports in detail

Back in the mid-90s, a young civil servant attracted the attention of the world's media. This young man was Nick Pope. Nick had been in charge of the UK's official UFO desk for three years and what's more he believed in UFOs. Nick left the Ministry in November. He talks to UFO DATA.

The name of Dr Roger Leir is associated with alleged alien implants and their removal from human victims. Recently, Roger and his team secured funding to carry out their twelfth such procedure.

How much proof do you need?

Plus page after page of UFO reports, accounts and personal experiences for you to digest. For future reference all correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, UFO DATA, PO BOX 280, Leeds. LS26 1AN - email: editor@ufodata.co.uk

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REMEMBER, REMEMBER IT'S THE 5TH NOVEMBER..



The saga surrounding the mysterious lights which have baffled locals and experts alike has recently been revived with a fresh spate of sightings.

Three locals have come forward to report seeing unusual objects in the sky, from blazing fireballs to light formations, which left drivers on the M4 braking to catch a glimpse.

The sightings will add to the enigma surrounding the lights. In late September, Newbury residents claimed to have witnessed triangular formations of lights hovering over Greenham Common and other parts of the district. So far, the MoD and the Met Office have been unable to account for the phenomena.

Christine Prater of Marsh Lane, Curridge, opened her bedroom curtains early on the Sunday morning of October 22nd to see two bright orange lights silently streaking across the sky at phenomenal speed. The sighting has left her wondering what

exactly she might have seen.

She said: "As I came back into the bedroom, I opened the curtains and in the sky there was a little light that caught my eye - two bright orangey lights side-by-side, literally whizzing across the sky from west to east. It was like fireworks with sparks flying out from the sides.

"It was going very fast, and it was not a plane. I thought at first it was but then when I looked it was going much too fast. I could not hear anything either - no noise. That's what I thought was so strange."

Anna Burnett of Lambourn said she was travelling eastbound along the M4 between junctions 13 and 14 on Tuesday when she saw three strange, bright lights over the motorway in a pyramid formation.

"One light suddenly disappeared and then the other two stayed for a while, and then disappeared also. The lights were so close together that it didn't

seem as though they were planes. Drivers were braking to see the lights."

Local resident Sadie Ives reported seeing a huge fireball moving across the sky last Thursday and is also searching for answers.

"At first I thought it was a hot-air balloon because of the flames, but then I thought there is no way that would be flying in the dark. Was there a meteor shower or is there any news of an aircraft on fire?" The answers to questions where a resounding 'No'.

UFO DATA

Could there be a simple explanation to this sighting.?

Having been active in UFO research and investigation for quite a few years now I have long learned that UFO reports throughout late October and early November turn out to be

a damp squib literally.

It's Bonfire season and I'm sure we are all aware that fireworks akin to small military ordinance are easily obtained and let off to either 'Oohs and Ahs' or 'Bloody idiots. Don't they know it's only October'-type remarks.

Although two of the comments from witnesses above refer to streaking and whizzing across the sky, we have no duration of the observation to refer to and a sceptical view would suggest fireworks, although the reference to sparks could well be a meteor or small pieces of space junk burning up in the upper atmosphere.

Both Michael and myself and our families were travelling back from Spain on the 4th November. It was a night flight, the skies were clear and the moment we crossed the channel travelling up the west coast of the UK to Liverpool, we could see thousands and thousands of pounds worth of fireworks going off continually. However, unlike the dramatic views we get in the back garden or at a display, it becomes obvious that at 30,000ft, the fireworks hardly seem to leave the ground and appear as a series of colourful flashes.

So in pointing to ground-based reports over this period, I would take fireworks into consideration, but if we had pilot or other airborne reports filed, I would not be so quick to include rockets etc.

The Achilles heel of ufologists these last few years is the fact that people have started to buy and release paper floating lanterns and a very high percentage of UFO reports covered in the mainstream press seem to describe these popular paper lanterns. When an observer claims the lights are making formations in the sky, you can bet your last dollar that they are seeing three light sources and, of course, if you put three points of light against a darkened sky, you will see a triangle. What's more, your eyes can even fill in the space between the dots, leading the observer to believe they can see a structured craft.

We have occasions where observers have reported and filmed clusters of these orange balls of light above well

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populated areas. Indeed at our recent Great British UFO Show, Rob Whitehead presented film from Fleetwood in Lancashire. Joanne and Danny England, their kids and several neighbours recorded lights on several occasions. These formations where not short-lived either and if paper lanterns with small burners under them are the answer to this particular series of events, then durations of several minutes of flight and the lack of any debris falling from the sky as a light extinguishes must be taken into consideration.

My own personal views on the floating lanterns are that they are a dangerous pastime, something like kids and matches. Once released, you are committing a burning, fuelled source that will travel uncontrolled. It will either burn out before coming back to earth or it will drop a paraffin or other fuel-soaked artefact to the ground. This could be a road or a car park or a tinder dry field or rubbish bins etc. I think our readers get the picture here.

What makes the better newspaper story:

Idiots Launch Flying Incendiary Devices at Party...

Or

Fleet of UFOs Spotted Over Village... ?

What it needs is for those who launch these devices without a thought for what could happen, to be charged with attempted arson or for somebody who suffers damage to property and hopefully not their person to sue for damages and win and then perhaps this idiotic society we live in can start to get priorities right.



Launching such devices might seem like harmless fun but in reality it is stupid and dangerous and UFO DATA Magazine in no way supports such activity.

Working in the field of ufology, one always comes across a 'classic case', something which stands head and shoulders above any other UFO case. Up until the famous A70 UFO abduction case of 1992 (more of which later), the incident that occurred near Livingston New Town in West Lothian back in November 1979, stood quite easily as Scotland's most baffling and puzzling UFO incident. This case came quite early in my UFO schooling and at a time when I only had a handful of cases under my belt. I became aware of this case when I heard a news broadcast about it on the radio and I quickly made steps to speak with the witness involved.

Because of the enormity of the case, and as I was basically a lone shark in Scottish ufological waters (there were basically no other serious Scottish UFO researchers around at this time bar Stuart Campbell, and at this time I had not even founded my research group, Strange Phenomena Investigations), I decided to call upon the services of a long time friend of mine, Sandy Craw.

I asked Sandy if he would like to accompany me on my visit to interview the witness. Sandy had actually been on a hiking trip with me to Loch Ness that same year and I remember Sandy saying to me, "Well, Male, if I went with you to hunt for water monsters up at Loch Ness, I don't see any problem in following you up to Livingston to look for UFOs!" Sandy, as you'll appreciate by that comment, was quite a witty character, still is in fact. I have to admit that although Sandy didn't exactly share my intense enthusiasm for all things weird and wonderful, he was a good friend, someone you could trust and was someone who would enjoy an adventure, particularly if it was something which was slightly different from the norm, of which our planned visit to Livingston most certainly was. Our trip to Loch Ness had been a laugh from start to finish, but this time I knew that this was to be a more serious affair.

Here we had someone who had stated that he had come in close contact with a landed UFO. Could it be true ?

**THE ROBERT TAYLOR
INCIDENT.
DECHMONT WOODS,
(Near Livingston, West Lothian).
NOVEMBER 9th 1979.**

Did forestry worker Robert Taylor stumble across a craft from another world one cold afternoon?

SPI's Malcolm Robinson presents an in-depth study into one of Scotland's most puzzling cases to date.

IF YOU GO DOWN
TO THE WOODS TODAY



Robert Taylor

Was he telling the truth? Why come forward publicly with a story like this if it was all made up, what did he hope to achieve? These questions, and many more, went through my head as I constantly thought about my approaching trip to Livingston. As I was to learn, the witness, 61 year old Robert Taylor, actually stayed in the small town of Deans, which is quite near to Livingston. I obtained his phone number, gave him a call and he explained to me that he would be more than happy to see me and explain what had happened to him. He informed me that a Mr Steuart Campbell was researching his case and although his house was awash with visitors and press people, he would still like to see me. I thanked him and gave him a date when I would call.

I remember that day as if it was yesterday. The day was cold with a frosty nip in the air. It had snowed that night and a fair sprinkling of snow was to be found all around the countryside. I have in my possession a photograph of myself taken on that day and it shows me with a bright red nose, which if I remember correctly, was commented on by Sandy no end!!

We arrived at Robert Taylor's house to find it a hive of activity. There were newspaper journalists everywhere, and Mary, Robert Taylor's wife (who sadly passed away a few years ago), was busily running back and forth with numerous cups of tea and plates of bis-

cuits for the crowd of people who had invaded her house. Believe me, it was pandemonium! Also in presence that day, were two BUFORA investigators, Martin Keatman and Andrew Collins. Andrew Collins would later go on to participate in what's known as 'Psychic Questing', which essentially is the hunt for hidden treasure and artifacts using psychic mediums as a means to find and locate where these items lay. Books such as 'The Eye Of Fire' and 'The Green Stone', make absolutely fascinating reading and I would recommend these books to the reader.

In the melee of bodies in the house, I managed to find a place on the settee and sat down with Robert, where he began to tell me all what had happened to him, all of which I managed to capture on audio tape. The following information is a combination of my recorded interview that I had with Robert that day and also other notes taken from Robert at the scene of the incident.

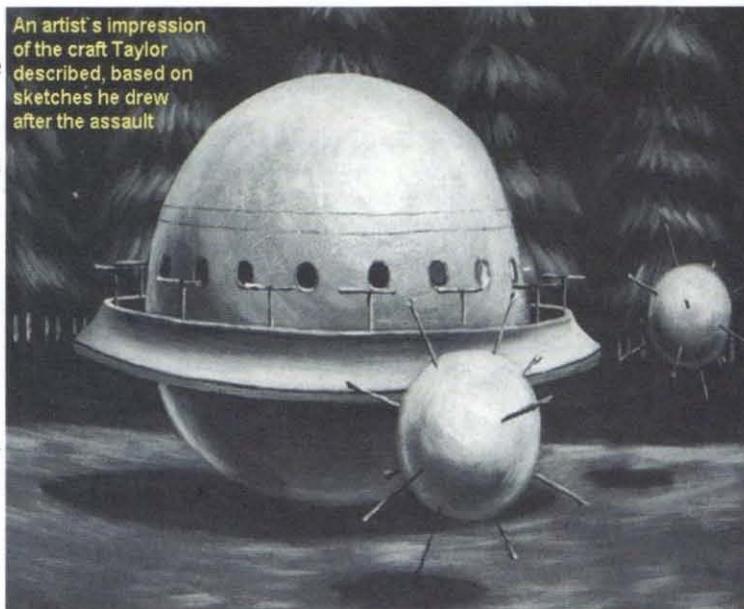
THE INCIDENT IN DECHMONT WOODS.

On the morning of November the 9th, 1979, Robert Taylor, who was employed by the Livingston Development Corporation (Forestry Department) as a foreman forester was driving his departmental truck towards an area of forest known as Dechmont. He was accompanied on his journey by his pet dog, Larra. It was a pleasant morning, fresh with broken cloud and snow had been forecast for later on that night.

He continued his journey to a point where he had to alight from his truck and continue on foot due to the state of the ground, which was quite muddy. The time was around 10:10am when Robert rounded a corner in the forest which took him out into a clearing. He had walked this path many times before in his daily duties, which on this day was to look out for any stray sheep that might have entered the

forest. As he rounded this corner into this clearing, he was absolutely stunned to observe a large, dome-shaped object hovering just above the grass. He stood transfixed, not believing his eyes. They say that seeing is believing, but what was before him now was something totally out of the ordinary and something which he had never before encountered in his life. He continued to stare at this object, taking in as much detail as he could. This object, he states, was dark grey all over and was roughly textured, it was also completely silent. It had a flange going around its circumference of which sticking up from this flange, were several spikes. Robert prefers to call them propellers, although these did not rotate. He also noticed above the flange, several dark, circular spaces, which he 'felt' were windows, although he could not be too sure about this. As if this spectacle wasn't strange enough, as he continued to stare, he then noticed that parts of this circular object began to disappear and he could see the young trees in the background begin to show through the 'hull' of this object. Seconds later, those parts which had seemed to dematerialise solidified again and he was once more looking at a solid object.

The only sound at this point was the sound of his dog, Larra, barking furiously beside him. Suddenly, what resembled Second World War sea mines, similar to the kind that were regularly dropped in the North Atlantic, descended from beneath the bottom of this object and started to rush towards him. By now Robert was frantic. This cannot be happening, he thought to himself. Rooted to the spot



An artist's impression of the craft Taylor described, based on sketches he drew after the assault

in sheer fear, he observed that the colour and texture of these small spherical balls were exactly the same as the larger object. As they came towards him, the spikes of these balls made a strange sucking or 'popping' noise on the grass. Soon, both balls were either side of him, where he then experienced a 'spike' from each ball had attached itself to each side of his trousers just below his pockets. He then felt a strong tug pulling him strongly in the direction of the larger object. As this was going on, he smelled a strong, powerful odour, hanging around in the air. He likened the smell to that of burning brake linings, it was a choking acrid smell which he could taste in the back of his mouth.

He also became aware of a sound similar to that of a cane if you 'swished it through the air'. At this point, whether through fear or of this terrible pungent smell, he lost consciousness and fell sharply to the ground.

It has been estimated by the timing of the events, that Robert Taylor lay unconscious for around twenty minutes, after which he regained consciousness and found that he could not speak, nor could he walk as he had lost the power of both legs. He also had a very dry throat and a powerful headache and, if this wasn't enough, he also felt very sick and had a burning sensation on his chin. Robert managed to crawl back to his truck, but unfortunately could not speak on the two-way radio, due to his loss of voice. Not only this, but he had managed to get his truck stuck in a ditch and was unable to free it. Deciding that he just had to get home, he managed to walk, taking a shortcut home through fields and woods, arriving at his front door around 11:15am.

When Robert's wife first saw her husband, she initially thought that he had been assaulted, such was the state and distress he was in, plus his clothes were all torn and muddy. Robert managed to tell her (his voice had returned on the journey home) that he had seen a 'spaceship' in the woods. Thinking that he must be confused, she telephoned her husband's boss, Mr Malcolm Drummond, and also their local doctor, a Mr Gordon Adams.

It wasn't long before both arrived and Robert proceeded to tell them what he

had encountered in the woods. Listening to this incredible tale unfold, both men were startled to hear Robert's description of what he had encountered, both men knew him well, well enough to state that Robert was not a teller of tall tales or would invent things just for the fun of it. Robert was a sound and rational man, a man not prone to invention, and a man with no interest whatsoever in flying saucers or 'men from Mars', this was not in his agenda.

The doctor stated that he would like to get Robert to a hospital as soon as possible for a check up. His preliminary check up showed that Robert was not suffering from any head injury or neurological disorder. His blood pressure appeared normal and, other than a graze under his chin and slight shock, he appeared fine. Still, he felt that Robert should be admitted to hospital for a full examination, just to make sure. This he did, and both Robert and his wife went along with the doctor to the nearby Bangour Hospital, where Robert awaited his check up.

Whilst Robert was at the hospital, his boss, Malcolm Drummond, and also some of the other forestry workers, went into Dechmont Woods to the scene of the incident to see if there were any signs which would validate Robert's claims. There were. Malcolm and the others observed around 40 holes in the grass and also two 'track like marks', evidence that 'something had clearly happened', but what they could only guess. Back at

the hospital, Robert had grown tired of waiting to see another doctor and decided to discharge himself. This was partly due to not only being fed up waiting, but also because

he was taking a family holiday that weekend with his wife down to England and wanted to get home and get ready for this trip.

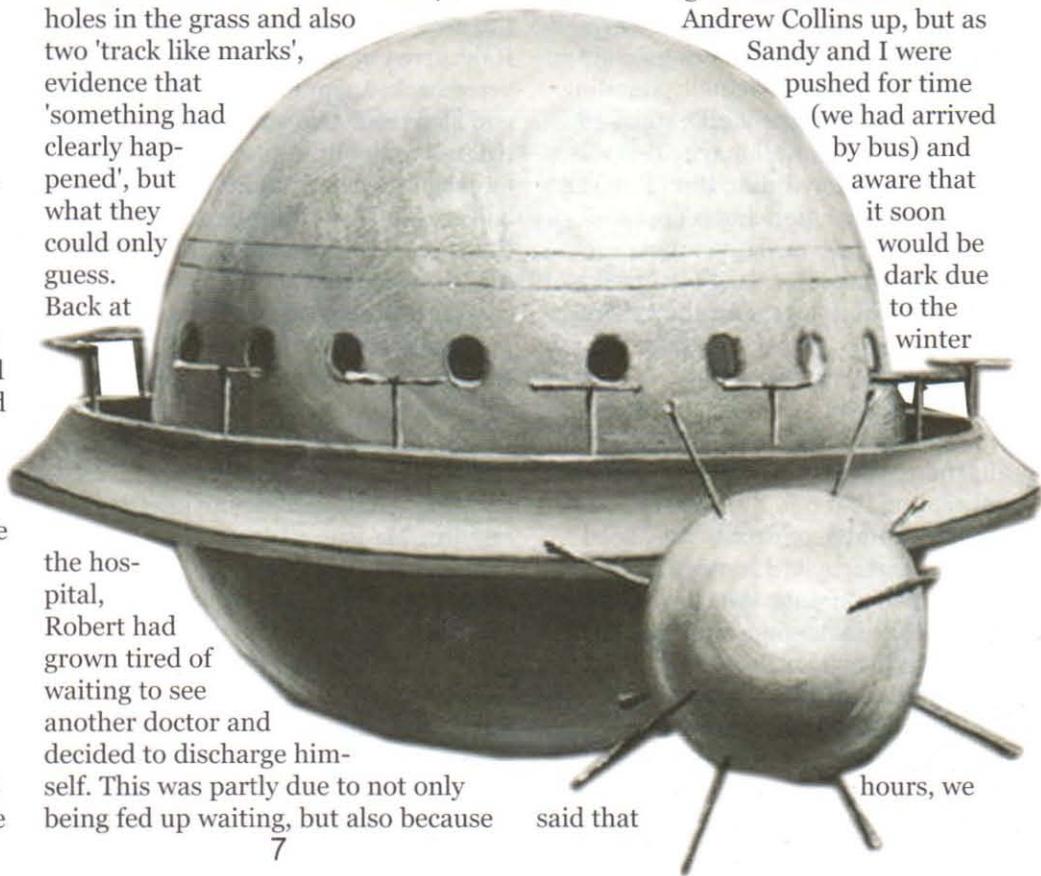
In fellow researcher Stuart Campbell's excellent article on this case, featured in the magazine *URIP*, Vol. 1 No. 2 1982, he states that, "Surrounding the tracks were 40 holes exposing fresh earth. Each hole was about 10 cm across and no more than 10 cm deep. The holes did not have any particular shape and did not appear to have been made by any artefact or tool. The earth in the holes was not compressed. New growth in 1980, showed no sign of the marks nor any other defect".

The Livingston Police had also been notified of this incident and, after interviewing Mr Taylor, had quickly visited the scene and roped-off the area for their own forensic people to conduct their investigation.

Back at the home of Robert Taylor, I sat deep in thought at what he had just told me. It sounded incredible and I detected no signs that Robert (Bob) was telling me lies. He sounded credible and it really looked like he *did* see what he had claimed to see (whatever that was!). I asked Bob the best way to get up to Dechmont Woods and visit the scene of this incident and he told me to hang on for a short while as he was taking Martin Keatman and

Andrew Collins up, but as Sandy and I were pushed for time (we had arrived by bus) and aware that it soon would be dark due to the winter

hours, we said that



we unfortunately couldn't wait and would have to make our way just now. After receiving directions from Bob, we thanked him for his time and made our way to visit the scene of the incident.

We arrived in Dechmont Woods only to get lost, hopelessly lost. I guess Sandy and I must have trekked over every part of Dechmont Woods bar the right part, and what made matters worse was the fact that it had snowed the previous night and, in some areas, it was quite deep. Cold, wet, tired and feeling slightly down, we almost gave up hope of finding the area. Thankfully, due to our incessant walking around in circles, we stumbled into the right area to find Bob Taylor showing Martin and Andrew where the incident had occurred.

Climbing over the wire fence that the police had erected, we entered the main area of the sighting. Bob and the two BUFORA investigators had carefully brushed away the fall of snow of which one could now see the grass and the marks contained within it. Sandy and I took many photographs of these marks, but not only that, I had with me that morning an old cine camera and I rattled off a number of feet of film. Even today, I can still recall standing in that area, two days after it happened. There honestly was a strange sense of 'something', I don't know what, but you could feel it in the air. Of course this could just be my imagination and after hearing an incredible tale, to be actually standing in the location where it all happened with the witness, well maybe this was why I felt the way I did. But I'll never forget that sensation and it's something that I have never again experienced anywhere in any of my investigations both ufological or the spiritual!!

Standing looking down at these strange marks in the grass that late afternoon was something else and the only sound that one could hear, was the faint rumble of cars as they sped down the nearby M8 Motorway (which really wasn't that far away from the scene of the incident, around 50 feet or so, but heavily obscured by trees). In the stillness and crispness of the air, I faced my hand-held audio tape recorder in the way of Robert as he broke the silence by saying some more details of his experience to Andrew.

Was I standing in an area where a spaceship from another world had touched down? Okay, it sounds fanciful, but honestly, at that time and after having listened to Bob's testimony and having a chance to actually view these marks in the grass myself, well maybe it didn't sound so fanciful after all!! After taking several more photographs, we said our farewells to Robert, Martin and Andrew and headed off to catch



our bus home. Just before we left, though, Andrew Collins turned round to me and said, "You know, Malcolm, I'm aware of a similar case to this one. It occurred in South America a few years back. A similar object was seen and also these two small, spherical balls as well, but in that case, the difference was that as those two spherical balls rushed out from the larger object, they proceeded to 'explode' in front of the witness! Thank goodness it didn't happen here". Yeah, too true.

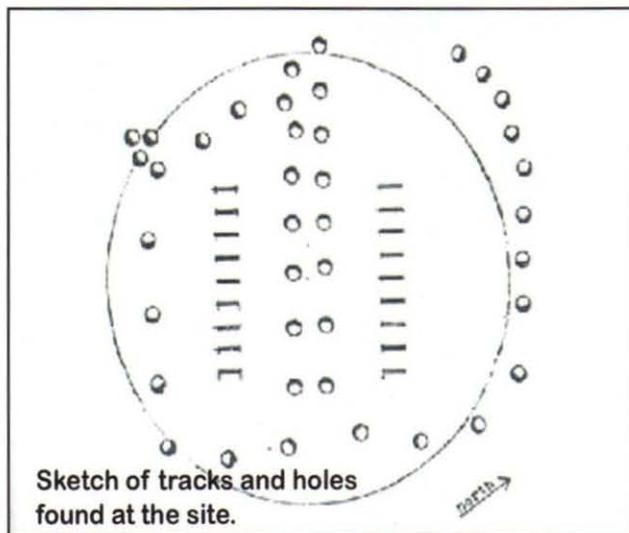
By now the darkness was creeping in and the temperatures were falling rapidly. My feet, which I could feel at the beginning of the day, I now could not. Now I've never ever told the following story as I didn't think much of it at the time but here it is for what it's worth: Looking up into that

darkening winter sky as I made my way home, I saw a bright, white light, move erratically about. Was it a plane? Perhaps, although I must say that it sure didn't look like one!! I arrived home tired but amazed. Moreover, the day's events had left a lasting impression on my mind which remains with me to this day. Cases as big as this are few and far between and to work on a case as big as this one early in my ufological career, well it was too good to be true. And this one case was to fuel the fire of my enthusiasm for many years to come and these days I reflect upon it fondly. Let us now look more deeper at this case and the other relevant points that came out of it.

THE POLICE INVESTIGATION...

As we have learned, the police were called out to investigate this case and fenced off the area in order for their own forensic people to go over the area. They were also interested in Robert Taylor's trousers, as they had been torn during his experience and they wanted to inspect them to see if they could find a rational explanation to account for the tears.

In Stuart Campbell's excellent study of the case featured in the magazine, *Journal of Transient Aerial Phenomena*, Vol. 1 No. 2 March 1980, Stuart states that a small hole could be seen just below each tear on each trouser leg and also that the police forensic scientist who inspected these trousers explained that neither of the tears or holes were caused by burning. He was sure that the cause of these tears could only have been achieved by



a 'strong mechanical pull upwards', or by the person wearing them jumping downwards and catching his trousers on projections.

The police scientist, L. Knibb, also stated that the tears could not have been made by a single pointed object like a nail, as the tears' breadth indicated a broad attachment. Bob's undergarment, which in point of fact was long johns (to keep out the winter cold no doubt!), were also torn. They showed an S-shaped hole on the outside of the left leg which corresponded with the large tear in that leg of the trousers. Sadly, although we still have Robert Taylor's trousers, we no longer have his long johns.

Steuart Campbell asked the question of Robert if these tears in his trousers could not have been made on his journey home, as he stumbled through the forest. Bob, however, strongly denies this. The grass at the scene of the incident was not scorched. Soil samples were taken by the police, one from one of the many holes in the grass and one from a molehill several yards away. These were subjected to X-ray fluorescence and, although the concentration of Mn, Rb and Pb was higher in the sample from one of the holes, this difference was reckoned to be a natural variation that can sometimes be found in the soil. Surprisingly, although the soil had been fairly soft at the time of the incident, the holes in the grass only went into the grass and did not go into the soil below. I can vouch for that for having seen all these marks in the grass and poked my fingers into them. No evidence of soil disturbance was to be found. Having interviewed Robert Taylor at length, the police are convinced that he is telling the truth and that he was not fabricating the whole story.

I interviewed Detective Sergeant Ian Wark of the Livingston Police, who himself was convinced of the testimony of Mr Taylor. He said that he had found Mr Taylor to have been of sound mind and never altered from his story. Detective Wark could not explain the marks left on the grass, and the whole incident had left him completely baffled.

MIXED OPINIONS ON THE ROBERT TAYLOR CASE.

So what did Robert Taylor actually

witness that day back in 1979? Was it a 'spaceship' as he himself felt it was? Or could the answer have a more rational and mundane answer?

Well, needless to say that there were many points of view on this one, not only from the press, but from the numerous researchers that then began to hear about it. The main researcher on this case was, as I've stated, Steuart Campbell, a respectable architect from Edinburgh who was, at that time, BUFORA's Regional Investigator Coordinator.

Steuart still researches the subject today and is well known for his sceptical views on the subject of UFOs. He does not believe that we are being visited by 'aliens', rather he believes that the answer is more mundane and can be found right here on Earth and that it is to do with either ball lightning, temperature inversion layers or mirages, which I'm sure a number of UFO sightings actually are. Steuart's views on the Livingston case, however, raised more than a casual eyebrow. Many people did not accept his findings and did not waste time in telling him so. So what were Steuart's findings that rankled many an investigator?

HYPOTHESIS ONE.

After Steuart had completed his investigation of the Livingston Incident, it was his considered opinion that what Mr Taylor had encountered in Dechmont Woods back in November 1979, was a rare form of 'black ball lightning' and not an 'alien spacecraft'. Coming across this 'black ball lightning', Bob then suffered an epileptic fit which somehow induced a subsequent hallucination which took the form of a 'circular flying saucer'. To be fair, Steuart himself still had problems with his theory, but taking into consideration all the available evidence, it did seem the appropriate one. Seven years later (1986), Steuart, after giving much thought and new consideration to this case, came up with another explanation to account for the Livingston Incident.

HYPOTHESIS TWO.

This time, Steuart believed that what Mr Taylor had encountered that fateful morning, was not 'black ball lightning' but a 'mirage of Venus' (!).

Steuart stated that as Mr Taylor entered the clearing in Dechmont Woods, he saw a mirage of the planet Venus which was slightly above the nearby Deer Hill which faced him. This mirage somehow induced an epileptic seizure on Bob. To explain better this new hypothesis, I'll quote in part from Steuart's article, *Livingston, A New Hypothesis*, featured in the *Journal of Transient Aerial Phenomena*, September 1986, page 80. This is what, in part, he had to say:

"I decided to try the astronomical hypothesis on the Livingston case, despite the fact that the incident occurred in broad daylight. The result was surprising. Venus, at magnitude 3.7, lay at only three degrees altitude, 3 degrees 13 minutes with normal refraction on a bearing of 138 degrees, almost precisely the direction in which Taylor was looking. More over, Mercury was at 2 degrees 15 minutes with normal refraction, on a bearing of 139 degrees, ie they were in close conjunction. Could the incident have been initiated by the sight of Venus and Mercury?"

Steuart goes on to state that it is accepted that bright stars and planets *can* be seen during daylight hours, and bright lights, of which Venus would have been a pinprick of light, may have been sufficient to stimulate Bob Taylor's epileptic seizure, especially scintillating lights, which even at low altitude Venus will show.

Astronomy alone cannot explain this incident, Steuart relates, and to give a more fuller account to explain the incident, he states that one needs to look at meteorological optics and the fact that low altitude astronomical objects are particularly susceptible to atmospheric distortion, especially mirages. A superior mirage, we are told, is where an image appears above the object. This can result from atmospheric temperature inversions, where cold air underlies warmer air.

However, it was also the close proximity of the planet Mercury to Venus, which also assisted this mirage effect to become more prominent, and Steuart goes on to speculate in his article that inversions and the brightening of such lights seen through inversions, can appear to rush towards the observer, just like the two

spikey balls that Bob Taylor said rushed towards him. Stuart believes that they were, in fact, the planets Venus and Mercury. The spikey rods on these lights/planets, were in actual fact caused by distortion in the eye. Stuart also uncovered the fact that the Livingston Development Corporation (Forestry Department) had been undertaking work near this clearing in the woods laying drainage pipes, so could the marks in the grass be a direct result of this?

Not so, said the L.D.C. They did not deny the fact that they had been completing work in the woods and further stated that where they had been working, was nowhere near the scene of the incident itself. Indeed, work had ceased in October, the month before the UFO encounter. Stuart still felt that the marks on the grass had a mundane explanation which probably had to do with something lying on top of the grass which caused these indentations.

This of course may be the case, but why if these obstructions were removed, were there no signs of any discoloration to the grass? Stuart also believed that, even though Bob denied it, he still felt that the tears in Bob's trousers were made either as he lay prone and unconscious on the forest floor, or when he was stumbling as he made his way back home.

In conclusion then, Stuart Campbell is of the opinion that his Astronomical Hypothesis is the correct one and offers a good explanation to account for the Livingston Incident, that Bob saw a mirage of Venus through a temperature inversion layer which then sent him into an epileptic fit. The ground marks and the torn trousers have no connection with Robert Taylor's visual experience.

THE AUTHOR'S HYPOTHESIS.

My own feelings in regards to the Bob Taylor Incident, is that he saw what he saw! He believes it to be a 'spaceship' and who are we to tell him otherwise? I'm not saying that Stuart Campbell's views should not be taken into consideration, of course they should. We should always look at the other side of the coin and Mr Campbell is to be applauded for his contribution to this case. Can we safely say in our heart that Stuart is not

right? I don't agree with him, but I do accept that his opinions should be given some thought and I'm sure that the temperature inversion layers and mirages may well account for a good deal of classic UFO cases, but to say, as Stuart does, that they explain *all* UFO cases, is in my opinion, stretching it a bit too far.

I honestly believe (not that I want to or have to!) that Bob Taylor saw a 'machine', a spherical shaped craft, call it what you will. I'm not happy with the mirage and epileptic seizure. Indeed, in a letter to the author from witness, Robert Taylor, dated 18th of April, 1988, he states:

"I can still see everything that happened that morning just as if it were yesterday, so there is no way that any silly stories of Ball Lightning or Venus peeping over Deer Hill can change my mind. I remember, Malcolm, that you were up at Dechmont Woods the day after the incident and saw all the markings on the ground. Just think, if you had been within ten yards of this vehicle and were even in contact with part of it, all the research will make no difference. I don't expect to see anything like this again." In an earlier letter that I received from Bob, he made the cutting comment, "If only my dog could talk."

MORE RESEARCH

People have asked me if hypnosis was ever conducted on Robert Taylor and I have to tell them that sadly it was. And what I mean by sadly is that someone arranged to have Bob Taylor hypnotically regressed by a stage hypnotist by the name of Robert Halpern. Robert was a well-known, seasoned stage performer and someone who brought a lot of laughter to an audience as he had people eating onions thinking that what they were really eating was an apple. These stage hypnotists are ten-a-penny on the club circuit and although I have no problem whatsoever with stage hypnotists (indeed I even went under one myself many years ago), I feel that their role in the subject of UFO cases should be left to the more professional hypnotherapists.

Under the spell of Robert Halpern, Robert Taylor was taken back to that eventful morning of November 9th, 1979. He relived the whole episode in

great detail again, but for those who may have hoped that 'something else' may have transpired, a UFO abduction perhaps, were to be disappointed, for Bob only went as far as his recall of being pulled by these two spikey balls in the direction of the large circular object. At this, his mind went blank and refused to give up any more secrets (if there were any that is !!). No matter how hard Robert Halpern tried, no further recall was had from that unconscious moment.

As for the famous trousers that Bob wore on that eventful morning, after the police examination, they were forwarded on to BUFORA, where they remained for a number of years. That was until the middle 1980s, when researcher Philip Mantle felt that they should return to Scotland and was kind enough to pass them on to me. I have kept them ever since.

I'll be returning to the subject of these trousers later, for now, though, I'd like to tell the humorous story about a return visit that I made to the site of the Livingston Incident with two English ufologists and a good friend of mine.

It was June 1988 and Philip Mantle and David Kelly of BUFORA were paying a visit to Scotland primarily to visit the scene of the Livingston Incident. They had asked that I show them where this occurred and since they were coming to Scotland, I had said to them that they might also like to visit Robert Taylor who had now retired and was living a quiet life in the small Perthshire town of Blairgowrie. So a date was set and, after meeting up with both Philip and David and also Frank McKay an SPI member, we took off on our journey to visit Robert Taylor.

Arriving in Blairgowrie, we were made most welcome by Robert and his wife and after a few moments we were in deep discussion with Robert about what he had experienced. Listening to Bob, I noted that he never altered from his story. Nine years had elapsed since the time of his encounter and he still stated that he could remember it as if it was yesterday with no added 'new bits' just to 'jazz' the story up. He told it as he recalled it and no more. After our meeting with Bob, we then travelled over to Dechmont Woods. Arriving

there, I observed that a great deal had changed since my last visit, which had been 6 years previously when I had attended a BUFORA National Congress in Edinburgh in which a party of delegates had visited the site. Looking around, I could see that many new houses had been built in the area. Not only that, many trees had been felled and a number of new pathways had been constructed throughout the woods. The golf course, which had been adjacent to Dechmont Woods, had been extended and had now encroached quite near to the scene of the incident. Also, a number of picnic tables and benches had been placed at certain parts throughout the woods. One could see then that the Livingston Development Corporation were encouraging members of the public into the woods, to enjoy a walk, which is no bad thing. However, all the change had yours truly quite confused and I found myself in the embarrassing position of being a Scottish researcher who had been involved in this famous Scottish case and supposedly knowing where it occurred, going round in circles hopelessly lost and pretending to his English colleagues that it was just around the next bend. Philip Mantle was not easily fooled and made many a joke, one of which, if I remember correctly, was that it would be easier to find a Yeti in Dechmont Woods than to find the scene of the incident!! And the way things were going, he was almost right! At last, I admitted defeat and said to Philip, David and Frank, "I think I'm lost, chaps." Not to be outdone, I decided to venture alone out onto the golf course, where I hoped to meet up with a golfer and ask him if he knew where the incident had occurred. As it was, I stumbled across three young golfers where I asked, "Do any of you know where the UFO came down in 1979?" "Yes, mister," came the reply. "Over and beyond Deer Hill over there." Ah, now I'm getting somewhere, I thought. The next statement uttered by yours truly is quite funny, looking back on it now, but if taken wrongly by any of these three young golfers, could have landed me well and truly in it, for I followed up my last statement with, "Well, would you come into the woods and show me where, I'll pay you for this information." Hesitantly and after looking at each other for some moments, they replied, "Okay," and so the four of us trooped

off the golf course in search of the famous location. We found it and I parted with my promised money. It's only now, looking back on this situation, that my honest intentions could have been misread by these young golfers as some sort of wood-dwelling pervert out to annoy them. It wasn't until I told this story to Phil, Dave and Frank, that they roared with laughter at my attempt to lure young kids into the woods. Upon their laughter, I realised then that my actions could have landed me in a lot of bother. That situation is still referred to today in the company of Philip Mantle in which I cringe with embarrassment with his every telling of the story, especially in front of others. This in a sense, is the fun side of ufology and researchers will always find something to laugh about. Ufology is not always the serious subject that it appears, I'm quite sure that there are many other researchers 'out there' who could tell a funny tale or two. By the way, when we did eventually find the location, we were all surprised to see that the Livingston Development Corporation had placed a picnic table and benches slap bang in the centre of where Robert Taylor had his famous encounter. I later made enquiries about this to see if this was placed due to their knowledge that this was where a UFO encounter had taken place. Their response was that they only placed that picnic table and benches there, simply because it was an open spot in the woods and not because it was where Robert Taylor had had his encounter. As we left the area that

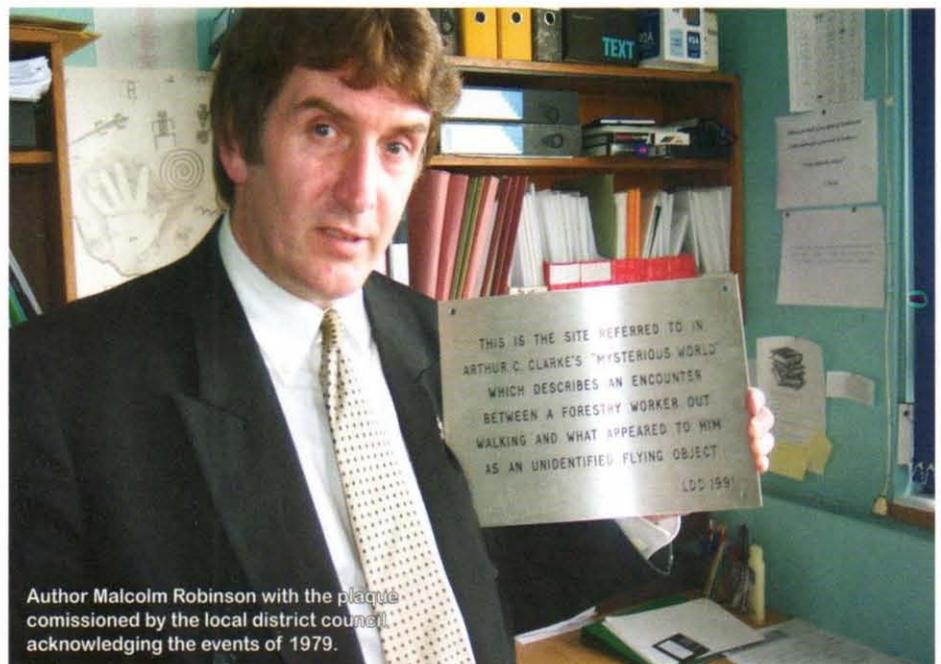
day, I remember Philip Mantle turning round to me in the car and saying, "You know, Malcolm, wouldn't it be great if this spot was recognised by a monument or something?" At that he turned round and looked back at the road. That brief statement was to fuel an idea that not only myself, but fellow researcher, Ron Halliday, had, that something should indeed be placed at the scene of the Livingston Incident, which, in a way, would commemorate it for all time. It wouldn't be until 4 years later that those words by Philip would come to fruition.

We continue with the research surrounding this case in on page 55 of UFO DATA Magazine.

The case is one of Scotland's most famous and both ufologists and sceptics have had their say.

Back in 1979 something happened to Robert Taylor something that changed his life forever...

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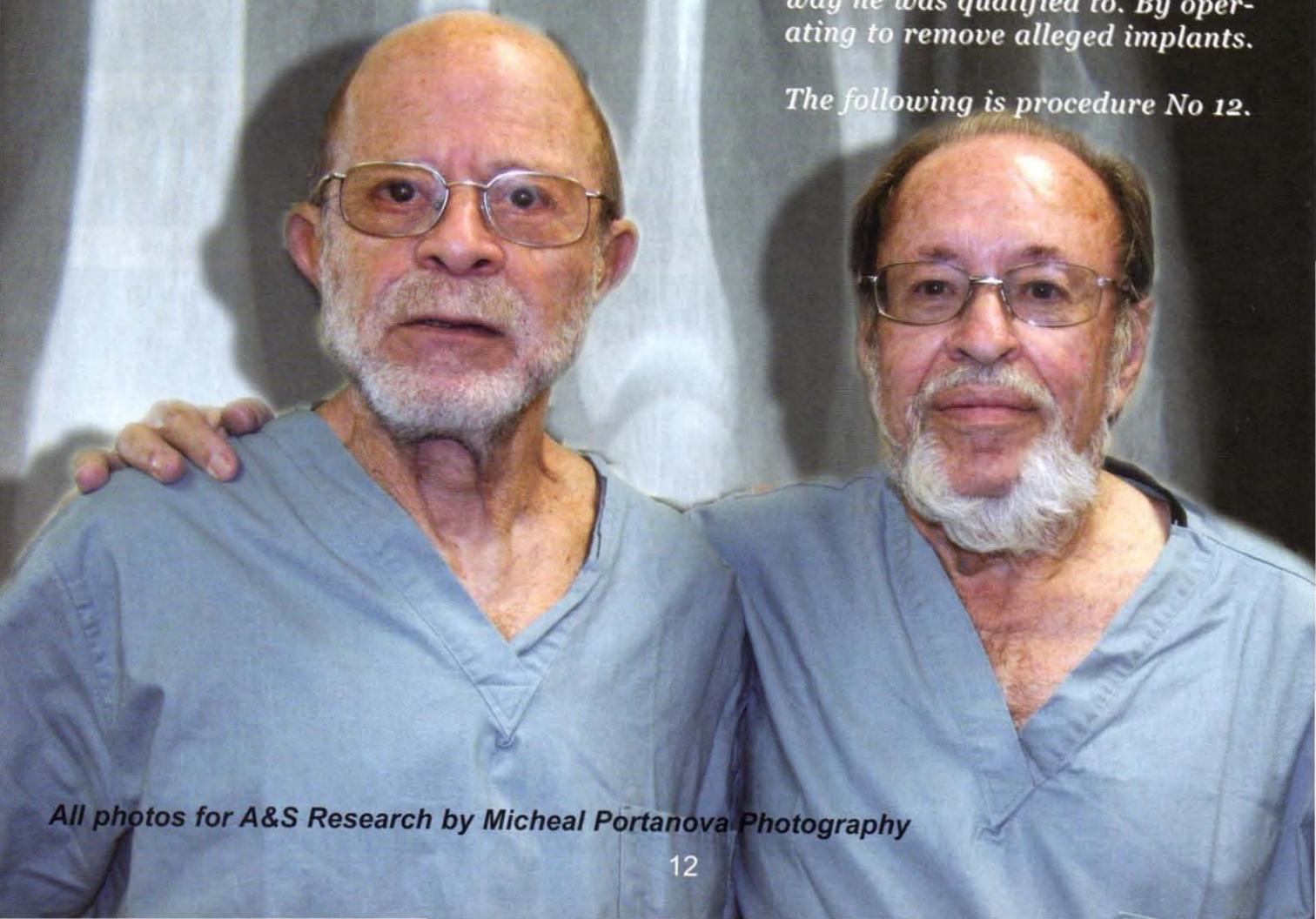
Author Malcolm Robinson with the plaque commissioned by the local district council acknowledging the events of 1979.

Surgical team carry out 12th 'implant' operation...

Science can be quick to ridicule this strange subject of ours. But since the subject was thrown into the public eye, there has been a select few men and women of science who have stood up to their personal belief and convictions regarding this subject.

Sceptics and debunkers when presented with claims that an individual is convinced that they have had some sort of invasive procedure carried about their person by alien beings will shout 'show me the evidence'. US foot specialist, Dr Roger Leir, set about getting evidence of such claims the only way he was qualified to. By operating to remove alleged implants.

The following is procedure No 12.

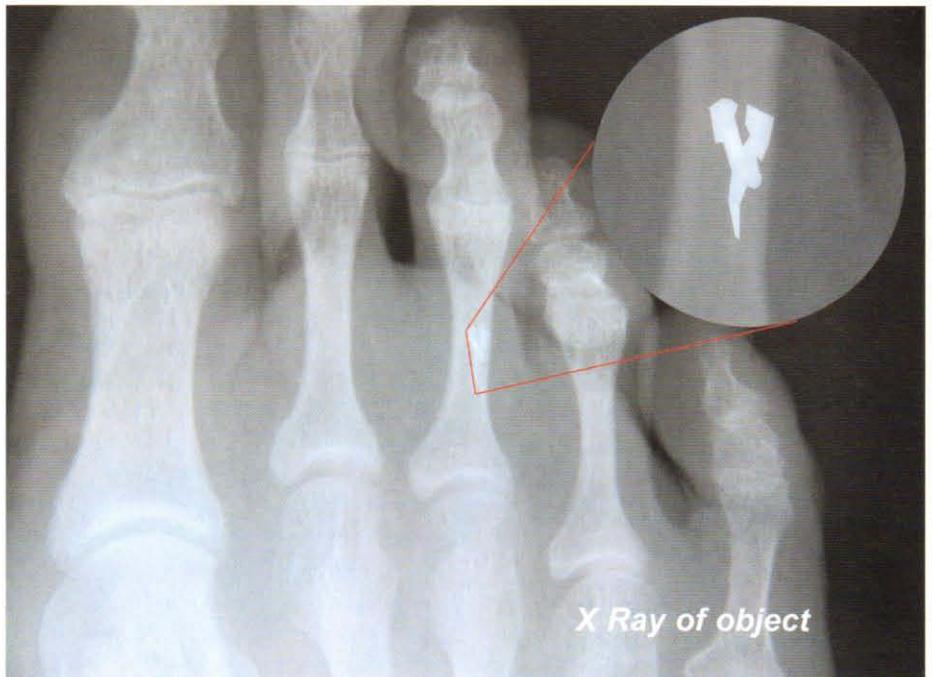


Alien Implant Operation No 12

On September 23, 2006, Dr. Roger Leir and his surgical team from A&S Research recently announced they have performed their twelfth surgery for removal of a suspected alien implant. Dr. Leir, a Southern California podiatrist, is considered by many to be the world's leading authority on alien implant research. Whitley Strieber has said on many occasions that Dr. Leir is a "true pioneer" in this complex and mysterious subject. Art Bell, world famous Coast to Coast AM talk radio host, made the following quote after interviewing Dr. Leir on his radio program: "Dr. Roger Leir did four hours of the most riveting radio ever broadcast on open national airwaves. Much of it sounded as though it should be on a need to know basis only." Dr. Leir is the author of seven books on the UFO subject and has over three thousand hours of radio experience. He has also appeared on hundreds of television broadcasts worldwide. Dr. Leir has also presented his material in 42 countries in the past 7 years with many visits to the United Kingdom.

The late Graham Birdsall's, *UFO Magazine* had presented numerous articles about Dr. Leir's scientific efforts to bring this kind of knowledge to the general public.

The latest surgery was performed on a female abductee in her forties. The



X Ray of object

object, verified on x-ray, was located in the third toe of the right foot. The patient had contacted Dr. Leir about three years prior and explained to him, she thought she might have an alien implant in her toe. She was sent a package containing one of the initial contact questionnaires given to clients who suspect they may be involved with the alien abduction program, designed by A&S Research. Once this was returned, she was asked to have an x-ray taken of the suspected area and then to have the x-rays sent to Dr. Leir for evaluation by his staff of radiologists. The patient was very compliant and did exactly as she was advised. Evaluation proved there was a noted radio-opaque object in the third toe of the right foot measuring approximately 6 mm in length and the approximate diameter of a pencil lead. Once it had been verified there was indeed, an object present, further

communication with the client continued. She was asked numerous questions pertaining to her personal involvement with the subject of alien abduction as well as the involvement of her family.

She explained there were members of her family who had experiences involving extraterrestrial beings. Dr. Leir was then supplied with a series of audiocassette tapes made by her father in which he talked freely about his own experiences.

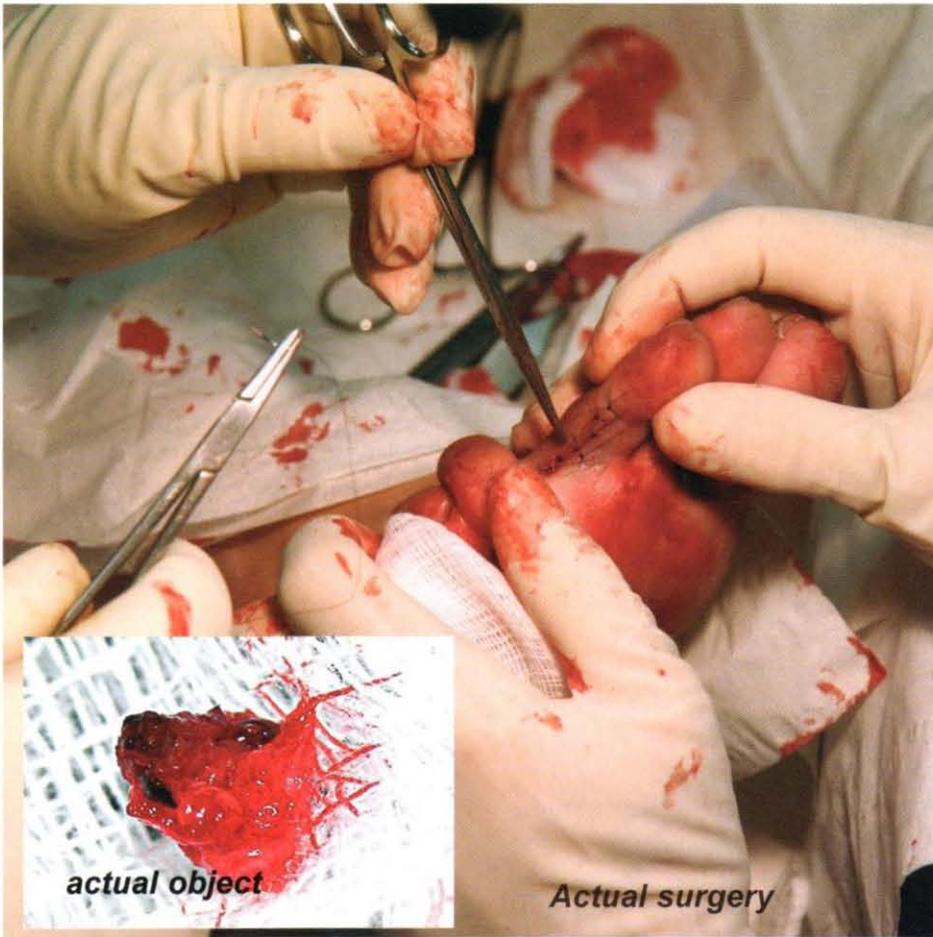
One of the important factors pertained to the fact that although she suspected she was an abductee, she had made no effort to seek previous help or undergo any form of hypnotic regression. Hypnotic regression is strictly forbidden under the protocols set forth by A&S Research for candidates that might undergo surgery. Once the surgical procedure has been performed and the patient would like to pursue hypnosis, a qualified hypnotherapist will be recommended to the client.

During the following months, A&S Research set out to acquire the funds necessary to perform the surgical procedure. Once this was accomplished a surgical date was set.

Since the client was local to the southern California area, her stay near the surgical site was only minimal. Her immediate recovery was satisfactory and she was allowed to go home on the same day the procedure was performed.



Procedure begins



Since only a short time has passed, only preliminary data is available. The first pathology report on the surrounding soft tissue demonstrates there was no reaction by the body with inflammation or rejection to the metallic foreign body. This finding has been consistent with the other objects removed by the Leir team. In another test, the metallic encapsulated device was placed on a 250-pound magnet. The object tilted itself upright and remained in that position until it was removed. The object was then placed again on the magnet and it uprighted itself to its opposite end. This indicates some magnetic activity, which is beyond common understanding of magnetic fields. It should also be noted that none of the 3 metal pieces contained within the biological capsule were physically touching each other. This also adds to the intrigue.

The object is currently undergoing high magnification optical photography and further analytical results will be forthcoming.

office, on the day of the surgery, the operative site was re-examined and another x-ray was taken. This showed the object had moved slightly from its original position and wedged itself into one of the toe joints. This resulted in the object fracturing into three separate pieces. Dr. Leir knew this would slightly complicate the surgical extraction. At the time of this visit several electronic instruments were used to detect electrical and magnetic energies that might be emanating from the object. Dr. Leir and his team used a simple gaussmeter, a magnetic stud finder and a radio frequency detector, which resulted in the following findings. There was a reading of 6 MilGauss detected on the Gaussmeter. The stud finder isolated the exact spot where the object was imbedded. The radio frequency detector was so precise that if the antenna was pointed at the second or fourth toe there was no reading. When pointed directly at the third toe, there was a reading of: 65.5781 GHZ and 30.012732 MHZ. The meaning of all this electromagnetic activity is still unclear, as not enough research has been done in this area to fully understand these complex phenomena. As with all research in the UFO field, lack of money always seems to be the dominant factor.

local anesthetic and a C-Arm x-ray device was used to help locate the object. Without this device the procedure would have taken hours longer. As with the other surgeries performed by Leir's surgical team, a metallic object, broken into three separate segments, was removed. The three segments were all contained in one capsule of unusual soft tissue. Soft biological tissue surrounding the object was also removed at the time of surgery for pathological analysis. Again, as with all previous surgeries, numerous individuals, consisting of medical professionals and others from the UFO research arena, witnessed the procedure. They all were required to sign written witness statements documenting their presence at the surgery. The team's professional video camera operator performed full visual recording. Also, Michael Portanova Photography took still photographs. Sean Casteel, professional reporter took notes and is writing an in-depth article for *UFO Magazine U.S.* The object was then sealed into a container immersed in the patient's own blood serum and will not be opened until the first examination is performed.



Dr Leir is one of the true friends of ufology across the globe and we look forward to regular updates in forthcoming issues of UFO DATA. You can access Dr Leir's website at the URL below...



www.alienscalpel.com

The surgery was performed under

Faulty MoD Radar 'Zaps' unsuspecting motorists...

At the beginning of November, 2006, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) admitted that a faulty Type-93 radar dome, at Trimingham in Norfolk, caused electrical failures in passing cars. The ministry has been forced to consider compensation payments to those affected by this bizarre incident. Dozens of vehicles suffered engine cut-outs, electrical failures, blown fuses and wildly-fluctuating gauges.

A local garage owner claimed to have dealt with over thirty cars in the four months (November, 2005 to February, 2006) that the radar was 'out of alignment'. He has claimed that cars are still coming in to his garage with electrical problems, despite the MoD saying that the fault has been eradicated.

UFOData Magazine contacted Neil Crayford, who runs the Crayford & Abbs garage in Mundesley, close to Trimingham. Mr Crayford said that it was difficult to run a business with the press attention that this story had received, but he was still kind enough to speak with us. He added that over the course of the year, over fifty cars, of varying makes and models have been repaired by his business, with vehicles still coming in at the rate of about two every ten days or so. He has not charged for these repairs and said

that more modern cars, less than five years old, were the ones most affected. Usually, the problems were rectified by simply disconnecting and reconnecting the battery.

When asked if he was concerned that a signal strong enough to 'kill' a car could do other things to people or other electrical systems, he replied that it was a bit of a worry, but he felt that the MoD would not purposefully put their staff or the public in danger.

You may ask what this story has in connection with UFOs. The Trimingham site is connected to RAF Neatishead, the radar station that picked up the object of the famous Rendlesham Forest Incident. While official sources claim that the radar was 'turned off', there have been allegations that the radar tapes were taken away, never to be seen again. Many other UFOs have also been reportedly picked up by the Trimingham/ Neatishead radar facility.

Only a few miles from Trimingham, a man named Barney Broom hit the headlines in February this year when he claimed to have found an alien in a jar whilst cleaning his attic. While the story has been pretty much relegated to the 'nonsense' category of the news,

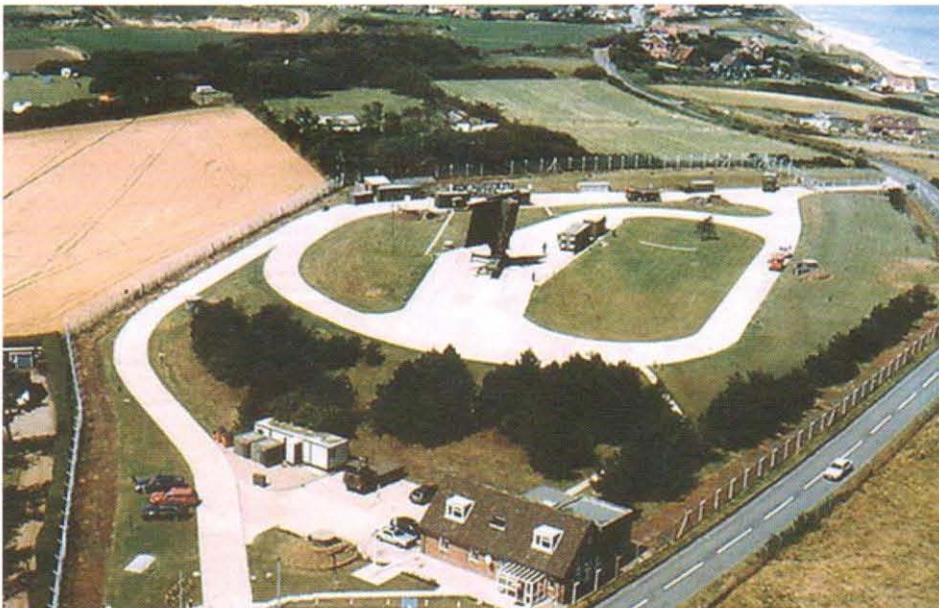
the timing of its release is curious.

The electrical interference supposedly created by the 'out of alignment' radar is reminiscent of similar experiences reported by many UFO witnesses. Car engines have cut out when a UFO passes by, so this begs the question if there is a connection between these seemingly unconnected phenomena.

Mr Crayford admits that he has never seen a UFO in the area and believes that any that are seen are probably from our own military.

East Anglia has a long tradition of UFO sightings, especially over the North Sea, beside which sits the Trimingham radar site. Could it be possible that the RAF were conducting an experiment of some kind? Were UFOs seen in the area between November, 2005 and February, 2006? If so, did they appear to be in any difficulty? If the signals from the domes were powerful enough to kill a car, what effect did the 'faulty' radar dome have on aircraft or other electrical systems in the vicinity? Have any of the other Type-93 radar sites around the UK had similar problems with similar results? If the MoD claims that the radar has been repaired, why are cars still conking out?

Steve Johnson - 2006



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Former naval intelligence crypto-tech, Brad Luker, is a down-to-earth kind of guy. At 40, he's a father and a husband, works as a power plant operator and walks the straight and narrow. He doesn't believe in Bigfoot, aliens or the Loch Ness monster.

So when he saw strange, bright lights in the sky above him Tuesday night, he assumed it was a helicopter, or maybe a small plane. Only when he opened the door to his truck, expecting to hear the whir of chopper blades above him, did he start to wonder what the craft could be.

"It was really bizarre," he said. "I've never seen anything like it. I do a lot of camping, and I've seen all the basic stuff (in the sky)," he said. Most strange things in the sky are high up in the air, he said. "This was way, way down here." It was so low to the ground, and so brightly lit, at first he thought there must be something going on at the Industry town hall. "I thought 'wow, that's kind of neat.'"

As he got closer, though, Luker realized the lights were coming from something about 300 feet above him. That was when he pulled over, and opened his door. It sounded like a quiet jet engine. Luker was mystified, and a little nervous.

A woman driving behind him saw it, too, Luker said. He never got her name, and wishes now that he had. She said she thought it looked like an aircraft trying to land on the road.

"I know the Navy has some real funky special top-secret aircraft out there," he said. "That's the only thing I thought that it could be."

Then it stopped, right above his head,

for a few seconds. "That's when it really freaked me out," he said. He'd have thought it was a spaceship, he said, except he doesn't believe in spaceships.

It could be a UFO, Leland Bechtel, former director of Maine's chapter of the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), said Thursday.

"There has been a lot of activity there in the past," Bechtel said. He did an investigation in Farmington a few years ago. Three college students, all very respectable, saw something similar to what Luker described. "This thing came directly over them, and stopped, with a powerful floodlight shining down on them."

Police said it might be a helicopter, Bechtel said. But most people can tell when they're seeing a helicopter and when they're not.

Could what Luker saw be a UFO? "It certainly has earmarks of being an unidentified flying object," Bechtel said. "And we don't know what they are. We don't know where they come from."

Bechtel, like Luker, is a well-respected man. He taught psychology at Bates College in Lewiston for years and only became involved in the world of UFOs by accident, after he began hearing stories of sightings by people he considered sane, and credible.

"I've investigated scores of reported sightings in Maine," he said, "by some of the finest, most respectable people that I've met, and they're not kidding, and they're not deluded."

He's not sure what they are, nor convinced they're from outer space. "I'm open to all possibilities," he said. "I think it just stands to reason that some of the sightings have been experimental aircraft of our own government. But there are plenty of others that do not appear, to me, to be anything that we have developed."

"I started very sceptical. I'm not sceptical anymore," Bechtel said. "I just have questions, rather than answers. But I do feel certain there is reality there that needs to be investigated."

Luker, too, has no answers. "I talked to the police and (the dispatcher) said

even if the military was flying some special mission, they wouldn't tell us. I felt kind of foolish." Calls to Brunswick Naval Air Station were not returned Friday.

Dispatchers in Franklin, Androscoggin, Oxford, Somerset and Kennebec counties said they received no calls about strange objects in the sky Tuesday night.

"I assumed if I saw it, a couple other people might see it," Luker said. "As I drove away I was thinking hey, maybe they gave me some sort of special intelligence," he joked. "I told my wife I wished they gave me the lottery numbers." He laughed.

In the end, Luker said, he thinks it was probably a military plane. "But I don't know why they would fly it that low, and I don't know why they would be out in Industry, Maine," he said. "It really doesn't make sense. But that's the only thing I can think of, because I really don't believe in spaceships, or anything like that."



Believe it or not...



A Japanese company is offering the ultimate mobile phone accessory. You can purchase a strap on UFO detector for your phone that flashes and beeps when a UFO is in the area.

Why didn't the US Military think of that?

\$19.00 is the price. If you are daft enough to buy one make sure it attaches to a camera phone that way you can prove your UFO Detector works...

<http://www.therawfeed.com/2006/11/worst-phone-accessory-yet-ufo-detector.html>

The High Strangeness of Dimensions, Densities and the Process of Alien Abduction

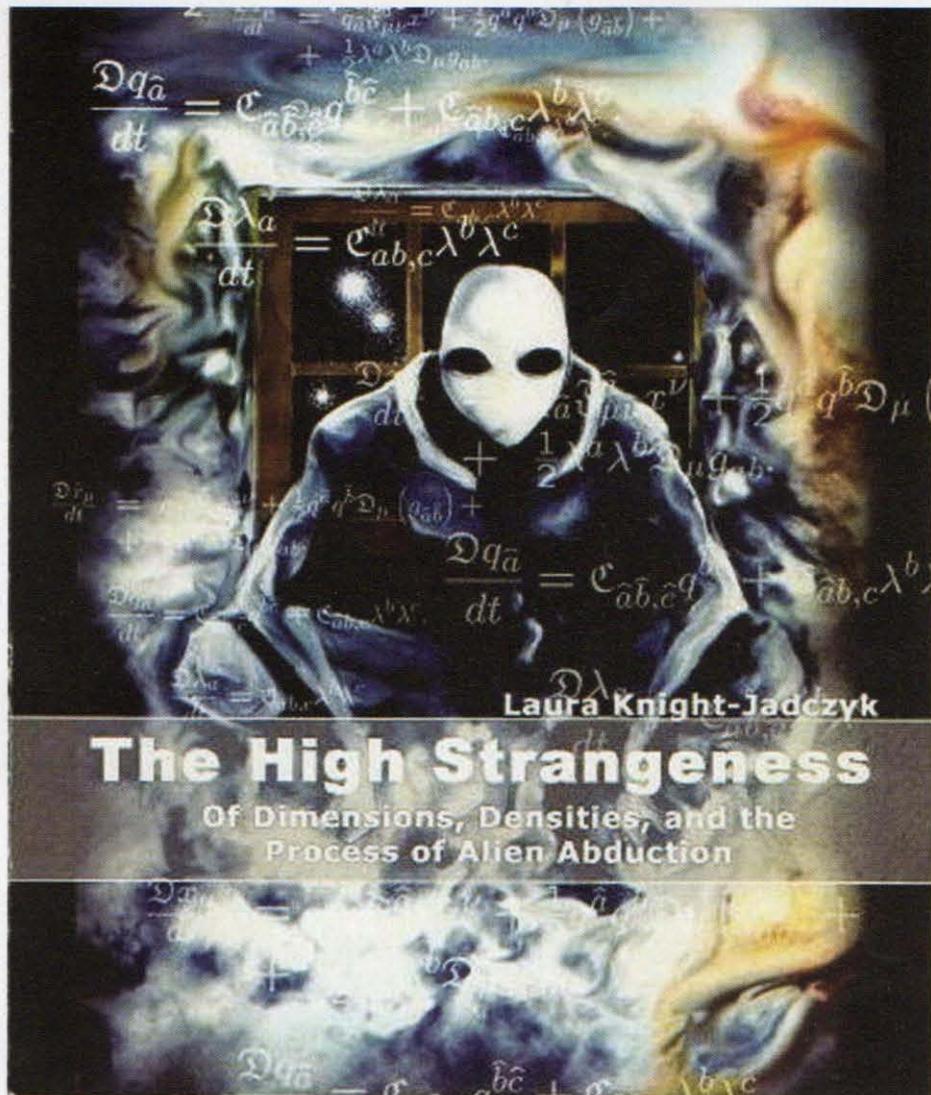
By Laura Knight-Jadczyk

After a mouthful of a title like that, you might think that the book is heavy-going. Thankfully, it is not. *The High Strangeness of Dimensions, Densities and the Process of Alien Abduction* is the intriguing story of the author's contacts with beings called The Cassiopaeans.

The contacts were initiated by the use of a Ouija board and messages were channelled and written down. I have never been a big fan of channelling (the use of psychic methods to receive communications from spirits, aliens, demons, trans-dimensional beings etc.) and I started the book with something of a heavy heart. However, Laura has written an entertaining account of her experiments (for that is how she describes them) and the messages she received are very interesting. I also apologise in advance if my knowledge of the subject is lacking, thus resulting in some confusion on my part.

Initially a sceptic with regards to the alien abduction phenomenon, Laura Knight-Jadczyk became interested in the UFO subject through a friend, who loaned her dozens of books. She went through a period of debilitating illness and had nothing to do all day but sit in bed and read. She found the topic fascinating, but in no way did she count herself as a believer.

Then she and her family witnessed two, huge boomerang-shaped objects fly over her house one night and her life changed forever. Already an experienced therapist, Laura came across a lady who believed that she had undergone an abduction experience. After exploring this through hypnosis, Laura and her group of friends eventually decided upon using a Ouija board as the best way to obtain information.



This was when the Cassiopaeans made their entrance. Several entities came through and many of the messages they sent were very long and it must have taken a long time to write down all the letters that the planchette pointed to!

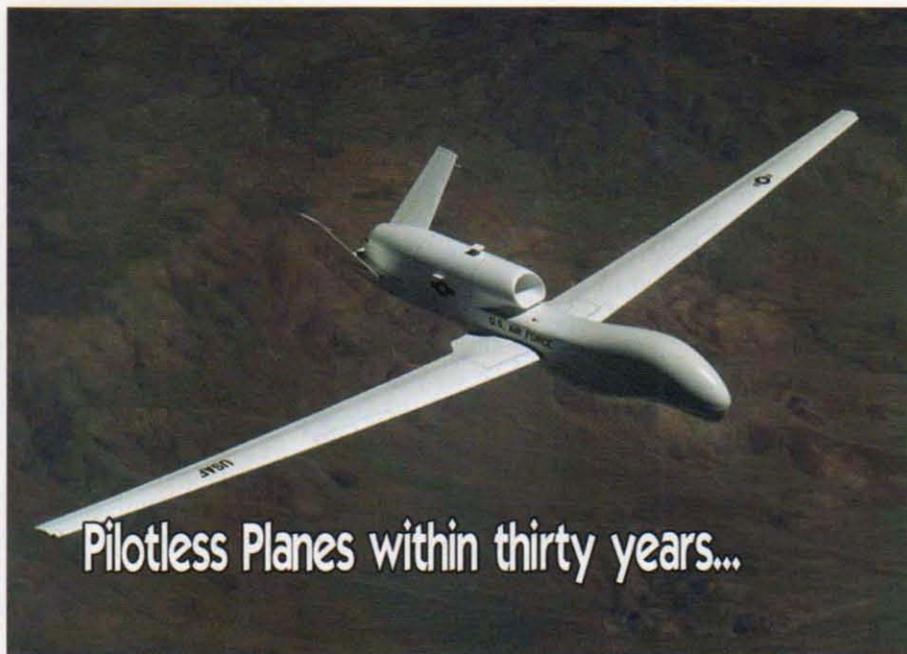
Without revealing too much about the book, a story emerged concerning the origins of the human race, ongoing experiments by 4th Density, reptilian beings (we are 3rd Density beings and the Cassiopaeans are from a higher density still) and what is to come in the future. Sometimes the messages received and responses to questions seem too thorough, as though what is being relayed is exactly what we want to hear. At times you get the feeling that everything is part of this alien plot (which, of course, it is if you believe what is in the book) and it can be frustrating when seemingly

innocuous events, such as glimpsing a reflection or having a bad dream, are described as 'lizards' or 'Greys' scoping us out.

Even if you do not subscribe to the ideas published in *The High Strangeness of Dimensions, Densities and the Process of Alien Abduction*, it is a book that is well worth reading and there are many moments in the book that will have you raising your eyebrows with surprise and recognition.

An official website can be found at www.cassiopaea.org

Steve Johnson - 2006



from civilian airliners. Maintaining that most passenger jets are heavily-automated already, even being capable of landing themselves, BAE suggests that a jet without a cockpit is no flight of fancy.

There are many operational UAV's in use with both US and UK Military. Some interesting looking flying machines too...



I'm sure these craft are responsible for many a UFO report, but not every report is a UAV...

The British Ministry of Defence (MoD) is to award BAE Systems (formerly British Aerospace) a £200 million pound contract to develop an unmanned fighter jet. The project will culminate in a 'working model' that will showcase weapons and targeting systems for the next generation of fighter aircraft.

While Uninhabited Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are widely used, with many having strike capabilities, this new effort will remove human pilots from full-size fighter planes. The aim is not to develop a plane that will be controlled from the ground by an operator, but to create a plane that is completely autonomous.

BAE already has a fully-automated UAV called Herti that has undergone successful testing in Scotland. The only actions that humans on the ground undertook were to switch it on before take-off and then switch it off after landing. This may sound impressive (and it is), but BAE can sit back with an air of smugness, knowing that each Herti UAV costs only £5 million. Compare this to the Northrop Grumman Global Hawk, used by the United States, which costs three times as much as an F-16 fighter, somewhere in the region of \$75 million (£39 million)!

It should be noted, however, that the Global Hawk is a far more sophisticated piece of kit than the Herti. While the Global Hawk utilises a Roll-Royce turbofan jet engine for flight, the engine for the Herti came from a

BMW motorcycle, the chassis of which is still leaning against a shed at RAF Warton.

The mode of propulsion, though, is secondary to the sensing equipment carried aboard the aircraft. BAE are working with Herti to develop highly-advanced automated systems that can detect other aircraft to avoid collisions. It will also have to fly itself in a stable manner so that other pilots will be able to predict its behaviour. Naturally, for a combat aircraft or a surveillance drone over enemy territory, these systems will likely have to be able to detect friend from foe and evade enemy fire.

BAE's aim is to remove human pilots from military aircraft within thirty years, when the upcoming Joint Strike Fighter reaches the end of its life. It also would like to see pilots disappear



BAE's HERTI

Possible ISS Sighting?

SOURCE YORK EVENING PRESS

It never fails to intrigue me why small local papers have little or no problem in mentioning the word UFO or Flying Saucer amongst the news pages of their publications. Below a recent example from York.

York Press
Tuesday, 28th November, 2006

On a clear, starry night recently, while out exercising my dog, I looked up and saw a brilliant white light in the sky.

It was about the size of a large car and circular in shape. I watched it for about ten seconds, before it vanished into thin air.

Could it have been a UFO? Well, it couldn't have been a terrestrial craft, as it was flying at an altitude higher than an aeroplane, very probably on the edge of space.

In any case, a plane or helicopter would have had smaller green or red lights. The object also did not move as a terrestrial craft would, but remained stationary in one place. It was almost as if the occupants inside were watching me, or had stopped to admire the view.

It's easy to get carried away with the romance of UFOs, but I regard this as my first "genuine" UFO sighting. Has anyone else seen a UFO over Bridlington, or can help me with this?

A Jones, Mount Crescent, Bridlington.

Quite an experience, I'm sure, but there are so many things to take into account before labelling any sighting a UFO and what's more, in this electronic cyber age that we live in, there are tools available to members of the public that even James Bond couldn't access even 20 years ago.

What Mr Jones observed reminds me of a sighting I had with a group of ufologists from Hull. We were out on a skywatch in the Vale of York,

taking advantage of the clear night skies that unfortunately were covered in cloud that particular night. Still, lots of hot coffee and burgers and hot dogs on the barbeque (don't let anyone tell you we ufologists don't know how to party).

Our attention was drawn to light shining through the clouds. We thought it was an airplane but there was no noise. As this light drew nearer, its brightness on the clouds grew ten-fold and lit up the clouds almost like sheet lightning. As it neared a break in the clouds, we could see this was light reflecting off something. We had an idea that we might have seen the International Space Station fly over, but we needed to check. A quick look at NASA's website and searching for ISS sighting opportunities (you have to think American to search American), found a handy calculator for working out what was in the sky at certain times.

The table below is a sample request for sightings over Leeds. Some last as long as 3 or 4 minutes others less than a minute.

This is an actual image of the ISS taken from Earth. It's taken with a very powerful lens, but small binoculars will allow you to see the unmistakable detail of the station's solar

arrays.

Of course, Mr Jones might have seen something other than the ISS, but with an accurate date and time we can soon find out what we might see if we were looking in a certain direction on a certain day at a certain time.

We must also take into consideration that the media have taken it upon themselves after claims from a well known Filey-based UFO hunter that this part of our country is actually the UFO capital of the world.

Such can be said of many areas but it was also suggested that East Yorkshire was high on the MoD's list of UFO Hot Spots recently.

This does not mean there are more sightings here than anywhere else, but it does mean that the MoD have had more reports from this area. In other words enthusiastic researchers have reported every single sighting they have heard about to the MoD but have the sightings being checked out by the investigators before informing the MoD? I expect not.



ISS photographed from Earth...

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
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SATELLITE	LOCAL LEEDS DATE/TIME	LOCAL LEEDS (MIN)	DURATION (DEG)	MAX ELEV APPROACH (DEG-DIR)	APPROACH (DEG-DIR)
ISS	Tue Nov 28/05:23 AM	< 1	41	41 above SE	41 above SE
ISS	Tue Nov 28/06:55 AM	3	38	10 above W	36 above S
ISS	Wed Nov 29/05:43 AM	< 1	51	51 above S40 above SE	
ISS	Wed Nov 29/07:15 AM	3	24	10 above W	23 above S
ISS	Thu Nov 30/06:03 AM	2	41	33 above SW	30 above SSE
ISS	Fri Dec 01/06:25 AM	2	26	19 above WSW	20 above SSE
ISS	Sat Dec 02/05:15 AM	< 1	25	25 above SE	25 above SE
ISS	Sat Dec 02/06:47 AM	3	15	10 above WSW	11 above S

Creatures from other worlds...

William Bartlett was born in Dover, Massachusetts in 1960. He knew from an early age that he would be an artist.

His earliest training was at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts Saturday classes with teacher, Ralph Rosenthal.

At the age of seventeen, Bartlett became a member of the Copley Society of Boston. He was also thrust into ufological folklore... (www.askart.com)

46-year old William Bartlett stands by his story of what he saw on Farm Street, Dover, that night. It was an eerie, human-like creature, he said, about 4 feet tall with glowing, orange eyes and no nose or mouth in a watermelon-shaped head.

The "Dover Demon" that Bartlett and two other teenagers reported seeing over a two-day span in April 1977 has since gained worldwide attention, akin to Bigfoot, the Loch Ness monster and recently the Latin American goat-sucker, the chupacabra.

Internet pages are devoted to the Dover Demon. You can even play a video game featuring the creature, or buy a figurine of it as far away as Japan.

"In a lot of ways it's kind of embarrassing to me," said Bartlett. "I definitely saw something. It was definitely weird. I didn't make it up. Sometimes I wish I had."

He has made a career as a painter, his work displayed in galleries on both coasts, but a Google search on "Bill Bartlett," he noted, invariably turns up his teenage encounter with the unknown. Once, his wife, Gwen, browsing the horror section of a bookstore, flipped open an encyclopedia of monsters and there was an entry about her husband and the Dover Demon.

"It's a thing that's been following me for years," Bartlett said. "Not the creature but the story. I dread every Halloween, I still get calls about the

creature."

On April 21, 1977, Bartlett, then 17, was driving along Farm Street at around 10 p.m. when, he said, he saw the creature on top of a broken stone wall. Two hours later, according to news accounts, John Baxter, 15, was walking home from his girlfriend's house when he got within 15 feet of the creature along a creek in a heavily wooded area of Miller Hill Road.

At midnight the next night, Abby Brabham, 15, was driving home with her boyfriend when she spotted the creature sitting upright on Springdale Avenue.

A drawing made by Baxter showed a humanoid figure with large eyes standing by a tree. Bartlett's large-eyed creature crawled with tendril-like fingers across a stone wall. "I, Bill Bartlett, swear on a stack of Bibles that I saw this creature," he wrote on the sketch.

The locations of the sightings, plotted on a map, lay in a straight line over 2 1/2 miles.

All the sightings were made in the vicinity of water. No sightings have been reported since, though Bartlett says a weird experience a year later left him wondering if he had had a return visit from the creature.



In 1978 Bartlett recalled being in a parked car with his girlfriend when he heard a thump on the car.

He could make out a small figure leaving the scene. He remains unsure who or what banged the car, he said, though it could have been a youngster playing a prank, but could not rule out the mysterious creature from the previous year.

Farm Street on a recent evening could have been a modern-day



Sleepy Hollow, with woods lining the fieldstone walls, and what little light there was coming from the moon. Since at least the 17th century, the vicinity of the second-oldest road in Dover has been associated with strange occurrences.

In his 1914 town history, *Dover Farms*, Frank Smith writes of Farm Street:

"In early times this road went around by the picturesque Polka rock [on the farm of George Battelle] which was called for a man by that name, of whom it is remembered, that amid the superstitions of the age he thought he saw his Satanic Majesty as he was riding on horseback by this secluded spot.

"The location has long been looked upon as one in which treasures are hid, but why anyone should go so far inland to hide treasures has never been told; however, there has been at times unmistakable evidence of considerable digging in the immediate vicinity of this rock."

Loren Coleman of Portland, Maine, a well-known cryptozoologist, or researcher of "hidden animals," from Sasquatch to sea serpents, led the original investigations into the Dover Demon, whose name he coined.

Studying Dover's history, Coleman said in a telephone interview, he was struck by the fact that the area in which the Demon was sighted had a tradition of unexplained activity.

"In the same area you had three major legends going on," he said, citing the apparition of the devil on horseback, the tales of buried treasure, and then the Dover Demon. "I think it certainly says something. It's almost as if there are certain areas that 'collect' sightings, almost in a magnetic way."

Coleman theorized that the large geologic outcropping in the woods off Farm Street that historian Smith called the "Polka stone might actually have been called the Pooka stone, after the fairy folk of Celtic folklore.

When the Dover Demon was sighted in 1977, it might not have been the first time a strange creature was spotted in the woods by local teenagers.

Mark Sennott of Sherborn, who was buying a bagel and coffee at Isabella's Groceria in Dover Center on a recent Saturday morning, said there was talk at Dover-Sherborn High School in the early 1970s of strange things seen in the woods.

In fact, Sennott said, he and his friends might have seen a "demon" themselves at Channing Pond on Springdale Avenue in 1972.

"I don't know if we really saw something," he said. "We thought we did. We saw a small figure, deep in the woods, moving at the edge of the pond. We could see it moving in the headlights. We didn't know - it could have been an animal." Sennott said the group told police, who investigated, but "nothing came of it."

When Bartlett saw his creature five years later, he said, he was driving with two friends on Farm Street near Bridge Street on the way to Sherborn about 10 p.m. They hadn't had any beer: "We were probably looking for it," he said, "but we didn't have any that night."

Bartlett said the car was traveling maybe 35 to 40 miles per hour when he saw the thing "standing on a wall, its eyes glowing" in the headlights. "It was not a dog or a cat," he said. "It had no tail. It had an egg-shaped head." He said he saw it from about 10 feet away, over the duration it took the car to travel from one utility pole to the next. His two friends did not report seeing the creature.

He grew up around animals, and had seen the odd mangy fox, Bartlett said. "This definitely wasn't," he said. "It was some kind of creature," with "long thin fingers" and "more human-like in its form than animal." Its shape reminded him of "kids with distended bellies," he said. "I've always tried to guess what it was. I never had any idea."

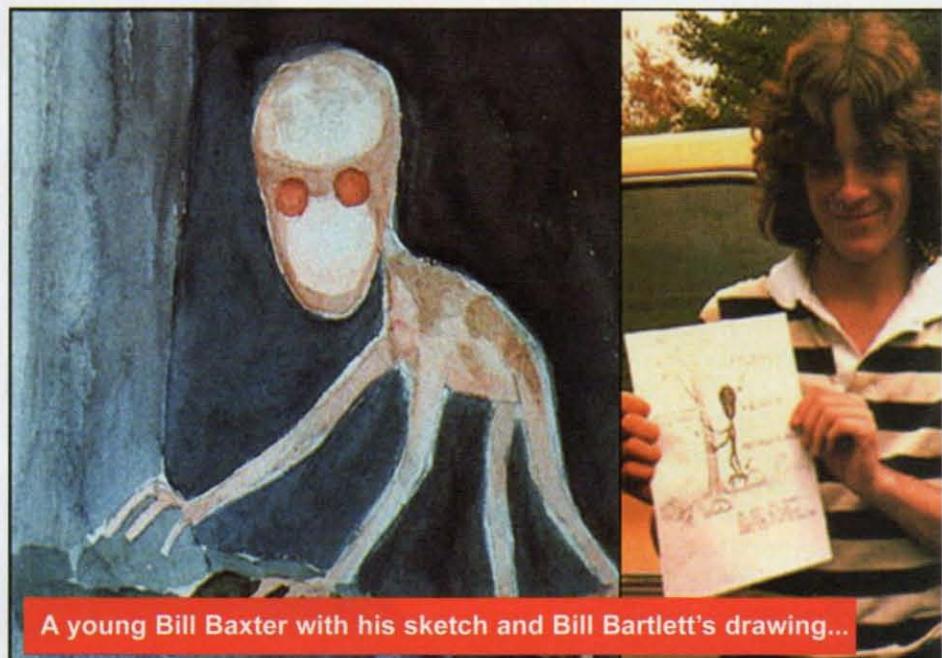
This was no prank, Bartlett said. "I wasn't trying to be funny. People who know me know I didn't make this up."

Coleman, who began an investigation within days of the sightings in 1977 and spotlights the Dover Demon case in the 2001 edition of his book "Mysterious America," believes Bartlett.

"We have a credible case, over 25 hours, by individuals who saw something," said Coleman, who interviewed all three teens within a week of the reported sightings and said he was convinced they had not concocted a hoax.

Nothing quite like the Demon has been reported seen before or since, he said. The Dover creature does not match the descriptions of the chupacabra, or of Roswell aliens, or of the bat-eared goblins said to have attacked a family in Hopkinsville, Ky., in 1955.

"It doesn't really fit any place," Coleman said. "It's extremely unique. It has no real connections to any other inexplicable phenomena."



Is it possible the teens actually saw a foal, or perhaps a moose calf, as some have suggested? Coleman said he canvassed local horse owners after the incident and none reported missing a horse. Moreover, it was not foaling season, he said.

As for the moose theory, only two moose were reported in Massachusetts in 1977 and 1978, both of them in Central Massachusetts, he said. A yearling moose by that time in April would weigh more than 600 pounds and be "bigger than the Volkswagen Bartlett was in," said Coleman.

"To have a bipedal moose with long fingers and orange skin and no hair and no nose would be more of a phenomenon than the Dover Demon," he said.

So what did those teens see? "It's OK to say we don't know," said Coleman.

"I think the Dover Demon's mystery lives on. It's an unknown phenomenon whose fame has stretched worldwide, and I think Dover should be very proud."

In Dover, a quiet community dotted with horse farms and one of the richest towns in the state, people are still not quite sure what to make of the story.

"That thing has haunted me for 29 years," said Carl Sheridan, a former police chief. "I knew the kids involved. They were good kids, pretty reliable kids.

"God only knows" what they saw, Sheridan said. "I still don't know. Strange things have happened. The whole thing was unusual."

He got calls from all over the world when the case made the news, the former chief said, and he still does from time to time. "The thing will not die," Sheridan said. "I'm telling you, the thing will not go away."

In Town Clerk Barrie Clough's office at Town Hall, municipal reports share shelf space with a file of materials related to the Dover Demon case, including a book titled *Weird New England* and a newspaper clipping headlined, "Bizarre four-foot creature with orange skin and glowing

eyes stalking a town."

"Every once in a while, people will come in and ask about it," said Clough. "I have no idea if it's true or untrue."

Downtown Dover was decorated recently with pumpkins as children arrived for a Halloween fair and a steady stream of regulars bought coffee and newspapers at Isabella's. Located in the old Dover Pharmacy, now with an Italian deli counter added to the old soda fountain, the grocery remains a town hub.

Behind the counter at Isabella's, Scott Bielski, a senior at Dover-Sherborn High, said the demon gives his small town a unique claim to fame. "'Home of the Dover Demon' has a nice ring to it," he said with a smile. As far as he knows, the creature had never stopped in to the soda fountain. "Let us know if he wants anything," he said.

A customer who gave his name as Jimmy said he has lived in town for four years but has yet to see the demon. "Maybe I will some day," he said. "I'm one of those realists - if I don't see it, I don't believe it."

Customer Ed Tourtellotte of Dover said: "I think it's probably as real as the Easter Bunny, but it's fun."

Nearly thirty years after seeing something very strange on Farm Street, Bartlett has decidedly mixed feelings about the experience. "It was my 15 minutes of fame, without wanting it," he said. "It was little embarrassing. It still is."

He said he hasn't talked much to his two children who are 8 and 5 years old about the creature: "I don't want to scare them."

And the professional artist has never drawn another picture of the thing he saw. "I don't have enough memory of it," he said. "I haven't wanted to. I'm a serious fine-arts painter. I don't want people to think I'm some freak.

"I don't usually tell anybody.

I know I shouldn't be embarrassed, but you see these people on TV and they're made to look like idiots."

"I wish it was seen again so everyone would know it was true."

More about the Dover Demon is available at the Strange New England website:

strangene.com/monsters/dover.htm
or at Loren Coleman's website:
lorencoleman.com

UFO DATA

There are some very pertinent words within this particular article and maybe a tiny clue as what might have been seen back in 1977.

It is sad that Bill Baxter feels he might be labelled an idiot for claiming what he observed, but many individuals have such tags attached to their experiences after the tabloid media and television producers get hold of the story.

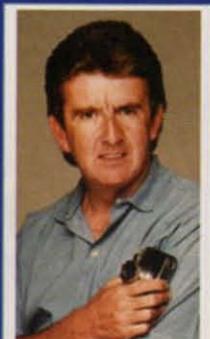
This case had several witnesses over a 48-hour period. The local police were happy to believe the teenagers and stood by the kids' integrity. Even now, thirty years on, they all stand by their fascinating story that they all came into close contact with a strange creature they had never before seen.

One of the descriptions had me thinking.

Bill Bartlett described the creature as looking like "kids with distended



bellies." Well, what about the creature in Ray Santilli's alleged Alien Autopsy. The bloated stomach and long fingers fit the description. What's more, award winning press photographer, Mike Maloney, claims he saw film of these creatures in the 1970's.



Mike Maloney, Britain's most prolific award-winning photographer, who claims to have viewed scenes from the alien autopsy film while working at the Disney Corporation during the 1970s.

During the 'modern' UFO era one face in particular has become synonymous with the British UFO subject.

I can imagine the excitement in a production crew when they persuade their financial bosses to part with cash to make a documentary on the UFO subject, especially after securing an official from the MoD to appear in their film.

Prior to First Tuesday's excellent prime time documentary 'UFO', back in the mid 90s, UK film makers had gone for the 'nutter approach' when it came to programme content. Not anymore.

Nick Pope was presented to the viewing world, adding a long lost credibility to this amazing subject and Nick did not let the subject down.

He actively attended and lectured at UFO conferences, not just in the UK, but across the globe and has never changed his own personal opinions on the subject.

It seems some UFOs are real...

MoD's Nick Pope 'Calls it a day'

(UFO DATA italics)

Nick, thanks for taking the time to speak with us. Everybody knows that you were 'the Man from the Ministry', working at Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a (Sec (AS) 2a) for three years in the early Nineties, investigating UFO reports with regard to the defence significance of these objects penetrating UK airspace, but what position did you hold beforehand?



Before my tour of duty on the UFO project I was working in another part of Sec(AS), dealing with subjects such as military aircraft accidents. However, I'd been pulled off these duties and seconded into the Air Force Operations Room, in the Joint Operations Centre.

This was related to the first Gulf War and isn't an area that I can discuss in any detail, except to say that many of my duties related to obtaining information about RAF activities and ensuring that this was included in the key briefings given to Ministers and the Service Chiefs.

It was while working there that I was sounded out about an internal transfer from Sec(AS) 1 to Sec(AS) 2 - an offer that I took up. I'd been in the MOD since 1985 and at the time you'd expect to move posts (either on promotion or level transfer) every 2 or 3 years. Before I came to Sec(AS) I'd done 2 other jobs, one with the Navy and another RAF-related job.

Did your Civil Service training prepare you for what you experienced on the 'UFO Desk'? How did that time compare to your other roles at the Ministry of Defence (MoD)?

No. Nothing could have prepared me for my time on the UFO project. I had no prior interest, knowledge or belief in UFOs and there was little by way of training that one could do to prepare for such a post, though a police back-

ground would have been useful.

The reason I say that is that 2 of the central principles of police investigations could legitimately be applied to any UFO investigation: firstly, identify and interview witnesses; secondly, identify and analyse evidence (in the case of UFO sightings this might include radar tapes, photos, videos, soil samples, etc). However, my training was as an administrator - a bureaucrat, if you like. But of course, I could call on a range of specialist personnel and equipment to assist me with investigations if needs be: radar specialists, scientific & technical intelligence officers in the Defence Intelligence Staff, astronomers, specialists at the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales, specialists at analysing and enhancing images, etc.

The UFO project's core was small (me plus administrative support) but it was a large network and we could bring in a lot of extra resources if needed. As to how it compared to my other roles at the MOD, it's certainly been among the most fascinating things I've done, but there have been many, many amazing things I've seen and done in a 21 year career - very little of which I can talk about.

Can you talk about what you did at the Ministry after you left Sec (AS) 2a?

I went to a financial policy job where my duties included considering requests from film and TV companies to film at military bases. We had to consider the potential benefits in terms of PR, training and recruiting and balance that against the desire to generate some income.

I learned a lot about the media in that job (although I'd already been media-trained during my time on the UFO project, not least because I had to appear on TV as an official MOD spokesperson).

After that, I went to a security job where my duties included being Clerk to the MOD Police Committee and working with the military police. This was a fascinating job which involved a fair bit of travel, including Germany, Northern Ireland, Kosovo, and two visits to Iraq.

Recently, you reported that the 'UFO Desk' was essentially closed down, with investigations taking a backseat to answering Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests from the general public.

Do you think the media attention that you have drawn over the years has been the catalyst for this?

No. UFOs was always going to be the number one subject that people asked MOD about under the FOIA. I made that prediction many, many years ago, before I spoke out on the UFO issue and long before the Act came into force.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm a passionate believer in open government and the public's right to know, but I'm equally passionate about the need to withhold information where it would genuinely endanger lives, damage national security or undermine international relations.

Has the Act hindered 'official' UFO investigations, in your opinion?



The problem is that staff on the UFO project are now so busy dealing with FOI requests, they have little or no time for the research and investigation that was the bread and butter of the job when I was in post.

The media reports that followed my leaving MOD were exaggerated.

I never said that I feared an imminent alien invasion. But I did say that the UFO phenomenon (whatever one believes) raises serious defence and security issues, and that UFO sightings ought not be dismissed without some form of proper, scientific study. That isn't happening at the moment and yes, I think that's a mistake.

You have been accused of being a 'government stooge' or other, similar things, in some quarters. There have been claims that you acted as a

diversion to the government's real interest in the UFO phenomenon. How do you react to such claims?

I'm frequently accused of being a disinformation agent. Recently, I was accused of having 'hijacked' a Channel Five investigative documentary (The British UFO Mystery) about the 30/31 March 1993 UFO sightings over the UK. I'm used to being demonised.

I suppose I should be flattered that people think I have the power and influence to somehow subvert prime-time terrestrial TV programmes.

The truth is that whatever I say, I'm not going to alter the views of people whose minds are already made up, so nothing I could possibly say in answer to this question would make a difference. I'm honestly not some sort of sinister 'Man in Black', but if people want to believe I am, then good luck to them.

You have spoken widely on The Rendlesham Forest Incident, the 1993 Shawbury/ Cosford Triangle and Project Condign. Are there any other cases that you think deserve more attention?

The MOD has received over 10,000 UFO reports since the UFO project was first set up. There are hundreds of files out there, many of which have yet to be discovered.

I work with a number of ufologists (sceptics and believers), advising

them how best to use the FOIA to acquire UFO documents. But I won't undermine MOD's position here and pre-empt their own rolling programme of disclosure. What I can say is this: there's a lot of great material out there that has yet to be released.

We'll be seeing some of it over the next few years. But bear in mind that releasing this is a huge job. I've handled FOI requests and it's a time consuming task. You have to go through files page by page, line by line, word by word. And remember that MOD has 10,000 UFO sightings and that one casefile alone can easily contain more than 100 documents. One issue that people forget is the Data Protection Act. Many UFO documents give names, addresses and personal information about witnesses. All of this has to be redacted.

The Data Protection Act is the legal equivalent of the witness confidentiality policy adopted by some UFO groups. But make no mistake about it, much interesting and significant new material will be released over the next few years.

You have now resigned from the MoD, so you will have more time on your hands (or not!). Can you tell us what motivated your resignation and what your plans for the future might entail? Or having completed 21 years of service is it a case of being able to take advantage of pensions etc. and retire as one might from the armed forces after serving 21 years.

More time on my hands? I'm as busy now as I've ever been! Tasks seem to expand to fill the time I have.

I resigned simply because I wanted to devote more time to my various business interests. Some of these business interests relate to media work (development production and presenting) but very few are actually related to UFOs or the unexplained.

I'm financially secure so I decided that it was time to move on. I'd been filling a Deputy Director slot on temporary promotion for much of the past 2 years and had passed the Assessment and Development Centre that would have made the move permanent. But if I'd have taken up a Deputy Director post I'd have felt duty bound to do at least 2 or 3 years, and frankly, I felt it was time to go.

It was either that or become a Deputy Director chasing a handful of Director level (i.e. 1 Star equivalent) posts. I think I made the right decision and I have no regrets.

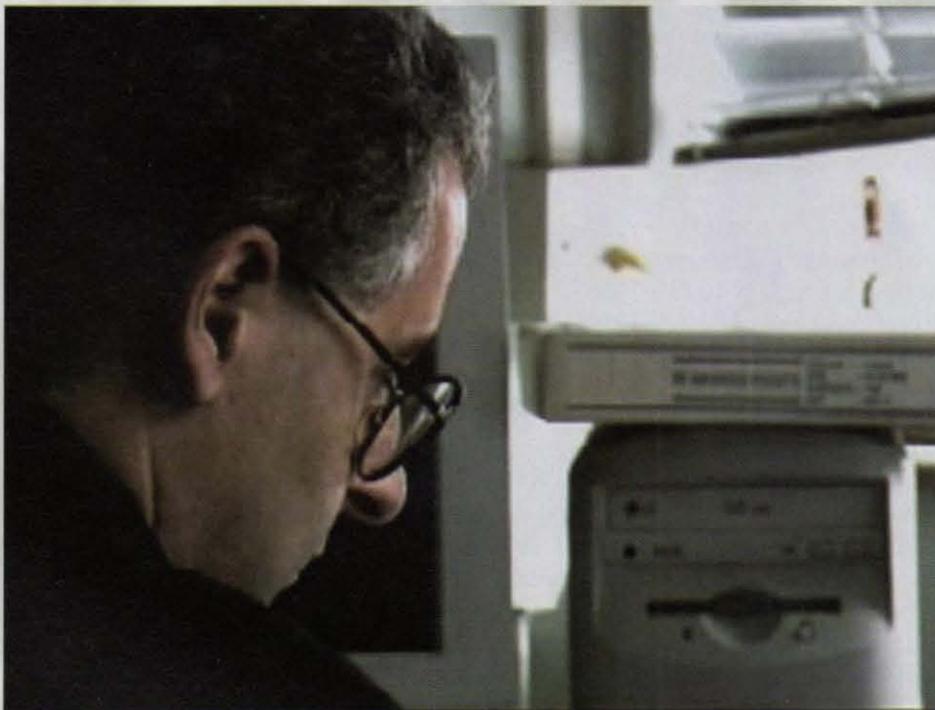
Are UFOs still going to play a large part in your life?

Every time there's a UFO sighting or every time a new UFO-related document is released under the FOIA, I seem to be contacted by TV, radio and newspapers, so in that sense, UFOs will continue to play a large part in my life. But while I still have contacts on the 'inside' (in a sense, one never really leaves MOD, at least not after 21 years in harness) I won't have time to investigate individual sightings, except in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Finally if something on the scale of Rendlesham or indeed Shawbury where to happen now you're in civvie street so to speak would you want to get involved and do you think the Ministry might call upon you to tackle such a case.

I suppose this follows on from my reply to the previous question. If a major UFO event occurred, I'd be happy to advise and I have no doubt that I'd be consulted, unofficially of course, on a 'backchannel' basis.

Nick Pope has a regular column in UFO DATA Magazine: See Page 66



Scientific think tank look ahead to 2056...

Ask a selection of well-known and respected scientists what their vision of 2056 might be.

Would it surprise you that alien life and first contact with intelligent alien life is one of their expectations.

Freeman Dyson on alien life:

"Once discovered, advances would follow quickly and our place in the universe would have to be questioned."

Carolyn Porco, leader of NASA's Cassini team:

"Life itself or evidence of past life will be found on bodies within our solar system."

In November, leading science magazine, *The New Scientist*, celebrated its fiftieth birthday by having a look forward another fifty years to what the world might be like in the year 2056.

They asked leading thinkers and boffins what predictions they have for our planet and the replies that came back surprised many. Expecting conservative, controversy-free answers, what came back from such noted scientists as Freeman Dyson and Colin Pillinger raised eyebrows all over the world.

Whilst predictions of technological and medical advances were at the fore, there was a surprisingly large percentage of voices suggesting that not only microbial alien life would be discovered, but also intelligent alien life. This repre-

sents something of a sea change in the halls of academia, where the notion of intelligent, extra-terrestrial life is often mooted, but usually behind a snigger-hiding hand.

Paul Davies, a professor of theoretical physics, cosmology and astrobiology at Arizona State University said that alien life could be found right here on Earth. Extra-terrestrial microbes might be indistinguishable from ones that evolved here on our own world and difficult to identify. He also suggested that life may have also independently evolved on Mars.

Chris McKay, of NASA's Space Sciences Division, also posits the notion of Martian life, but goes on to plant flags on Europa, Titan and Enceladus. Like, Professor Davies, he is open to the possibility of alien

life existing right here on Earth and refers to the 'shadow biosphere', a home for life that is unlike ours and so has no interaction.

Freeman Dyson, professor emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, New Jersey, was another noted mind that backed the discovery of extra-terrestrial life forms. He said that once discovered, advances would follow quickly and our place in the universe would have to be questioned.

Monica Grady of the Open University would think it 'very disappointing if we fail to discover signs of an extraterrestrial biology' by 2056. She seems confident of the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence by signing off with

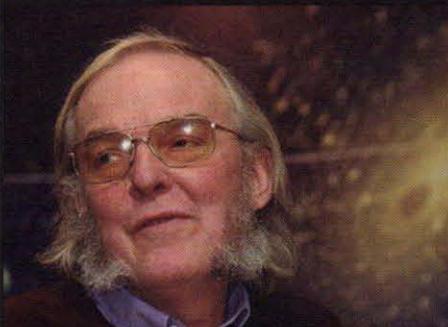
'SETI here we come!'

Professor Piet Hut, of Princeton, is also hopeful that life will be found on bodies in our own solar system. He believes evidence of extra-solar life will be found by analysing chemical signatures from planets orbiting other stars and that SETI 'may detect extra-terrestrial intelligence'. He gives odds of 50/50 for any of those three predictions to come to fruition.

Colin Pillinger, professor of planetary sciences at the Open University and head of the ill-fated Beagle 2 project, is more cautious. He hopes that man may have set foot on Mars by 2056, but thinks it more likely that probes will have returned samples to Earth from the Red Planet and may also have 'sniffed out' life there, either living or extinct.

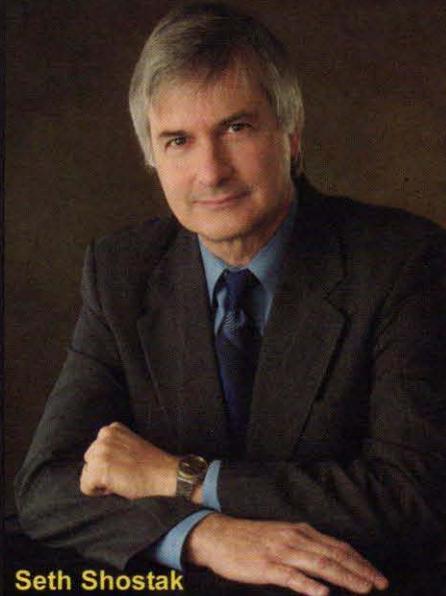
Carolyn Porco, leader of NASA's Cassini probe imaging team, concurs with Pillinger, in that life itself or evidence of past life will be found on bodies within our solar system.

Steve Squyres, professor of astronomy at Cornell University, New York, believes that the chances of *not* finding life 'out there' in the next fifty years are virtually nil. He is somewhat cautious about finding evidence of life on Mars, however, noting that Mars and Earth have 'been swapping rocks for billions of years' and any evidence of microbes on Mars could be of an earthly origin.



Colin Pillinger

While most of the scientists questioned refer to finding evidence of microbial life, it is interesting to note that the search for intelligent life also comes into the equation. Recently, Seth Shostak of SETI proclaimed that his team would find evidence of ET intelligence by 2025 and Ian Morrison of Jodrell Bank quipped



Seth Shostak

that he believed that we would have direct contact with aliens before SETI detected a signal. Brazilian researcher, Rogerio de Almeida Freitas, has announced that the extra-terrestrial presence on Earth will be indisputable soon, with worldwide sightings of 'huge' UFOs captured by the media between November 16th, 2006, and April 30th, 2007. We'll see...

With our space science still in somewhat of its infancy, we are flinging probes to worlds in our own solar system that may harbour life. We are also planning manned missions to the Moon and, possibly, Mars. Is it too much of a leap to suggest that intelligences far in advance of our own have already found their way here? Will the scientists be proven right in that we share our cosmic neighbourhood with a few microbes? Or will Freitas' vision of mass sightings in the next six months come true?

Will we have to wait fifty years or is the truth a lot closer than we think?

Steve Johnson - 2006

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fireworks and, after they hovered, we also ruled out aircraft. If it was helicopters, they would have been audible, but there was no sound whatsoever from the lights.

"At that point, I asked my partner to nip round to our house for our camcorder. We then pointed the lights out to the ladies and they also agreed they were odd. She said there was no battery in our camcorder, so my neighbour ran and got his for me to use. However, it was too late because while he was finding his camcorder, the lights had both moved to a different part of the sky and suddenly zipped upwards into the air. This movement also made us rule out Chinese lanterns as has been suggested to us.

UFOData Magazine was alerted to a video that appeared on YouTube in mid-November of a UFO sighting in Exhall, a village about twenty miles south of Birmingham. Darren Gordon and his neighbour, Trevor Naylor, saw the objects and, luckily, had a camcorder to hand.

Their footage appeared on Central TV News shortly afterwards. One segment in particular had us smiling in the office and on the UFOData forum, when, as Darren is taping this invasion from space, his wife is heard to say: "There's an extra burger, if you want one, love."

We contacted Darren and here is what happened in his own words:

"We take it in turns with our next door neighbours to have a fireworks display each year. This year it was their turn. We usually eat first and then crack open the fireworks for the kids. There were four adults and three kids at the same house. The ladies were busy cooking and the kids were helping us to set the rear garden up for the fireworks display. Myself and my neighbour were just about finished preparing when he said, "What's that up there?" He pointed to two lights that almost looked like stars, but they were moving. We ruled out

"So we had missed the opportunity to take some footage of these objects. The camera was set aside in the kitchen and we all went back outside to start the fireworks party. After seeing what we did, our eyes kept wandering up to see if there were any more, when we all spotted two more lights coming over again from the same direction. This time I knew where the camcorder was, so I ran and grabbed it, stood on the kids climbing frame and started filming. The second pair of lights travelled the exact route of the previous two, but then one stopped while the other carried on moving, then after about three or four seconds, the one that had stopped shot across to again catch up with the light that was ahead of it. They again travelled together, then both stopped and hovered for a while before shooting upwards into the sky, just as the first pair had. Both lights [shot upwards] at the exact same time and at an impossibly rapid speed. They actually illuminated the surrounding cloud as they shot upwards. Just as they disappeared, we saw some kind of conventional aircraft in the same part of the sky, which circled the area twice before leaving. This aircraft was audible and was easily identifiable. I filmed it briefly too so I could show the comparison on the recording.

"The guy that describes the events on the news footage (Trevor Naylor) was two doors down in his back garden

untouched photo



Objects highlighted above.

with his wife and two children, and we established that they were all watching the same thing as us. He tried to film the objects on his camera phone but the results weren't too clear unfortunately.

"Although the ladies found the lights strange, they went back in to finish off the burgers, as you can hear on the soundtrack of the footage. They agreed they were unusual, but they didn't want to burn the remaining food (priorities huh?). The children were really excited about it and although we made no suggestions to them as to what they were, they also saw them as being very unusual.

"Things we noted whilst watching the lights were that they were silently travelling against the wind direction and they seemed to move in a very controlled manner, rather than being driven by the wind. (They were) hovering and then assuming the same pattern and distance from each other as before. We ruled out the possibilities of them being fireworks, aircraft, Chinese lanterns, stars

[or] satellites because they acted dif-

ferently to all of these things. They were brighter to look at than the film shows, but this was night-time footage taken on a standard digicam.



"I guess it was two sightings, each lasted approximately three minutes before they shot away into the sky. The sightings happened between 7:40pm and 8:10pm on November the 5th, 2006."

On first viewing the video, I was convinced that what we were looking at were those Thai lanterns that have been so much of a headache for UFO researchers lately. Darren's description, however, seems to suggest that

this was something different. The objects moved against the wind, manoeuvred in formation and shot up at great speed, illuminating the clouds as they went. Then there was the mystery plane that circled afterwards.

If any of our readers have any insight into this case, please feel free to drop us a line at *UFOData Magazine*.

Steve Johnson

**You can
email reports**

**to
news@ufodata.co.uk
or**

**call our office direct
0113 2865566
1.30pm to 6.00pm
please...**

POLISH UFO MYSTERY

Solved after almost 40 years...

There is a certain amount of responsibility attached to being a UFO researcher, indeed any kind of research demands objectivity from those who carry out the work.

When you are dealing with a subject such as ours then the objectivity part of the research is a must if he or she expects anyone to take their particular line of work seriously.

In this article from Poland, Robert Lesniakiewicz takes into consideration evidence that would not have been common knowledge at the time of the sightings, but has become available to him in more recent times.

The images are reconstructions from eyewitness accounts of the time.

WHITE TRIANGLES OVER POLAND



By Robert K. Lesniakiewicz

This story has its beginning back in the late 1960s. When I was a young boy, I spent my holidays on the Polish



western coastline and it is here where the first of two sightings took place in an area between Szczecin and Swinoujscie. (see map below).

Firstly myself and almost 100 of my schoolmates noticed a strange object in the early morning skies around 06:00 hrs. It was a white triangle, which hung almost 70° above the western horizon. Later we went onboard a small tourist ship, *MV Alina*, from Szczecin-Dabie terminal to the Jezioro Dabie lake in thick fog. At 07:00 hrs, we entered the Zalew Szczeciński lake and the fog began to lift. We were able to watch a broad area of water from eastern shore to the German part of the lake on the West and we could still see the white triangle-shaped UFO as it hovered above the western part of the lake at an elevation of about 60°.

I watched this unusual object until about 9 o'clock, when our boat ride came to Swinoujscie port. The UFO moved slowly toward the German border and finally disappeared

behind trees of the Uznam/Usedom island.

This UFO sighting took place on July 27th, 1967.

I described that incident in my book entitled *UFOs Above the Borderland (Cracow, 2000)*.

Another UFO report very similar to that one I witnessed came

from the Tatras Mountains.

On Sept. 13th, 1973. I went again on holiday with my classmates in Zakopane, where we visited the tourist attractions of that region. On Sept. 13th, we went from Zakopane through Lysa Polana and Morskie Oko lake to the Dolina Pieciu Stawów Polskich valley via the Swistowka pass. We were on a saddle of the Swistowka at 8 o'clock. We rested and started to watch the beautiful, wild and primitive landscape of the High Tatras.

The weather was perfect, the sun shone very bright, no clouds in the sky, no mist in the valleys. There were two large lakes behind us and five smaller tarns in front of us so we were surrounded by water when sud-



BALLOON-SHAPED UFO ABOVE THE ZALEW SZCZECIŃSKI LAKE SEEN IN LATE 1960'S

denly one of my class mates noticed something strange in the morning sky. He was pointing at a bright-white triangle, which moved very slowly from the South to North. We watched it for about 4 hours until we lost sight of it behind Woloszyn mountain range.

The next day one of my friends bought the *Gazeta Poludniowa* (now *Gazeta Krakowska*) newspaper, where we read an article about a UFO-sighting over part of the Northern Slovakia and the Malopolska (Little Poland) Province of Poland. The UFO was seen by many people in an area from Poprad and Liptovsky Mikulas in Slovakia to Cracow in Poland.

The UFO was also observed by two Polish astronomers - Prof. Dr. Kazimierz Kordylewski Ph.D. (1903-1981) and his assistant Mgr. Zbigniew Dworak - the both of the Jagiellonian

University Astronomical Observatory in Cracow, it was also seen at the Hvezdaren Astronomical Observatory over Skalnaté Pleso tarn in Slovakia and the Astronomical Station of the Jagiellonian University in Koninki, Poland.

The two astronomers stated that they had watched a flying, balloon-shaped structure.

They described the UFO as being over 100m in height and observed it heading towards the North.

As a matter of coincidence during this time in Eastern Europe there was a symposium devoted to the possibilities of the contacts & communication with extraterrestrial life conducted by the Jagiellonian University in Cracow! I described that in another book of mine, *Project Tatras* (Cracow, 2002).

I was not able to explain those events for a very long time and they remained 'unidentified' but recently I discussed this matter with some friends and historians of the internet site *Inne Oblicza Historii* (Other Faces of History - www.ioh.pl). Although nobody had answers for me, I found reference and suggestions in works by Prof. Dr. Ing. Zbigniew Schneigert (1908-1998), who was a Polish member of the AAS and authors M Twarowska, who wrote about the attempts to use stratospherical balloons to lift spacecrafts above the low layers of the Earth's atmosphere up to 40 km and more.

This was an early attempt to create the modern single-stage-to-orbit (SSTO) program, a much less expensive way of getting satellites into space than using traditional multi-stage equipment.

According to both men's work, experiments were carried out by both superpower and other countries too, but the results were never published. It is quite understandable, because that technology can be used to launch ICBMs and ASAT-missiles.

I think that balloons and airships could also be used in the modern SDI/NMD-type defence programs in USA, Russia and China.

Other UFO-sightings with balloon-shaped UFOs were reported in Hungary and Bulgaria in late 1960's. According to the information given by the Polish Press Agency (PAP), the UFO over Hungary flew at an altitude above 100 km. It was similar to the stratospherical balloon, white-silver in its colour, which emitted long, blue-green sparks from its top and bottom.

Similar accounts are mentioned in the book, *NOL - Goscie z Kosmosu tom 1 and tom 3 (UFOs: Guests from Space vol. 1 and vol. 3, Gdansk 1983, 1988)* by Lucjan Znicz-Sawicki (1912-2004).

I discussed this matter with Hungarian writer and ufologist, Istvan Nemere, who stated that in fact such balloon-shaped UFOs had been seen over Hungary on June 10th, 1947, and that the 'UFO-wave' was probably the American operation.

The balloons had anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda leaflets in them, he says.

The Bulgarian press released information of the UFO-sighting over Sofia on November 22nd, 1967. The object again was very similar to the one which I witnessed over the Zalew Szczecinski lake in 1967 and the Tatras mountains in 1973. The same such UFO was also observed above the town of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria and Budapest, Hungary.

The Soviet press *Izvyestya* and

Pravda daily newspapers 'explained' that phenomenon by claiming that the Hungarian's and Bulgarian's watched the NATO weather balloon. The same 'explanation' gave the Bulgarian astronomer Dr. Bogomil Kovachev in the Bulgarian press.

The next 'weather-balloons' launched by NATO were seen in the Bulgarian village of Bokhot (Pleven District) on December 29th 1968 another balloon was seen in Yugoslavia during the Summer of 1968.

Don't forget that at this time the Warsaw Pact's troops occupied Czechoslovakia (from Aug. 20th, 1968 to Sept. 12th, 1968) and the central European skies were open to both Western and Eastern spying devices. After looking at the more recent research, I have come to the conclusion that I am almost 99% sure that the UFOs I observed with many other witnesses were probably the Soviet and NATO/USA weather and spy balloons, which flew above Central Europe to bring the intelligence data from the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries during the height of the Cold War, but they could also have been early attempts to launch satellites or ICBMs with the stratospherical units.

So then, I think that patience has finally resolved this particular mystery.

Jordanow, November 24th, 2006.



Shopping Centre UFO Stops Traffic

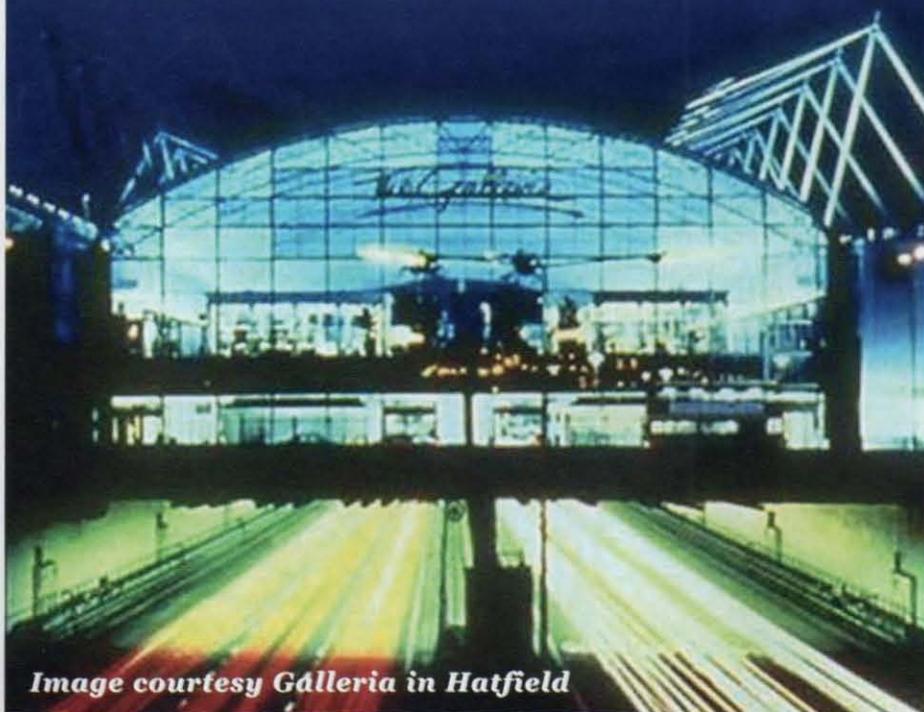


Image courtesy Galleria in Hatfield

This report featured in southern local paper, *The Welwyn & Hatfield Times*, recently.

A UFO was spotted hovering over *Times* territory on two separate occasions at the weekend.

On Friday evening, several drivers

stopped in the road to stare at a "spacecraft" hanging in the air near the Galleria in Hatfield and on Sunday night a group of teenagers claim they saw lights moving slowly over a housing estate in Welwyn Garden City.

The *Times* received several calls from

startled witnesses on Monday and all were adamant that what they had seen was definitely not a plane, helicopter or firework.

One woman, who wished to remain anonymous, said she had been driving past The Galleria at around 5pm when she noticed lights in the air at about the "height of an electricity pylon".

She said: "The only way I can describe it is like a space craft. It lit up the sky with blue lights.

"Initially I thought 'Oh my God, there's going to be a plane crash!'. Its proximity to the ground meant it would have crashed if it had been a proper aeroplane."

The WGC resident said that, in a scene reminiscent of the Spielberg classic, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, she and several other drivers stopped to look up into the sky before exchanging amazed glances.

"I thought I was going crazy!" she said. "We were all baffled.

"I didn't believe in UFOs before but when I saw it I thought what the hell else could it be?"

Just two days later, 15 year old Lucy Smith, of Essendon Gardens, was called out into the garden at around 7.45pm by her two excited brothers, Craig and Toby, 19 and 13. She told the *Times* she looked into the sky and saw three bright red lights low in the sky. "They were moving slowly over the houses," she said.

"It wasn't a plane or helicopter because we couldn't hear an engine and it definitely wasn't fireworks because they stayed for too long in the sky.

"The dogs were going crazy. It was just like in the films. It was a UFO!"

UFO DATA received an excited phone call from a driver on the M25 claiming traffic was stopping to look at this UFO....

If you can tell us more please email:
news@ufodata.co.uk



DID
YOU SEE
?

Steve Johnson reviews recent programmes...

ON THE BOX



THE BRITISH UFO
MYSTERY

The British UFO Mystery
Channel 5 (UK) - Wednesday,
1st November, 2006

Channel 5's documentary series, *Stranger Than Fiction*, has covered some intriguing topics this year, not least the excellent *Apollo 11: The Untold Story*. This episode covered an event of which the general public is likely not even aware, although is quite famous in UFO case files. *The British UFO Mystery* tells the story of a series of UFO sightings that occurred on the night of March 30th-31st, 1993, and the man tasked with investigating them on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).



Nick Pope was assigned to Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a (Sec. (AS) 2a) in 1991 and served there for three years. His job was to investigate UFO reports and ascertain whether there was any threat to the national security of the United Kingdom. He estimated that during his time at Sec. AS (2a), he received, on average, five reports per week and that ninety-five percent of those could be explained in orthodox terms (aircraft, weather, meteors etc.). He also delved into the archive and found that since its inception in the 1950s, the department had received over ten thousand UFO reports. Nick

confirmed that both the government and military took the UFO subject very seriously and, against the recommendation of the 1950 Flying Saucer Working Party, continued to collect and collate all the reports that came in.

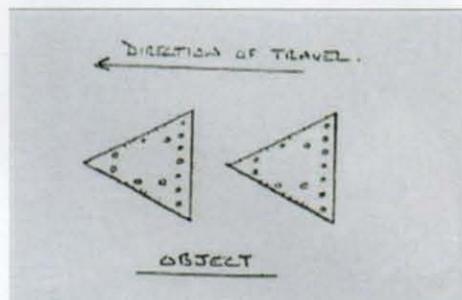
One case that he looked at is legendary: The Rendlesham Forest Incident. I don't need to go into the case, as we all know the story of the lights seen in the woods between the RAF bases of Woodbridge and Bentwaters in Suffolk over the Christmas period of 1980, but the programme covered it with some nice re-enactments. Portions of the Halt tape recording were also played.

Nick is of the opinion that the Rendlesham event is very important in the study of UFOs because the witnesses were highly-trained observers and men tasked with protecting front-line bases during the Cold War. He maintains that if the case had been investigated thoroughly, an answer could have been found (whatever that might mean).

Because Rendlesham highlighted the problems of not investigating an incident properly, he vowed never to let that happen during his tenure at Sec. (AS) 2a. For two years he logged reports and explained most of them as mundane, thus hardening his scepticism of the subject. Then on the morning of 31st March, 1993, he began receiving reports of something that had occurred during the previous evening and early morning. He said his phone was 'ringing off the hook'.

Hundreds of reports came in from people claiming to have seen a huge, triangular craft in the sky over Wales and Southern England. Many of the statements were from serving police officers and members of the armed forces. By the end of the first day alone, he had over fifty people contacting him, with many giving descriptions of a structured craft with lights,

unlike any aircraft they had seen.



At 9:30pm on March 30th, 'a series of lights which formed a vast triangle' was seen heading from the west and entered British airspace over the Welsh coast. At 10pm, a sighting was reported by an off-duty police officer in the Quantock Hills area of Somerset. A huge object was described, flying in from the north at a low altitude. Nick received so many reliable and well-described reports that he was able to track the object's flight path. He found that it had overflown two of Britain's key military installations, RAF Shawbury and RAF Cosford, in the English West Midlands.

Pope was impressed with the length of the sightings (totalling about five hours) and the quality of the witnesses, all of them seemingly agreeing with each other about what was seen. One description, submitted by a police officer, likened the 'craft' to two Concorde airliners pasted together and extremely large.

At 1:10am, the object was sighted in Liskeard, Cornwall by another police officer, who saw a 'triangle of bright lights moving silently north'. Similar reports came in from Devon and Cornwall, with speed estimates of the object suggesting it was travelling at Mach 2 (about 1300mph). Nick suggested that the flight path of the UFO was comparable with a craft on a reconnaissance mission.

Nick soon realised that there were two distinct phases to the reports coming in. Those from the evening of March 30th described a large object at low

levels, while the reports from the early hours of March 31st depicted an object at high altitude. He was certain that by collating data from the UK's air defence network, he would be able to get to the bottom of the mystery. The witnesses seemed to agree that what was seen was gigantic, perhaps hundreds of metres across and brightly-lit. Surely it must have been detected on radar.



It was possible that what people were seeing were formations of satellites, passing overhead and appearing to the untrained eye to be a single, huge craft. It was a logical explanation and one that had stood Nick in good stead in the past. Unfortunately, that night, no satellites passed over the areas in question in orbits that matched the directions supplied by the eyewitnesses.

One piece of space junk did seem to match what people had seen that night. It was a spent booster rocket from the Russian Cosmos 2238 launch and re-entered the atmosphere at the same time as some of the high altitude UFO sightings. Nick said that it may have been visible from Devon and Cornwall on a south-easterly bearing that night.

Dr David Clarke, of Sheffield Hallam University, was absolutely certain that what was seen that night was the Cosmos booster burning up on re-entry. "We can put a definite full-stop on this one," he said. Nick Pope



agreed that the burning space junk could explain some of the sightings at 1:10am, but it could not have been responsible for the sightings earlier that evening. Dr Ian Morrison, of the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope in Cheshire, agrees that the earlier sightings could not have been from the Cosmos booster.

Estelle Burrige was travelling by RAF Shawbury in Shropshire at about 10pm on March 30th when she saw flashing lights in the sky. Thinking it was lightning, at first, she looked again and heard a crackling noise 'like electrical cables' coming from the lights. She believed that the lights were all part of a single, triangular craft.

Nick was surprised to have received so many reports from police officers and military personnel, people he regards as 'expert witnesses'. It was his experience that witnesses such as these were reluctant to make such reports for fear of ridicule from their peers.

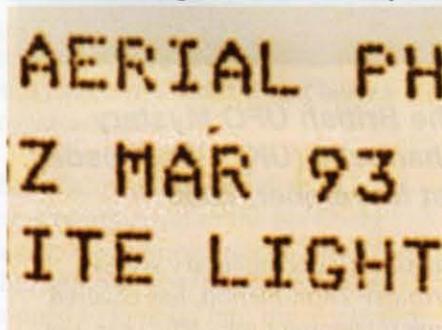


Detective Constable Gary Heseltine of the British Transport Police has compiled a list of UFO sightings made by police officers. He stated unequivocally that a report from a police officer should be taken very seriously. Law enforcement officials are expert at taking statements, logging duty reports and describing events accurately, because their notes may be required as evidence in court. If an officer filed a report, including one of a UFO sighting, that turned out to be untrue, Gary said that 'they would be crucified'.

One of the reports that impressed Nick greatly came from two RAF police officers at RAF Cosford, on duty on the evening of March 30th-31st. They described two bright lights above the airfield at about 1:15am. They appeared to be flying at high speed in a south-easterly direction at

an altitude of about a thousand feet. The lights were circular, emitted no beams, were creamy-white in colour and remained steadily in relation to one another as they moved. There was no noise from the lights and, as they disappeared from view, they appeared to emit a slight, red glow. The officers immediately contacted surrounding airbases, but no known aircraft were in the vicinity at that time.

Nick found that a civilian had filed a report from the area of RAF Cosford at roughly the same time. It matched the officers' report almost exactly.



Then a report came in from a meteorological officer at RAF Shawbury, nearly twenty miles from Cosford. He described the lights moving erratically towards him over the airbase and travelling at hundreds of miles per hour. He described the lights as 'narrow, like a laser beam' and that they appeared to be searching for something on the ground. He was an officer with eight years' experience and had never seen anything like it before.

The radar records at the London Air Traffic Control centre at West Drayton did show an aircraft over RAF Shawbury at that time. This seemed to satisfy David Clarke, who pointed out that the plane was in radio contact with air traffic control. The radar records told a different story to Nick Pope, who noted that they logged the flight level of the plane at over twenty-thousand feet. This is far too high to be attributed to the reports from the RAF police and meteorological officers, who placed it at a thousand feet. At twenty-thousand feet, an aircraft would seem extremely small from the ground, even with its lights flashing. But an aircraft at a thousand feet would be clearly recognisable to trained personnel.

With answers still eluding him,

Nick had one last explanation to draw upon. What if the craft was a top secret prototype, unknown even to air force officers? If it had been a test flight from a UK project, Nick would have been told as such, even if explicit details were omitted. He would have received word that the craft was 'one of ours' and that his search for an answer was over. He received no such assurances.

His next port-of-call was to ask the United States if they had any test flights over the UK that night. American research projects have been the cause of many UFO reports over the years, especially with the then-secret B-2 Stealth Bomber and F-117a Stealth Fighter.

Nick wondered if the project commonly known as 'Aurora' could be behind the sightings. He filed a request through the US Embassy, asking if 'Aurora' had been tested over UK airspace. He was told that such a project did not exist.

Undeterred, he tried again, contacting his American colleagues and asking them if any type of secret aircraft had been operated over the UK that night. The response he got back staggered him. Rather than confirming or denying any activity, the reply asked if the British had been testing any secret aircraft over the United States! It seemed that the Americans were having UFO problems of their own!

Bizarrely, the letter from the American government is missing from the file obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

As Nick's job was not to prove or disprove the existence of UFOs, but to assess the reports with regard to the security of UK airspace, he had to complete his report, saying that, while the object penetrated British skies and passed over two important RAF bases, it had never returned and, as such, could not be construed as threatening, despite being of unknown origin.

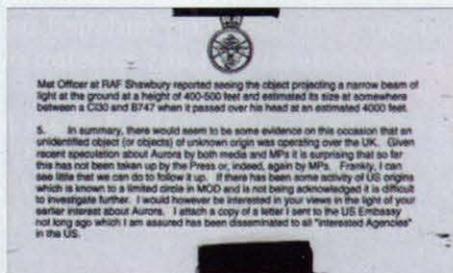
Ian Morrison was of the opinion that, as far as he knew, no UFOs could be construed as being extra-terrestrial. He then said (sit down and take a deep breath, folks) that he believed that we would have direct, face-to-face contact with extra-terrestrials before the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI), for whom Dr Morrison did research, picked up a signal!

The case has gnawed at Nick ever since. He wanted to explain the sightings, but failed to do so, through no fault of his own. With the FOIA coming in to force ten years after the incident, Nick found a document that startled him. It was written for and approved by his superiors and stated: "...there would seem to be some evidence on this occasion that an unidentified object (or objects) of unknown origin was operating over the UK."

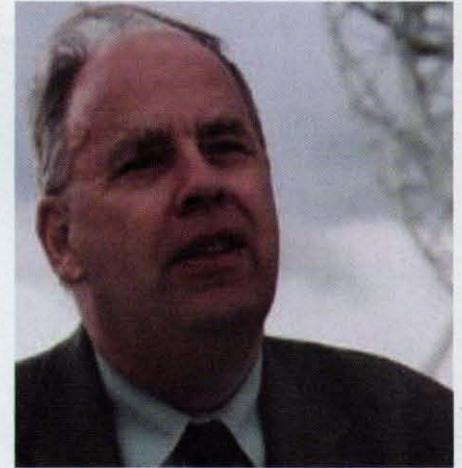
It is an astonishing statement, as it is senior MoD

personnel seemingly signing off on the existence of genuine UFOs.

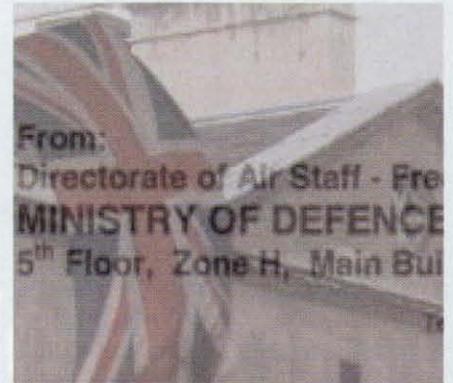
The 1993 case helped turn Nick Pope from a sceptic to a believer regarding the Extra-Terrestrial Hypothesis (ETH). He fully acknowledges that what was seen that night may very well have been a craft from another planet. The evidence appears to suggest that, he said.



This was a fascinating and extremely important programme. It should serve as a document to those of us wanting disclosure about the UFO phenomenon. Here we were shown files from the MoD that indicate top-level acceptance of the existence of unidentified flying objects. No question, it's there in black-and-white.



We also heard from a top scientist, the director of Jodrell Bank, Ian Morrison, suggesting that direct, physical alien contact would happen before SETI would pick up any signals. This is from the man who refused to look at The Secret NASA Transmissions: The Smoking Gun footage for fear of losing his budget. Astonishing!



It seems to me that something is happening at the very highest level with regard to UFOs. Not long ago, we were told that the subject was dead and buried, yet now you can hardly turn on a television without seeing a programme about it in one form or another. I think disclosure is not only coming, I believe we are in the middle of it. This is an exciting time for the subject and it seems we may finally start getting some definitive answers pretty soon.



BREAKING NEWS

As this issue goes to press, NASA made an official announcement on 6th Dec 2007.

In a news presentation, the team behind Mars Global Surveyor showed a series of photographs from the planet's surface, taken at different times during MGS' 9-year mission. These images showed signs of liquid movement on the surface within the last few years.

A full report in our next issue.



More info: www.nasa.gov

Mars Global Surveyor 'Contact Lost'

NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity did not detect any signal from the Mars Global Surveyor orbiter on Wednesday during an attempt to get the orbiter to transmit to the rover.

Pasadena, Calif. - NASA's Mars Global Surveyor has likely finished its operating career. The spacecraft has served the longest and been the most productive of any mission ever sent to the Red Planet.

"Mars Global Surveyor has surpassed all expectations," said Michael Meyer, NASA's lead scientist for Mars exploration at NASA Headquarters, Washington. "It has already been the most productive science mission to Mars, and it will yield more discoveries as the treasury of observations it has made continues to be analyzed for years to come." Its camera has returned more than 240,000 images to Earth.

(C) NASA/JPL

The orbiter has not communicated with Earth since Nov. 2. Preliminary indications are that a solar panel became difficult to pivot, raising the possibility that the spacecraft may no longer be able to generate enough power to communicate. Engineers are also exploring other possible explanations for the radio silence.

"Realistically, we have run through the most likely possibilities for re-establishing communication, and we are facing the likelihood that the amazing flow of scientific observations from Mars Global Surveyor is over," said Fuk Li, Mars Exploration Program manager at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif. "We are not giving up hope, though."



2001 image of 'The Face' with a much higher resolution than Viking...

Efforts to regain contact with the spacecraft and determine what has happened to it will continue. NASA's newest Mars spacecraft, the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, pointed its cameras toward Mars Global Surveyor on Monday. "We have looked for Mars Global Surveyor with the star tracker, the context camera and the high-resolution camera on Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter," said Doug McCuiston, Mars Exploration Program director at NASA Headquarters. "Preliminary analysis of the images did not show any definitive sightings of a spacecraft." The next possibility for learning more

about Mars Global Surveyor's status is a plan to send it a command to use a transmitter that could be heard by one of NASA's Mars Exploration Rovers later this week.

Mars Global Surveyor launched on Nov. 7, 1996, and began orbiting Mars on Sept. 11, 1997. It pioneered the use of aerobraking at Mars, using careful dips into the atmosphere for friction to shrink a long elliptical orbit into a nearly circular one. The mission then started its primary mapping phase in April 1999. The original plan was to examine the planet for one Mars year, nearly two Earth years. Based on the value of the science returned by the spacecraft, NASA extended its mission four times.

"It is an extraordinary machine that has done things the designers never envisioned despite a broken wing, a failed gyro and a worn-out reaction wheel. The builders and operating staff can be proud of their legacy of scientific discoveries and key support for subsequent missions," said Tom Thorpe, project manager for Mars Global Surveyor at JPL.

The spacecraft evaluated landing sites for the twin NASA rovers that landed in 2004 and sites for future landings of the Phoenix and Mars Science Laboratory missions. It monitored atmospheric conditions during

aerobraking by newer orbiters. It served as a relay link for the rovers and provided mapping information about their surroundings.

"When we watched the launch 10 years ago, we wondered if we would make the specified mission length. We certainly were not thinking of a 10-year operating life," said JPL retiree Glenn Cunningham, who managed the Global Surveyor project through development and launch. A few of the mission's many important discoveries about Mars include: The spacecraft's camera found gullies cut into many slopes that have few, if any, impact craters. This indicates the gullies are geologically young.

Scientists interpret this as evidence of action by liquid water, essentially in modern times.

The mineral-mapping infrared spectrometer found concentrations of a mineral that often forms under wet conditions, fine-grained hematite. This discovery led to selection of a hematite-rich region as the landing site for NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity.

Laser altimeter measurements have produced an unprecedented global topographic map of Mars. The instrument revealed a multitude of highly eroded or buried craters too subtle for previous observation, and mapped canyons within the polar ice caps.

The magnetometer found localized remnant magnetic fields, indicating that Mars once had a global magnetic field like Earth's, shielding the surface from deadly cosmic rays.

The camera found a fan-shaped area of interweaving, curved ridges interpreted as evidence of an ancient river delta resulting from persistent flow of water over an extended period in the planet's ancient past.

A long life allowed Global Surveyor to track changes through repeated annual cycles. For three Martian summers in a row, deposits of carbon-dioxide ice near Mars' South Pole shrunk from the previous year's size, suggesting a climate change in progress.

JPL manages Mars Global Surveyor for the NASA Science Mission Directorate, Washington.

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GROUP CAPTAIN GORDON BURGESS CBE 'AN OFFICERS STORY'

During my time at UFO Magazine, I heard many reports that raised eyebrows. Unfortunately a lot of these were hearsay and not really suitable for publication.

Back in 2001, we heard several reports that a local group in Stafford had presented a lecture from a retired Group Captain that was, to say the least, riveting. The audio recordings made at the time were never released, but I was recently contacted by Robbie Graham who had, some years ago, transcribed the tape in order to send a transcript with the Group Captain's blessing to Graham Birdsall at UFO Magazine. This was in late 2003 when we suddenly lost Graham and the transcript was never sent.

Well, Robbie has put that to rights and here, for the first time, we are able to present a lecture by Group Captain Gordon Burgess CBE.

Speaking: 16/05/01
Transcript of Audio Tape by
Robbie Graham

(Notes by Robbie Graham are appended '- RG'. Notes by Steve Johnson for UFOData Magazine are appended '- SJ')

Gordon Burgess (GB): I'm not actually used to talking in old theatres, I hope you can hear me at the back. If my voice should give out it's because I haven't actually been all that well recently and it's just possible that my voice will go.

Now, I'm very pleased to be talking to you here tonight because I suspect that most of you treat this particular subject quite seriously. Recently, I was asked why I had decided to talk about UFOs now - which at this time it's

about 43 years since I first became involved with it - and the answer is quite simple. First of all, whilst I was still in the Royal Air Force, I was under perhaps some compulsion to keep my mouth shut... I took it fairly seriously, but more recently I became aware that many people treated this subject as a sort of joke and this annoyed me greatly and I decided, as a first step, that I would talk to some people that I knew - actually members of the Staffordshire National Trust centre at which [I] happen to be Chairman. And as a result of that, I was then asked if I would talk to the Litchfield Scientific and Engineering Society. Now both of these bodies seemed to accept what I had to say and then Graham asked me if I would come and talk to you. So I said yes. I just wanted to make it clear that I don't make a habit of doing this, so I suppose to some extent you could say that you are fairly privileged. Now, I have absolutely no vested interest whatsoever in Unidentified [Flying] Objects. Everything that I say is based on my own experience and knowledge. I'm not using any visual aids, because pictures, like almost anything else in this world, are quite easy to manufacture and there are plenty of them available, but I cannot personally vouch for their accuracy and, therefore, I'm not prepared to use them.

My conscious memory starts in about the 1920s and I think it's very important that I tell you something about my background because it does, in a way, authenticate what I have to say.

You may of course, some of you, remember that in the 1920s, certainly the whole of Europe and a great part of the rest of the world had, hanging over its head, the shadow of the First World War.

And, even as a boy, I was very well aware of the threat that could still exist if Germany was allowed to revitalize itself, as of course it eventually did. And I have to say that, to me as a boy, it was the air which seemed to offer the most challenge and certainly seemed to offer the most adventure and I used to read every book that I could lay my hands on about aircraft and aeroplanes and as most of the books in fact turned out to be about the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War, that I suppose it was almost inevitable that I should develop a desire to fly military aircraft. That was strengthened when, in the summer of 1934, a large RAF aircraft made a forced landing in a field not far from my home. And as soon as I could get away from school, I dashed across from the house across to have a look at this aeroplane. It was, in fact, a Vickers Valentia, a big four-engine bomber or transport, and when I got to it there were two airmen guarding it. They were pretty friendly, because I suppose really a 12 year-old boy didn't offer much of a threat and they told me that this aircraft had come from Cranwell and that at Cranwell, amongst other things, they trained air signallers and they told me about the Royal Air Force College there - which I knew quite a lot about anyway. [They told me] one of the engines of this aircraft had had trouble, but they said that the next day someone would come and repair that engine and then the aircraft would fly away.

I think actually it was the sheer size of this aeroplane that most impressed me. It was an enormous thing, very basic of course. But I knew beyond any shadow of a doubt as I stood underneath that aeroplane on that lovely summer's evening, which was the sort of summer's evening you

only get in this country, that is, when it isn't raining, now I knew that this had to be my future. Of course, I didn't realize it then, but that changed the whole of my future life.

In 1940, I was almost, not quite, eighteen and the war had started the previous September and I walked into a recruiting office and said, "I want to be a pilot." They didn't actually laugh at me (I thought they might) and I was eventually sent down to Cardington, in Bedfordshire, where they used to take people to go through all sorts of peculiar tests. And I believe that on the day I went there, there were about 120 people trying to get into the Royal Air Force and out of that number only about 10 were actually accepted to become pilots. Now, the next milestone came when I completed my initial training. I'd actually flown solo. You had to prove, most people being sent over sea trained, but you had to prove that you could fly an aeroplane and I was sent to a little flying training school near Stoke on Trent, a place called Meir, now closed. It's an industrial site now. And there I flew an aeroplane for the first time. We were then kitted-out and we were all then going off to Rhodesia for further training. And then at the last minute I was told to hand in my kit. The C.O. wanted to speak to me and he said, "You're not going to Rhodesia" and I was terribly sad. I thought they were throwing me out. He said, "You're going to Cranwell." He said, "You're going there to be a cadet." And there, of course, the holy of holies, I learned to fly properly. I can't describe to you how important to me this was. This was actually the last of the proper cadet college courses that would run. After that it became a flying training school.

I got my wings in May, 1941, and they were pinned on by Lord Trenchard, the founder of the college [and] father of the Royal Air Force. And it's difficult now to remember the... the impact this had on a mere boy. I was nineteen the day before this happened and there I was, standing in front of this super college, with this old chap, who virtually had tears in his eyes, because he said, "I never thought I would have to send you young men into war." He said, "I thought we'd managed to stop it."

Whilst I was at Cranwell, I witnessed an occurrence which, of course, changed the whole future of aviation. Because on the 15th May, 1941, Gerry Sayer took off in the tiny Gloster Whittle aeroplane at 19:40 in the evening. And as we watched this little aeroplane zoom upwards, we suddenly realized it had no propellers. Now we were privileged to see this and we had been lined up so that we could see it and we were sworn to secrecy, you know. They said, "This is a very new thing, nobody else has heard about it, but you've actually seen it fly. This is what is going to happen in the future." Anyway, we got our wings shortly after this and we went and joined our squadrons and went off to war.

I flew from Iceland over the North Atlantic. I flew from Egypt to various other places in the Middle-East; over the Mediterranean and the Aegean Seas; from Scotland over the North Sea and the Norwegian Fjords. I flew from the Azores over the Southern Atlantic. And, to my surprise, I actually survived, though an awful lot of my friends didn't. Of my entry at Cranwell - and there were 25 of us - there were only two left at the end of the war. From my own village in Leicestershire, six of us flew in the Royal Air Force and I was the only one who survived. I've always been rather grateful and wondered why it was.

But this talk is not about me, it is about Unidentified Flying Objects. The aim is to simply show to you that, when I talk shortly about strange encounters, I wasn't an inexperienced youngster, but a battle-hardened veteran and I only believed what I could see for myself and this was very important. This all happened. Jump forward now to 1958. By now I was a squadron leader with 38th Squadron, based in Hawks... (Indecipherable - RG). Now, our province was virtually the whole of the Mediterranean, it was a very large squadron and there was no other RAF maritime patrol squadron in the Med. The Americans were there of course with the 6th Fleet in some force and we cooperated with them quite a lot. We flew the mighty Shackleton; the Shackleton with its four Rolls-Royce Griffon engines, each driving two very large, contra-rotating propellers. We could

fly for about twenty hours without refuelling and we could cover what, in those days, would be considered great distances.

With a crew of ten, being captain of a Shackleton was... was quite a difficult job and the aeroplane was quite a handful. I mean there was no modern fly-by-wire or anything like that. You know, when you operate that aeroplane, you are actually operating the control circuits, you needed very strong hands and very strong wrists, especially in rough weather and we used to get a lot of that at certain times in the Mediterranean.

In 1958, in fact, we were heavily engaged in Operation (Indecipherable [Operation Lucky Alphonse or Operation Sparrowhawk? - SJ]). You will recall a chap named (Indecipherable [George Grivas? - SJ]) was trying to drive the British out of Cyprus and, of course, our job was to stop weapons being taken in. We ran a detachment in Cyprus from which we did the various operations and, of course, from time to time, I used to go and command this detachment myself. Usually it was run by a flight-lieutenant, for instance. As a squadron leader, I felt that it was right that I should go and do this and I used to go and take my crew there from time to time... (Indecipherable - RG).

Now I'm going to read to you an account of something that happened in the early morning of the 15th of August, 1958, and as I've written here, "Gosh, that's forty-three years ago!", but to me it actually only seems like yesterday. The incident is still sharp in my mind, just as sharp as it was then. I actually wrote the basis of this report when it happened, as I was required to do and I have altered it a little bit to make it more understandable. I've taken out most of the Royal Air Force jargon, you know, we used to have our own sort of language. So here we are and I called it 'Close Encounter, 15th August, 1958':

The four Rolls-Royce engines hummed steadily and the crew dozed quietly and I checked the trim indicator of 'George' - the autopilot - that was flying the Shackleton effortlessly westwards at 2000 feet across the Mediterranean. It had been a normal

operational sortie. We had left Akrotiri in Cyprus at eight o'clock the night before [and] we had patrolled the entire coastline of Cyprus. We'd had some contacts and they had been investigated, we had identified them. We'd used flares and they'd been investigated by the Royal Navy, who had quiet ships on-station around Cyprus. We had found nothing, they were all quite clear and this was quite usual. Simply, the fact that we were there deterred people from coming. We landed back at Akrotiri at about midnight and we picked up the ground crew who'd gone with us to Malta and we were taking them back to Cyprus. This was a regular occurrence [and] we knew the procedure quite well. We'd go and stay a fortnight or so, pick up the crew and come back. According to the almanac, it was still night. But already, if you could see it, there was the first streak of light behind us which told us that another glorious day was coming to the Mediterranean.

Crete now lay on our starboard side, not very far away. (A few digressional sentences edited out here for time's sake - RG) I felt very tired, but I knew I had to stay awake just a few more hours yet, because my co-pilot in my right-hand seat - he was a young chap - was fast asleep. When we were transiting, we didn't keep everybody awake. Anyway, I wasn't really very bothered, but suddenly... "Skipper! There's an aircraft coming in fast on the port quarter." This sudden, sharp voice from the signaller in the port beam lookout made me wake up (I was partly asleep). I instinctively checked that the navigation lights were on, because in our job they were more likely to be switched off. "Are you sure?" I said. "Yes," came the confident reply. "Closing in fast." By this time, of course, everyone had plugged into the intercom system wide awake. It was very unusual to meet other aircraft out here, especially at night and certainly at the height that we were flying. It could, of course, be Greeks coming out to identify us. The Greeks, of course, were our allies in NATO, but because of the job we were doing, we didn't used to tell them what we were doing. And we certainly didn't clear through their flight information region, which we were in at this particular time. Any gun-running to Cyprus would start in Greece, so, of course, we didn't let

them know we were there. Civil traffic would have been much higher. The United States 6th Fleet were in port in Naples preparing for a NATO exercise and, in any case, they would always call us on a separate frequency, which we had before they closed (? - RG). They would never have approached on a military aircraft without cause. It could, of course, been a planet - we'd chased Venus before this time. Everybody who's ever flown, particularly in the early morning and late evening, particularly in places like the Mediterranean, knows how clearly you can see these planets, particularly Venus - and it looks like a flare - we'd chased after Venus before today. But suddenly an older electronics operator came on, a very experienced man, and he said, "No doubt about it skip, it's forming on us now and it's showing a red light." That was on our port side - a red light on our port side in formation. Wrong. It should be showing a green light if it's another aircraft. I eased round and tried to look back, but I couldn't see because of the wing and the two engines. Now the tactical navigator came on and he said, "I'm in the astro-dome and I confirm that it's showing a red light, but it doesn't look like any aeroplane I've ever seen before." I tried again to look back and suddenly I saw it, a cylindrical object, rather like a long cigar and the red light was actually on the nose, diffused in this sort of ghost-like cloud. I remembered, of course, that I should be careful, I had heard other stories about things being seen in the Mediterranean, but I wasn't much in the mood for playing around. Anyway, the geographic navigator came on and he said, "Can I have the radar down and full on? I want to get a check on our position fixed on Crete." [This was] because we had to report where we were. I felt the aircraft trim change because the radar on that particular Shackleton used to go quite a long way down underneath. The trim would change, so you readjusted the trim for 'George' to keep him happy. Having got the fix, the scanner was retracted, the radar was put back on standby, the engineer checked the fuel state - no problem there - we had about another 400 nautical miles to go, which, at our very economical cruise, would take about two-and-a-half hours. We didn't rush around because we were trying to save fuel really. It was now get-

ting really quite light.

I called the geographic navigator on the confidential intercom. We had a normal intercommunication system, but the captain could talk to any particular position confidentially and nobody else would hear. So I called the geographic navigator and I said, "Send a first sighting report to headquarters, just in case something happens." The signal of course would go 'Flash - Highest Priority' and in plain language, you wouldn't code it. And within a very short time, the radio operator said the message had gone and it had been acknowledged. He said, "There's an awful lot of interference, skip, but I did manage to get through it. Can I keep the training aerial out?" Now, the training aerial, which we used for communications, trailed out several hundred feet behind the aircraft. If you were in close company with anybody, you normally wound it in, but I thought, well, we might need it in a hurry, so I said, "Yes, leave it trailing out and if anybody wants to get tangled in it that's their problem." I can imagine the scene in the operations room in Houghton when they got our signal [laughs]. We were supposed to report ships not unidentified flying objects! [I said] "Captain to crew, I want everyone, including the passengers to have a look at this thing and to remember what they see and let me know when that's been done." Co-pilot and engineer went off to have a look and quickly came back and I thought to myself, well, there are sixteen of us on this aircraft and sixteen pairs of eyes can't all be wrong, you know, we must some of us be awake and we really have to know what we're looking at.

Very quickly everybody had seen it. Now I got impatient. I always was a bit impatient and I know the crew used to think I threw the aircraft about a bit now and then, especially when we used to practice low-level bombing on targets. [I said] "Captain to crew, secure the galley, stow all loose items, trailing aerial in, seatbelts tight!" Confirmed. They were very quickly ready. "Action stations! Action stations! Give me 2400 plus 4 boost." And I took 'George' out and as the Griffons wound up, the Shackleton, of course, responded like the thoroughbred she was and I rolled it over onto its starboard side into a

slight dive, well within the limits of the aeroplane, but very unusual. We didn't usually take it up to that speed. As soon as I'd got the sway on at about 300 knots, I slammed the throttle shut, the eight contra-rotating propellers all went full... (Indecipherable - RG) and, of course, the disk effect is better than any airbrakers, just holds it steady, slightly nose up and suddenly this thing shot forward and I got the sight and I poured the power on and I dived down after it and I suppose I was no more than about 50 to 100 feet behind it. I held it in my forward gun sight and followed it down and suddenly it pulled up and dropped back into formation as easily as anything! "That's enough," I said. "We'll climb into VHF (? - RG) range with Malta. Give me a rated power for maximum climb, put the transponder on NATO 2, trailing aerial out, retain combat stations, clear the front guns for action." It's part of the maritime tradition that after excitement you always have something to drink, so I said, "Send coffee round." I thought to myself that if I haven't emptied the water in the boiler that we'd soon have nice hot drink, which we did.

The navigator sent an amplifying report and of course we were squawking NATO 2 on our special transponder and that meant that we were a NATO aircraft, combat ready and asking for assistance. And our signal would show up very large on the Malta defence system as soon as we were in range. We rapidly climbed to 10,000 feet and, within minutes, Malta approach called and told us to change frequency to the Malta defence sector. Control had said they could see us and they had scrambled two Javelins to intercept. You might remember the old Javelin aeroplanes, they weren't really that brilliant but, by gum, they could move downhill. They came overhead at 30,000 feet and they hurtled down towards us and as they came down they reported that they could see another object with us... (Indecipherable - RG) and as they approached, this thing shot forward, I mean at incredible speed and went straight up.

I heard later, on the grapevine, that the type 18 defence radar in Malta lost the intruder at something around 60,000 feet and still climbing at a speed which was outside their range

to measure and they could measure up to one-and-a-half to two mach. This thing was going like the clappers. We reduced height, we crossed the coast of Malta (Indecipherable - RG) and then we landed and, in the office room, we all reported what we had seen and we wrote a report and it went off to London. We were told not to talk about it, but, of course, we did nothing else, amongst ourselves, for weeks. As I say, that was over 43 years ago, well... about 43 years and I still remember every detail as though it was yesterday. There is no doubt in my mind that that thing was real. When it left us, I actually passed through its slipstream and felt the jolt. I mean, it wasn't a ghost, it was a real object. I, at that time, never really took any more interest in it.

I remember the thrill of the chase on that lovely, Mediterranean morning so long ago and the way in which our Shackleton responded. I mean, it was a wonderful aeroplane - you could throw it around and it never complained.

After Malta, I was promoted to Wing Commander and I took over the flying wing at Royal Air Force Kinloss, which is up on the Moray Firth, right up in the north of Scotland. And I kept my mouth shut, but, in fact, I heard talk going on amongst other aircrew and it was quite clear that other people had seen things and they'd all been told to keep quiet. So I became very interested in the whole subject. But nothing very much happened when I was up there, except one night I was flying far to the north, right up in the Arctic Circle on one of our Soviet surveillance operations - we used to go up there to check on the Soviets - and we saw quite a lot of peculiar lights. Now, we had been told and were told afterwards, that this was the aurora [borealis - SJ]. Well, I'd seen the aurora. I'd seen St Elmo's fire. These were lights and one of them was definitely slightly red. So I don't know. We didn't get close enough really to identify them.

After Kinloss, I was posted to the Royal Air Force Staff College on the Directing Staff. I had done the staff college course myself, and qualified, before going to Malta. And I became the lecturer on communist countries and Marxism. You may think it's very odd, but in our service staff colleges,

we actually studied communism and we studied Marxism, but you see it's very important to know your enemies and this is what we were about. I used to lecture, not only to our own Royal Air Force staff college, I used to lecture to the Army and the Navy and I used to do some overseas lecturing as well and I had to keep in close contact with the Foreign Office, because I used to get a lot of my information from Moscow to the Foreign Office.

And one day I was in the Foreign Office and a chap that I dealt with said, "Do you know anything about UFOs?" and I was quite surprised by this so I asked, "Why?" He said, "Well, the Russians are very bothered about things that have been flying around some of their secret areas and they've asked the Americans and ourselves if we know anything about it." And, of course, I was very intrigued, because I can assure you that if anything goes flying around in those days, anything that went flying round in Russia would be shot at. And if the Russians couldn't shoot these things down, they must have had a hell of a capability. Anyway, as a result of this I was asked if I would meet a Russian general, which I did. He had come over, in fact, from Moscow to visit. He wasn't the normal defence attaché, he was an air force general and he was, quite genuinely, wanting to talk to somebody and I got the job. So I got permission to invite him down to the staff office. I thought we could talk better there than anywhere else. Just one slight, little story on the side here - I went to a great deal of trouble to get hold of what I knew was very good vodka. I wanted a vodka that was not just the sort of rubbish that they sell over here in the shops, but the real stuff. And in fact, through our embassy in Moscow, I actually got hold of a bottle of vodka which was the one that they drank in the Kremlin whenever visitors were over there and that's how our embassy got hold of one.

They sent this through in a bag and I took this general in for a drink at lunch time and put this bottle very firmly in a position where he could see it and I offered him a glass of vodka and he pulled himself up and he said, "Niet! Vodka is for peasants, I shall have some of your very fine Scotch whisky!" [Audience laughs] So don't ever believe that the Russians

are not class-conscious, because they certainly are, particularly when you're a general, and he loved his whisky, I can tell you.

I had quite a long discussion with him and, as a result, I realized that these UFOs were operating in some very funny places indeed and there was no doubt that what was upsetting the Russians were indeed Unidentified Flying Objects. I couldn't do much about it at that time and I didn't talk to anybody else about it. My next posting from the staff college was, would you believe it, to the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall, where, officially, I was involved in the development and purchase of the Nimrod maritime aircraft for coastal and strike commands. That was my main task.

That aircraft is still in service, probably the best maritime patrol aircraft in the world. And of course the ones we tried to turn into airborne early warning aircraft weren't quite so successful, but you can blame a company which in those days was called GEC Marconi, they've changed their name these days. They cost us a fortune, but never actually managed to develop a radar. There was nothing whatsoever wrong with the aeroplane, super aeroplane - we're into our 3rd mark, coming into service fairly soon - (Indecipherable - RG). Anyway, that was what my job officially was. I was the liaison with Min Tech, who were buying the aircraft for us, but I used to look after what was called 'Special Operations'. I can only say that for this work I had to work closely with the intelligence people, I had to work with the Foreign Office and also with Number 10, Downing Street. And the incumbent in Number 10 in those days was a gentleman named Harold Wilson.

Don't ever believe that the Labour Party, particularly the Prime Ministers of the Labour Party, don't know anything about real power, because they certainly know an awful lot about it. I could get permission to do things from Harold Wilson that I could never have got from his predecessor who was Conservative. And I can tell you from personal experience that whenever we've had a Labour Government that they've always been very keen on doing the right thing in the defence field. They often don't

shout about this now, of course, because of the left wing of their party. Harold Wilson had no doubt as to who our potential enemy was and I never had any problem in getting his permission to do the things that we used to do to find out what the Russians were doing in certain areas. As a result of all this, I used to go into some very secret places in London and I thought, well this would be a good opportunity to sort of get my feet under the table and raise this business of UFOs. And I mentioned UFOs in one of these places and, by God, the roof nearly fell in! So I very rapidly changed tack.

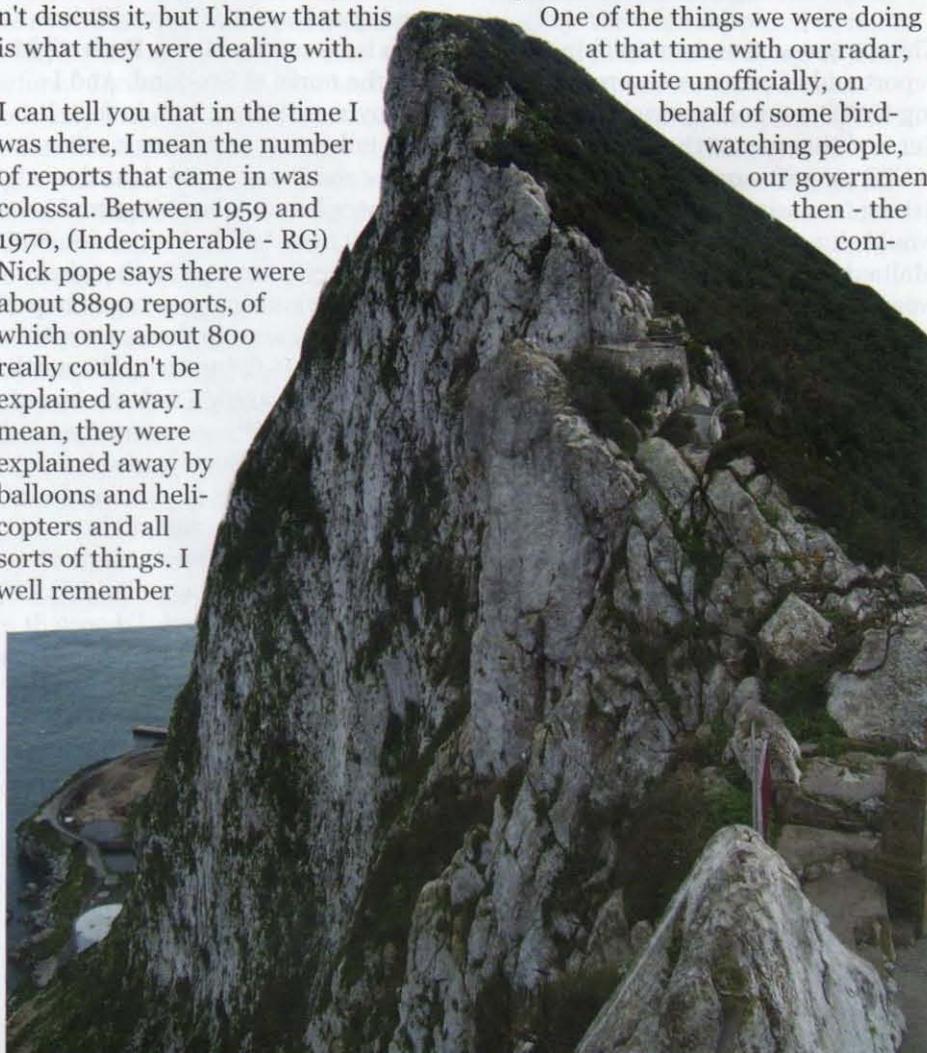
You may remember - you've just been told about Nick Pope, civil servant - well, when I was in the ministry, Nick Pope wasn't there, but he served, when he was there, in a place called the MoD Air Staff 2. Well, in my day, that was DS8 - Defence Secretariat 8. And because of the funny things that I was doing, I used to get bits of paper from DS8, asking if I could explain certain things and I rapidly realized that they were dealing with UFO reports, which, of course, Nick Pope would eventually do. Yet they wouldn't discuss it, but I knew that this is what they were dealing with.

I can tell you that in the time I was there, I mean the number of reports that came in was colossal. Between 1959 and 1970, (Indecipherable - RG) Nick Pope says there were about 8890 reports, of which only about 800 really couldn't be explained away. I mean, they were explained away by balloons and helicopters and all sorts of things. I well remember

when I was there, a particular Air Minister, in response to a question in the House - I had a bit to do with writing his response - he said that these sightings could be explained as meteorological balloons, natural phenomena, aircraft, etc. But when he came back into the ministry, after he'd been in the House, he told friends, and I was there, I heard this, he said, "Well, what can I say? I know they're not balloons. You know they're not balloons, but until we can actually get our hands on one of these damn things and put in on show at Farnborough, it's got to be a balloon, otherwise we all look like bloody fools!" You see because they just couldn't do anything about it.

Now let's jump forward to May 1973. After the Ministry of Defence, I was sent to Gibraltar to take a command there, because you may recall the Spanish started a campaign to take back Gibraltar and, of course, they shut the border and they were being very difficult... very aggressive. And I was posted out there to see them out, which I did.

I spent a wonderful time in Gibraltar. One of the things we were doing at that time with our radar, quite unofficially, on behalf of some bird-watching people, our government then - the com-



mander-in-chief was an avid bird watcher - we used to put a special camera on one of the screens for our main defence radar and we would run it all night, just taking pictures every so often. And we could follow the trails of these migrating birds. It was quite impressive, they'd come from all over Africa. They'd converge on places like Gibraltar because it's only a short track across the sea (Indecipherable - RG) high altitude, they used to come through. We were amazed at the altitude of some of these things. We did see other things moving with these birds! [Things] which we knew were not birds, because the birds showed up as just a trail. These things were individual, so I think we were looking at the odd UFO then. They weren't aircraft, because we knew every aircraft, we could identify aircraft.

Anyway, after commanding in Gibraltar, I went back to a staff college where I became group director. And after that I was sent to join the staff of the Supreme Allied Command Europe. Now this was NATO's post. SACEUR of course is based at Mons (Indecipherable - RG) in Belgium. But I, in fact, was sent to Omaha, Nebraska, in the middle of the United States and I represented SACEUR on the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff. Now, the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff was co-located, in those days, with Strategic Command of the United States and specifically Strategic Air Command. Strategic Air Command has now moved, it's now part of the 8th (? - RG) Air Fleet, but in those days it was actually there. And the Commander-in-Chief of Strategic Air Command was in fact the director of the Strategic Target Planning Staff and I was on his staff, representing SACEUR, so that I was damn near his deputy. What happened was that the United Kingdom and the United States, who are the two nuclear powers in NATO, France, of course, (Indecipherable - RG).

We would coordinate the national plans, but we then were given certain targets which SACEUR wanted to hit in certain circumstances and my task was to ensure that that happened. So I was allocated nuclear forces by the United Kingdom and by the United States and my job was to coordinate these with the other forces so that when we went to strike, you know, we

wouldn't all go after the same thing at the same time. So we used to produce a thing called the SIOP - Single Integrated Operational Plan. There's nothing secret about that, we used to make sure the Russians knew a fair amount about it. Because if you want to deter somebody, you have to remember that deterrents operate in the minds of your enemy and therefore he has got to know what you can do and he's got to be convinced that, under certain circumstances, you would do it. That's why the Russians backed down in the Cuba business and it's why they scarpereed like mad out of Egypt in 1973/74, because they knew what we would have done if they hadn't.

My office was in a complex which was undoubtedly the best-equipped and certainly the most secret place in the western world. Our computer capability was, and still is, the most sophisticated anywhere. I mean, man on the Moon - Houston - you could have dropped their computers in a corner of our set up and lost them. I had a thousand computer operators operating just for me at certain times, when I had to do a revision of some of our plans. Naturally, our offices were very deeply underground. I had about 150 feet of reinforced concrete above my head. But I did have an office on the surface, just so that I could occasionally look out and realize that it was daylight.

You may be interested to know, those of you that are computer buffs, that we invented Windows. We were into our fourth and fifth generation of computers by that stage and Bill Gates... pinched Windows from us. Well, he didn't pinch it, it was probably given to him... (Indecipherable - RG) we used him... (Indecipherable - RG)... but we invented Windows and we opened them and closed them as required for a purpose that I'm not at liberty really... to tell you about. Because we had to be ready to respond rapidly and it was here that the response would be generated once it was cleared by the President and the Prime Minister...

Basically because we have bits of real-estate all over the world that were once part of the British Empire which we would quite like to get rid of really, but they were too small to be viable and we allowed the Americans

to use them and there are a number of them: Diego Garcia, in the Indian Ocean, for example, [is] a British territory and it allows the United States to project their power in that neck of the woods, which they couldn't do if they didn't have use of that island. It is a British territory; on paper the commander there is a Brit... (Indecipherable - RG) we couldn't have operated in the Falklands without the use of Ascension and we couldn't have done what we did in the Falklands without the help of the Americans who, of course, used Ascension and it was their intelligence shared with ours, amongst other things, that helped us do what we did in the Falklands. So never run away with any idea that it matters who's sitting in Number 10, Downing Street - the Prime Minister, whoever he is, he cannot change history. Historically, you cannot escape from the way in which, in which we operate in certain fields with the United States. Long may it last, because it saves us a hell of a lot of money and it gives us a great deal of comfort and you should all sleep soundly in your beds, I mean, that we have this system behind us - it would cost us a lot of money to replace it.

Anyway, nothing can move without NORAD knowing it, not even birds, and I sat in the operations room one night and I asked the right questions in the right way and I did get some of the right answers.

I learned, for example, that on the 18th October, 1973 (I was virtually sitting there when it happened), a civilian pilot, a Captain Laurence Coyle, he was flying a helicopter near Mansfield, Ohio, at 11 o'clock at night and he saw a red light approaching him from the port side - just the same thing that had happened to me - [and] he realized it was the wrong colour. He took evasive action, but this object stayed with him. It actually hovered in front of him and then it shone a green light onto him for a time and then flew off at an incredible speed.

I learned later that the British crew of a British Airways Boeing 747, en route [from] London to Bangkok, saw another aircraft at the same height on their starboard side and it was showing a green light when it should have been showing a red light. "It came

towards us," they wrote, "and, in accordance with traffic rules, we turned to starboard, passed behind it and it accelerated across our bows and then it displayed a vague, red light on the nose. We resumed our original heading. It was not an aircraft such as we know them. It was cylindrical in shape, it looked metallic and it went away from us at a very high speed." And then they added, "We are all oldish, cynical aviators with many hours of flying experience. We have no doubt about what we saw." And some other members of the staff on the aeroplane, the cabin staff and passengers, saw it as well.

What is even more interesting is that on the 6th July, 1965, the captain and crew of a Norwegian tanker observed a cigar-shaped object fly out of the sea just off the coast of Venezuela, near to Punta La Cruz (Puerto La Cruz, a city with a large oil refinery in Venezuela? - SJ). It went straight up and disappeared from sight at high speed. It had a red light on the nose and appeared to be metallic. There were no submarines operating in the area.

It was tracked by Venezuelan naval radar and reported to the Americans.

Intriguingly, not long after this, on the 18th March, 1966, further south, just off the coast, in the Gulf of San Jorge in Argentina, a naval pilot reported seeing a cigar-shaped metallic object dive into the sea. The area was searched, there was no wreckage found and they just could [not? - SJ] say what it was.

Now, I was in the United States for four years and I discovered that there were two organizations there investigating UFOs. One, called the National Investigating Committee on Aerial Phenomena [NICAP - SJ], was semi-official. At that time it was chaired by a Major Donald Keyhoe - I've met him - a retired United States Marines aviator. It operated with the full support of the United States Air Force and Congress, sometimes called 'Blue Book'. The United States Air Force Party was chaired by a man named Professor Condon at Colorado University.

The CIA and the FBI have all been active in this cause since about 1952 and that was based upon the fact that

the then Secretary of the Navy, a man named Dan Kimble, was actually approached by two UFOs near Hawaii. He was on a... (Indecipherable - RG) by the Pacific and he said afterwards, "The speed of the craft was amazing. My pilots estimated that it was doing at least 1,500 mph." It was very similar to the thing that I saw. Flying behind Kimble, as is always the case with VIPs, was a second aeroplane. They were about 50 miles astern and the UFOs covered this 50 miles in less than two minutes and then zoomed off at a colossal rate of speed.

The CIA, the FBI, the United States Air Force, the Royal Air Force and the Russian Air Force all investigate UFOs. All of them refuse to discuss the problem. The secrecy is based on the fact that they can't explain what these things are and they can't do anything about them. It's always admitted that none of them have ever been aggressive, as far as we... (Indecipherable - RG) ...and we have been a bit aggressive towards them, but they've never... I mean there was one incident of at least one American aircraft being lost, but, almost certainly, the pilot ran out of oxygen and that was the cause of that particular accident [the Captain Thomas Mantell incident of 1948? - SJ].

After investigating, about ninety percent of the sightings can be explained as being either natural phenomena or aircraft, helicopters seen at difficult angles in the day or night. But that ten percent cannot be satisfactorily

explained, as I have said.

In 1989, one lot of sightings did get out of the bag - and you probably know about this - but all over the north of Germany and Belgium there were defence radar riots in 1989. Fighters were scrambled and then they were repeated in 1990. To give you some idea of the problem, one F16 pilot - you know an F16 can accelerate from virtually stand-still to 1,100 mph in a few seconds - at least one F16 pilot from the Belgian Air Force locked on to one of these things... (Indecipherable - RG) got up to sort of about 1,100 mph and this thing just went away from it like a, you know, they just couldn't get anywhere near it. One of these intruders was actually seen to descend 30,000 feet in a matter of seconds and that is totally impossible for any normal aeroplane.

And the Belgian Chief of Air Staff, General Wilfried De Brouwer said, "There was a logic in the movement of these things". For example, part of their evasion tactic was to fly slowly within the ground environment, thus avoiding radar detection. They certainly knew what they were doing.

Now I'm going to go back a little bit. In 1962, before I went to America - actually whilst I was still at Staff College originally - in 1962 I was one of the first senior Air Force officers to be sent to the engineering department of Bristol University to take part in a series of discussions on the use of



space. At that time we were taking our first, faltering steps in the use of satellite systems which we were going to launch, either in conjunction with the United States, which we did and, later, with our Western European defence partners. You may know that, apart from NATO, we're part of a thing called Western European Defence, which was set up just before we set up... (Indecipherable - RG)... Brussels... (Indecipherable - RG)... NATO... (Indecipherable - RG). Amongst other things, this gives us access to certain technical developments carried on in say, Italy and France, which... (Indecipherable - RG).

Anyway, at Bristol I met Sir Stanley Hooker. You may never have heard of him, on the other hand you may know him well. Stanley Hooker, of course, had worked for a long time with Rolls-Royce and he worked with Rolls-Royce... (Indecipherable on tape - RG)... and he eventually took charge of the development of the Rolls-Royce engines after Whittle handed them over. A very remarkable man. Probably, alongside Frank Whittle, he has done for - he's dead now of course - he did more for British aviation, I should think, than almost anyone else. Yet, as I say, his name is hardly known. I can't really say too much about him because I don't have time, but I talked to him about UFOs and he told me that no organization on this planet could produce the performance that he had heard of in these particular things and we were sat quite late into the

night one night talking about it - and in the end he quoted Shakespeare, he said, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Now, let's just apply a little bit of logic to what we've been talking about here. If we accept that there are vehicles operating in our atmosphere which could not have been made by people living on this planet, then, ipso facto, they must have been built by somebody else. Take into account that the vehicles we have seen don't even conform to our current knowledge of aerodynamics, they do not appear to have aero-foils, we have not been able to see any proper control circuits on them and add to this the very significant fact that no military crews have ever successfully photographed any of these vehicles. Now, my own aircraft, when I had my close contact, was very well-equipped with photographically, I mean we were a reconnaissance aeroplane and we had a sideways-looking F24 camera. We took at least two real desirable photographs and all the exposures turned out blank, except for a very grainy representation of this hued light. And I note that my radio operator, using medium to high frequency, reported heavy interference and I think these are significant facts.

These things seem to have the ability to cast around themselves some sort of an electronic screen which seems to present a problem. It certainly interferes with radio communication equipment as we know it.

Now let's just, quickly, we've got the time, quickly look at modern physics. Einstein, as you know, told us that $E = mc^2$, where 'E' is energy, 'm' is mass and 'c' is the speed of light. And laboratory trails with nuclear particles, have proved this equation and the final, awful proof, of course, lies in our fission and fusion nuclear weapons, things which, at one time, I used to deal with. It can be stated, quite clearly, that as an object approaches the speed of light, its mass will rise continually so that it will need ever-increasing energy to increase speed, but it can never reach the speed of light, because, by then, its mass will have become infinite. Therefore, we know that only light and - here's the important thing - other waves without intrinsic mass, can move at, or perhaps above, the speed of light. You've all seen these clever chaps on television, you know, that transfer themselves into some sort of ray and say, "Beam me up!" you know, well... it's perhaps not as stupid as it sounds.

Now look at our universe, it is, of course, vast beyond comprehension. Our own planet is just part, a small part, of a small solar system, in a galaxy which is just one of millions. In cosmic terms our galaxy is small and yet it is one hundred thousand light years from end to end. Taken as part of the total universe it is small. That's the size - one hundred thousand light years. Light, as I'm sure you all know, travels at just over 186,000 miles per second - per second. So you can see, this distance is beyond our comprehension. So when you look up at the stars, some of them other potential solar systems, try to think how far away they are and then accept the fact that according to our current state of knowledge, we cannot exceed the speed of light.

So how can these beings, if they're coming from outside our own system, how can they get here? The answer is that we do not know, not with our present state of knowledge.

So I now have to turn to philosophy. My investigations tell me that we are dealing with something which we cannot explain, [something] we cannot even comprehend. John Stuart Mills, in 1843, wrote *The System of Logic*, a work that is still the basis of modern logic. He wrote, "What we



cannot conceive or understand is not necessarily impossible." Here we have the enigma: we cannot explain what we see, yet logic tells us that it is possible.

I've, tonight, simply tried to open a little window onto a world that flies beyond our comprehension and I hope I've given you food for thought and that you now see... why we have to go on asking questions such as, "What is the true nature of our universe? And what is our place in it?" Scientists, of course, and philosophers have been asking these questions all down the ages. And it may be that in the future, as we reach out into space, we may find some answers.

Now, I haven't said anything to you about craft which we and the Russians send to orbit our own planet and indeed people that went to the Moon. Strangely enough, I have never heard of anybody asking them whether they have ever actually seen what they would consider to be UFOs. But I do know for a fact that it has happened and has immediately been clamped, like everything else. When I was in the States, I was at a lecture on this very subject and there's absolutely no doubt at all that these things have been seen in what we would call outer space.

So there we are. Ever since that morning in 1958 when I came so close to that shining, metallic object in the sky, I have continually wondered what it was and, after all this time, I'm no nearer the truth... and it is almost certain that I shall never know. Yet I do believe, most sincerely, that we must go on searching for this higher intelligence, which I am absolutely certain is responsible for this. And my hope would be that, one day, the people of the Earth, may find their salvation from contact with these beings and open up a future which we can only really dream about. This planet, like our Sun, is, of course, ultimately doomed - you don't have to get too bothered, it's not going to happen for a few billion years - but it is, ultimately, doomed. And, therefore, the future of our intelligent life, may have to depend, in the end, on the acquisition of knowledge which will enable that life, that intelligent life which we have, to continue somewhere else in our ever-expand-

ing universe. Therein, perhaps, lies Mankind's salvation.

I just want to finish on a slightly different note: when I started flying in 1940, there was of course a very special thrill and this was captured, so very well, by a young man - you may have read about him, you may have read the whole of this poem - Pilot Officer [John] Gillespie Magee, a young [American/]Canadian, flying with the Royal Air Force. And just before he was killed in action on the 11th of December, 1941, he wrote a poem. I'll just leave you with a few of his words:

***Oh! I have slipped the surly
bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laugh-
ter-silvered wings.
Sunward I've climbed...
I've topped the windswept
heights with easy grace,
Where never lark nor even
eagle flew.
And, while with silent, lifting
mind I've trod
The high, untrampled sanctity
of space,
Put out my hand and touched
the face of God.***

Thank you for listening.

POST-LECTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION:

Selected statements from the Group Captain:

DESCRIBING THE OBJECT HE SAW
IN 1958:

I would estimate that it was 60 to 70 feet long.

Q: Did it have any windows?

A: No. Not that I could see.

If you talk to anybody who has flown certain types of aircraft for any length of time at all, they've nearly all seen something at some time or another; not always quite as specific as the one I saw and not necessarily as specific as the others that I've heard of. But there's hardly any serious aviator - you know, professional aviator - who hasn't, at some time, seen something.

That 15 years is now gone, in fact it's

been gone for some time... but I still didn't feel any compulsion to talk until I noticed that there was a bit of a tendency, especially amongst some of the media people, you know, to make a bit of a joke of all this. And I suddenly thought, well at least I will tell one or two people one or two things that might make them think. But I haven't talked widely about this as I said, I only - I did it initially to some of my own friends who literally live in Staffordshire and then as a result of that I was asked to talk to the Litchfield Scientific and Engineering Society, who were quite interested and this chap [Graham Allen] happened to be there that night, you see, and he said, "Would you come and talk to us?" So I don't really do it; I may never do it again. I might write a book which can be published after I die, you know, that's the, [laughs] that's about the sort of feeling I have.

No. There's not anything they can do... there's nothing that anybody can do to me now. My fifteen years is over. Although it was pointed out earlier this evening that a particular United States General spilt a few beans and that he got shot, didn't he? I think he was shot - he certainly was, I think the term would be 'assassinated' - but nobody knows by whom. [Jokingly] I've probably been followed here tonight, but I wear a bullet-proof vest [laughter]. No, there's, I'm... I'm fireproof.

TRANSCRIBED BY
ROBBIE GRAHAM - 29/07/04

There are still people like Gordon Burgess who have had close contact with the UFO subject that have not yet shared their stories for fear of ridicule or worse.

UFO DATA Magazine would like to hear from anyone who during the course of their work was touched by this subject, touched in a way that would change personal views forever...

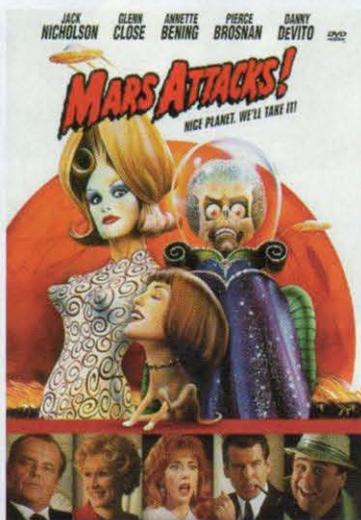


Aliens, UFOs Don't make me laugh...

Everybody knows that ufologists are a serious bunch of people, spending their whole lives staring into the sky or dryly investigating any and all reports for signs of the alien presence on Earth. Yep, we're all nerds with no sense of humour - or so the stereotype goes.

UFOs have been the butt of jokes since their popular inception. Terms like 'flying saucer' and 'little green men' were designed to make a serious subject more lightweight to the public. That said, a good joke is a good joke, even if you're the target. I mean, who doesn't titter inwardly when the old 'aliens from Uranus' chestnut is rolled out? Oh, is it just me, then?

Movies have poked fun at the subject



and the odd alien, took great pleasure in depicting a ufologist in as geeky a fashion as it could. The story revolved around a television crew for a cable channel paranormal programme looking for a good story. They travel to a remote location, following a UFO abduction story and all manner of gory fun ensues. It's pretty terrible stuff, but was redeemed by one of the

great lines in movies, though, when it was declared: "Don't f*** with a UFO enthusiast!" Nirvana...

Possibly the most successful transitions of the subject to the comedy screen were with *Men In Black* (1997), its 2002 sequel and *Alien Autopsy* (2006).

A massive, worldwide blockbuster, *Men In Black* starred Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith. Based on a comic book, it told the story of a

for years, with varying degrees of success. Films like *Mars Attacks!* (1996) and the more recent *Evil Aliens* (2005) revelled in the humour found in our beloved subject. Fleets of flying saucers from the Red Planet invaded in *Mars Attacks!*, with Tim Burton squeezing every comedic ounce out of the genre, from nerdy boffins to naïve politicians to gung-ho soldiers to the hilarious Martians themselves. "Ack! Ack!" A stand-out scene had a flying saucer ensuring that the Washington Monument fell on a group of visiting boyscouts. Burton's saucers were based on the designs of Ray Harryhausen in his sci-fi classic, *Earth Vs. the Flying Saucers* (1956), which was itself based on Donald Keyhoe's book, *Flying Saucers from Outer Space*. *Evil Aliens*, a British-made, low budget affair, swimming in gore, sex

secret government agency that monitored alien activity on Earth. One great scene had Tommy Lee Jones reading *The National Enquirer* and stating that it had the greatest investigative journalism on the planet.



Men In Black tapped into the government conspiracy aspect to the UFO subject rather than UFOs themselves, with the general public largely unaware of the many extra-terrestrials that live among them. The sequel used the first contact scenario as its basis, using cheesy, 1960s television visuals to depict the meeting of human and alien for the first time.

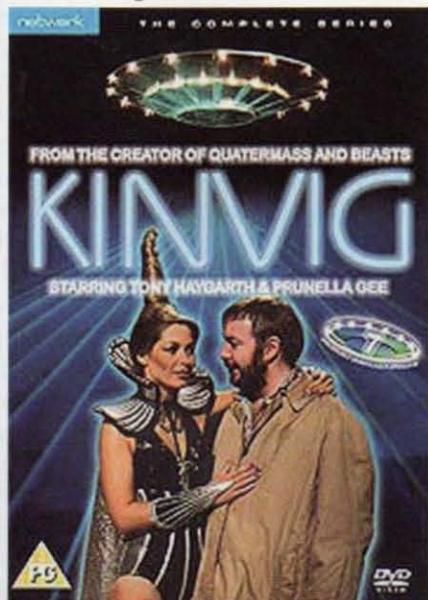
Telling the story of Ray Santilli and Gary Shoefield as they set about 'recreating' a movie of an autopsy on a dead Roswell alien, *Alien Autopsy* is often hilarious and the casting of telly favourites, Ant and Dec, was inspired. The filming of the autopsy itself is crammed with comedic gems, from offal ending up on the floor, causing the actors to slip, to the granny inter-



-rupting the scene, asking if anybody wants a biscuit and a cup of tea.

The world of television has also tackled the UFO/alien encounter comedy concept over the years. In the early Sixties, *My Favourite Martian* became a huge hit, telling the tale of a newspaper reporter coming to terms with an alien living in his home, christening him 'Uncle Martin'. In the Seventies, Robin Williams shot to worldwide fame as the confused alien moving in with a young woman in Boulder Colorado. *Mork and Mindy* was a massive success and spawned a lexicon that entered the public mind-set. Shazbat!

In the UK, a short-lived series called *Kinvig* aired in 1981. Written by the late Nigel Kneale, it revolved around a television repairman who stumbled across an alien spacecraft one night. The craft is damaged and Kinvig is asked to repair it. Curiously, this advanced piece of kit runs on old-fashioned tubes rather than 'modern' transistors and Kinvig quips, 'The more there is, the more there is to go wrong.' It only ran for seven episodes before being cancelled.



The big alien-centred comedy hit of the Eighties was the American show, *ALF*, an acronym for Alien Life Form. For four years, ALF (real name, Gordon Shumway from the planet Melmac) explored the human condition through the Tanner family. Often very funny, with the alien's dry wit cutting through each script, *ALF* recently had something of a comeback in a 1996 TV movie, *Project: ALF*. His image also appeared in an episode of *The Simpsons* when Millhouse declared that ALF was

back, 'in Pog form'.

Stand-up comedy has dipped its toes into the UFO subject too, with comedians relishing the opportunity to take the mickey out of us 'flying saucer nuts'.

Popular British comic, Frank Skinner, told the tale of the 'Mince Pie Martians' (the famous case from Christmas, 1979 in which Jean Hingley encountered alien beings and offered them mince pies). He had read it in a newspaper called *The Smethwick Telephone* and had his audience (and me!) howling with laughter as he recounted what he read:

"She says, 'I was in the back kitchen, washing up, when I saw this spaceship land on the lawn and I thought, 'Oh arr'. So I went up and knocked on the door.' Obviously, as you would - a spaceship lands in your garden. And these little green men, she said, little green men looked out and said, 'What do you want?' She said, 'What are you doin' on my lawn, here?' And she said that they understood every word she said, you know? Now if you've ever met anyone from Cradley Heath you know what an achievement that is! [...] She said she took 'em in the house and gave 'em all mince pies. I mean it was at Christmas!"

He rounded off the gag with a line from the newspaper, saying he would remember it if he lived to be a hundred:

"She watched as the alien craft rose into the morning sky and disappeared towards Dudley."

Another comic that mentioned UFOs was the late Bill Hicks. Hicks was more well-known for his barbs at authority and is now considered to be one of the great comic thinkers of recent times. He used UFOs in his act many times, but we will focus on one example. In 1991, he performed at the Montreal Just For Laughs festival and the show was released a DVD titled *Relentless*. Here's his skit (with expletives deleted):

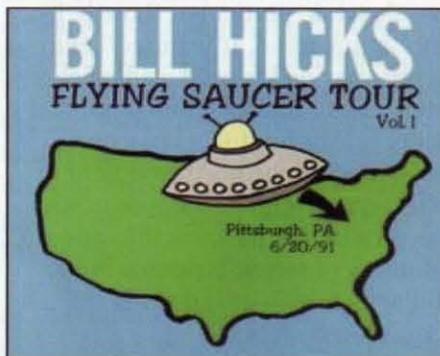
"I'm down South recently and I'm playing a town called Fyffe, Alabama. It's right outside Sputnumburg, for all of those who need a point of reference. Anyway, I'm down there in

Fyffe and they want me to host their annual Ricketts Telethon. Alright, whatever. It's great to be able to give something back. Anyway, in this town (this is absolutely true, it was in all the papers, it was on CNN), apparently, everyone in this town saw these UFOs. Everyone in the town saw these UFOs: Police chief, mayor, everyone saw the UFOs. I'm curious. I ask people what it was like:



"'Oh, man, it was incredible... incredible. People came from miles around to look at 'em. A lot o' people came armed.'"

"Excuse me? People are bringing shotguns to UFO sightings? Don't you think there's gonna be a point where we drop the weapons. I mean, when the mothership comes, 'Maybe we don't know everything (drops gun). Wowwww! It's not like some intergalactic skeet shoot. 'There's one now!' BANG! Bringing shotguns to UFO sightings, man, it kinda brings new meaning to that phrase, 'You ain't from around here, are you, boy? Yep, they're little green people. We call 'em boogers.'"



"So I said to the guy, I go, 'Why do you all bring shotguns to UFO sightings?' He said, 'Well, we don't wanna be abducted.' I'm thinking, 'Yeah and leave all this? Dude, if I lived in this town, I'd be on my hands and knees, praying for abduction every day!'"

"I said, 'What do you mean, abducted?' he said, 'Well, they abduct people and they perform scientific and medical experiments on 'em.' I said, 'Well maybe we'll be lucky and it's some type of sterility or dentistry program they got going. Maybe they come down, castrate you, straighten your teeth and split. Sort of a Clean Up The Universe pack.' He said, 'Huh?'"

"And I'll tell you something that's starting to annoy me about UFOs, the fact that they cross galaxies or universes to visit us and they always end up in places like Fyffe, Alabama! Maybe these aren't super-intelligent beings, you know what I mean? Maybe they're like hillbilly aliens, some intergalactic Jode family or something."

"Don't you wanna land in New York or LA?"

"Nah, we just had a long trip. We gonna kick back and whittle some.' Oh my God, they're idiots! 'We're gonna enter our mothership in the tractor pull!"

"The last thing I want to see is some flying saucer up on blocks outside a trailer, you know? Bumper sticker on: 'They'll get my ray gun when they pry my cold, dead, eighteen-fingered hand off of it!' Oh my God, we're being invaded by rednecks!"

Back in the early Eighties, the popular children's series, *Tiswas*, had a short-lived spin-off called *OTT*. All the gang from *Tiswas* were there (with the notable exception of Sally James) and it ran for thirteen, pretty dire episodes before being canned. One sketch in particular, though, has stuck in my mind. It featured Lenny Henry, playing his newsreading character, Trevor McDoughnut, and Paul Henry (of the original *Crossroads* fame, in which he portrayed Benny). In the sketch, Henry was a man who was certain that he knew the cause of a number of recent incidents in the Midlands, which included his car being placed on bricks.

"It was the Martians," he said. "I expect they had landed and taken off again in some form of extra-testictorial craft. They had taken my wheels and replaced them with a form of transport that looked like four piles of



bricks. I got in the car and turned the key. I didn't know what to expect."

"I can imagine," quipped McDoughnut.

"I turned the key and I didn't know what to expect. Air travel? Time travel? Even space travel?"

"What happened?"

"The car fell off the bricks and I broke my back axle."

As UFO enthusiasts, we have to develop thick skins. We are an easy target for comic relief, but if the jokes at our expense are good ones, we should be flattered. After all, if there was no UFO subject, comedians and comedy writers would have one less thing to write about. We would have had no *Men In Black*, no *Alien Autopsy* and no *Mork and Mindy*. Oh no! I take it all back!

Steve Johnson - 2006

EDITORS CHOICE

I'm sure Steve's look at some of film and television's comedy offerings over the years has stimulated the giggle muscles in quite a few of our readers.

As editor, I couldn't resist the chance to mention my favourite offering over recent years.

It was *Galaxy Quest*, the finest skit on *Star Trek's* success you will ever see. My favourite line.

'You just had to get your shirt ripped' Alan Rickman (prosthetic head hanging off) to Tim Allen after he has just saved the crew yet again...



Livingston *Cont...*



PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING OF ROBERT TAYLOR'S TROUSERS.

In June 1988, I wrote a letter to Jenny Randles of BUFORA, asking for funding or a grant in order to set about trying to find some new information about the famous Livingston Case. The concept of a psychic quest for possible added pieces of information in regards to the Livingston Incident, came about during a committee meeting of the SPI which was held at the Station Hotel in Alloa on the 7th of June, 1988. I had taken along the trousers that Robert Taylor wore that day and which showed, quite clearly, the rips in them, especially to show a local psychic medium, John Williamson. John had predicted with great accuracy the tragedy of the capsizing of the ship, *'The Herald Of Free Enterprise'* and also the tragic fire at the London Kings Cross Tube Station, weeks before they had happened. My thoughts were, I wonder if John could 'psychometrize' these trousers and see if he could get any feelings about them?

For those who don't know what psychometry is, I should give a brief introduction. Psychometry, otherwise known as 'object reading', is the apparent 'reading' of the history of an object/article which belongs or belonged to an individual either living or dead. Psychics claim that by holding an object in their hands, they can receive images about who it belonged

to and where it came from. The word was invented by an American scientist, Professor Buchanan back in 1842. The psychometrist, a medium or sensitive, usually takes the object, which they like to be a personal object that has had a long association with its owner, and hold it quietly in their hands where they seek to absorb something of that person.

There have been many spectacular results from the use of psychometry. Anyway, at this committee meeting, we asked if psychic, John Williamson would like to hold these trousers and see if he could 'tune in' and perhaps perceive any images that might come his way. It would be fair to point out to the reader, that John *was* aware of the history of the trousers, that he did know who they had once belonged to and what had happened to him, but this was just a 'one off test' with John. We knew only too well, that to conduct a test of this nature, we would have to select psychic individuals who did not know anything about these trousers, indeed, a second pair of trousers as a control sample, should also be used.

Nonetheless, knowing about the case, John was still keen to try, and so I handed him the trousers, upon which he fell silent. After a couple of minutes he asked for a pen and paper and proceeded to draw something quite unusual and interesting. His drawing shows a semi-circular, disc-shaped object which was emitting some kind of 'pulsed' rays in an outward manner. He also wrote on the drawing, the words, "Blob jelly like figures", and "burnt smell" That was all he got, other than he felt extremely 'hot' as he held these trousers!

After the committee meeting had finished, we all talked at great length on the possibility of what psychometry might bring to the Livingston case. We talked of other psychic quests, ie 'The Green Stone' uncovered by Philips and Keatman. Could psychometry hold the key to unlocking the Livingston case? And if so, would any new information be accepted by the UFO community and media? Was psychic evidence any better or reliable

than witness testimony. Indeed, ask yourself the question, 'What constitutes evidence?' Is it ground traces, torn trousers, witness testimony, or psychic evidence? One, or a combination of all?

We, at SPI, felt that at that time we had nothing to lose by going ahead with such a venture, even though it was not officially recognised by many other researchers. There were five avenues which we hoped to explore by the use of such a venture. Firstly, (A) psychics would psychometrize Bob's trousers, either by holding them or holding a bag which contained the trousers. A control sample pair of trousers would also be used. (B) Psychics would also be asked to psychometrize photographs of the area and also another sampled area. (C) Psychics would be asked to visit the scene of the Livingston Incident and see if they could 'tune into' anything. It was our desired wish that those psychics we used knew absolutely nothing about the Livingston Incident. (D) We hoped that Mr Taylor would allow psychics to visit him, and for them to 'tune in' and see if they could pick anything up. This would only be done with the permission of Mr Taylor. (E) That psychics hold and psychometrize the dug-up turf samples that BUFORA had taken away from the site back in November, 1979. So there it was, an ambitious plan, and something which at that time, we felt would be viable.

All the above, well-planned intentions fell flat and this well-intended plan never got off the ground, which was sad, as it may have given us some new and added information about the case. Three years later (1991), I attended a meeting of the SRUFO, (Scottish Research into Unidentified Flying Objects) which was held in Mid Calder and chaired by its founder, Ken Higgins. Amongst other things discussed that night, was SPI's failed psychometric testing on Bob Taylor's trousers.

At that meeting was a young man called Carl Alyward who claimed that he was quite good at psychometry. He was well aware of the Livingston Incident, so in reality whatever he said could really not be taken with any seriousness. Still, what the heck, we felt that as I had the trousers with me that night, we should

at least give him the chance to hold them and see what he got. The following information are the words spoken by Carl (aged 32) as he told them to a hushed and attentive audience.

"I see three small people, two forward and one in the middle. They are speaking in a high-pitched language. The dog is on the ground, 'knocked out'. I don't see it moving. I see them coming towards Bob, they are sticking a needle in Bob's right eye. 'Stop, go away'. He's laughing now, he's all at peace. He's falling back, falling asleep. They told him to go and tell everybody, something about four year's time, they'll see him again. Seeing craft now, a blue light, like a strip going round it. They are talking about Venus. He is waking up now, his heart is beating too fast. I never thought I'd see one, but I've seen a UFO, "Why me?" Gone, it went to the North. Hungry, very hungry, I could eat a pie (!). Getting cold, very cold. I should tell everyone, but I don't want to. There is a mission involved here. I'm seeing red now in front of my eyes. His fear (Bob's) was unbelievable."

The silence in the room as Carl relayed this information was intense, you could have heard a pin drop. Carl later explained that he also perceived that Bob was 'lifted up' by the shoulders and that there was quite a pain in his shoulders. This apparently, was just after 'they' had inserted a needle into Bob's eye (!).

I personally felt that as Carl was 'on the spot' so to speak, it may be interpreted that he was 'expected' to come up with 'something' to please the hushed audience. He knew all too well that all eyes in the room were staring directly at him. Was this really psychically gained information? Or was parts of it just fabricated fillers?

That Carl was good at psychometry I had no doubt, he had proved it to others and that same night proved it to a close friend of mine when he took a ring from her and astonished her by the relevant and factual information that he relayed to her. This ring was a family heirloom and had a lot of history attached to it. He was spot on with the information that he gave her. As for the information that he imparted about the Bob Taylor Incident, I spoke to Bob some weeks after this

event and he could not really relate to any of it. Of course one could surmise that the events that Carl is relating to mostly took part when Bob was unconscious, but of course that is just pure speculation.

Our intended psychic testing of Bob Taylor's trousers never got off the ground. It was a good idea, but one in which we never pushed far enough with. Looking at this idea today, I would have to say that it would not be viable to try it, simply because that far too many people have now held Robert Taylor's trousers in their hands and, by doing so, have left their own 'impressions' on the material, in so much as if we were to try and psychometrise these trousers today, we might end up getting a whole host of feelings and emotions which do not stem from the Robert Taylor experience, but are emotions left by the many people who have held Bob Taylor's trousers.

Again, all this hinges on whether you believe in the first place that psychometry is a viable means of obtaining information. We felt it was, still do, but that avenue is now closed to us but may still be used on other SPI cases as the years roll by.

NOW UFO IS OFFICIAL. CAIRN MARKS THE SPOT !

We, at SPI, strongly felt that the site of the Robert Taylor UFO Incident should be commemorated and, if you recall, it was initially the thoughts of Philip Mantle who stated that some form of monument should be erected for this very purpose. Little did he know it at the time, but both Ron Halliday and I already had plans for this. I wrote a letter to Dean Swift, who was the principle architect for the Livingston Development Corporation. It was dated the 13th of August, 1990. I explained how strongly we at SPI felt that a cairn (marker) should be erected at this sight to commemorate such an important incident and that by doing so, it would undoubtedly entice members of the public to walk into the woods and see such a monument.

In some follow-on telephone conversations with Dean, he made it very clear to me that the L.D.C. had taken on board our societies' feelings on this issue and had decided that they *would* be erecting a cairn to mark this spot.

This was great news and was greeted by all SPI members with great pride. We had asked the L.D.C. that we should be made aware when they were erecting such a cairn, for we wanted to hold our own ceremony at the site. "No problem," said the L.D.C. Sadly, they did not keep their word and for whatever reason, the following year, (October, 1991), they erected a cairn, which in actual fact, was really only a large stone boulder with a plaque attached. And as if that wasn't bad enough, the actual wording on the plaque really annoyed both Ron Halliday and myself, for it did not mention Robert Taylor *at all*. What it did say was the following: "This is the site referred to in *Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious World* which describes an encounter between a forestry worker out walking and what appeared to him as an Unidentified Flying Object."



We at SPI would have preferred the wording on this plaque to have been much different, but, at the end of the day, one must accept that it was after all, the L.D.C. who were erecting it, so we must be thankful for this. SPI's displeasure at the wording on the plaque made national news in Scotland and a number of newspapers ran stories concerning it. Gordon Davies, the L.D.C.'s technical director, was quoted as saying in the *Scotsman* newspaper of 10th September, 1990, "Visitors to the town often asked where the landing occurred." He went on to say that, "A colleague was recently on holiday in America. When he said he came from Livingston, the Americans remarked that that was where the UFO landed." In the same newspaper, Jenny Randles of BUFORA was quoted as saying, "By erecting this plaque, Scotland is cer-

-tainly establishing a precedent." In the *Observer* newspaper, Gordon Davies was quoted as saying, "Let's face it, we are supposed to be a responsible arm of the government. We can't possibly say this is the spot where an unidentified object landed." And why not? we wonder!! And so it was up to SPI to officially commemorate this incredible UFO incident. A commemoration of which had never been done anywhere else in the world. This would be a world first. The first time anywhere something like this had been 'officially' commemorated and we at SPI were very glad indeed that it was happening in Scotland.

**SPI COMMEMORATE
LIVINGSTON UFO EVENT.
14th MAY, 1992.**

On a glorious, hot, sunny day on the 14th of May, 1992, members of both SPI and SRUFO, set off to the site of Scotland's most famous UFO encounter, commonly known as the 'Livingston Incident', to commemorate the event by unveiling a plaque set in a cairn at the site which was erected by the Livingston Development Corporation, (LDC). This was to be our 'official' ceremony as the L.D.C. had previously erected the cairn without any fuss or ceremony, but to SPI it was highly significant. This was a world 'first' which had never been done before, and so with this in mind it just had to be officially commemorated. We had kindly invited the witness Robert Taylor to attend but, unfortunately, due to the ill health of his wife, he could not make it.

Also attending that day were good friends of mine, Glasgow UFO rock group *CE IV*, (which of course stands for Close Encounter of The Fourth Kind). *CE IV* write and perform songs on the UFO phenomena and are regularly contacted by radio and television companies who wish to use their material for programmes. They had brought along their 4-foot tall alien model which they used on stage during their performances, as it served not only as a good prop, but was also visually informative as to what an actual alien is supposed to look like. Sadly as we approached the cairn we saw much to our disappointment, that vandals had removed the plaque from the cairn. Standing at the cairn



which was minus its plaque, was a bit of a let down, but nonetheless the cairn was there so that in itself was at least something. Our society had invited a number of newspapers to attend the SPI/SRUFO ceremony, of which only a representative of the *Scottish Sun* newspaper sent a photographer. After those present took some photographs of the cairn, I then stood next to the cairn and said a few words regarding the incident and that how pleased we at SPI were that the L.D.C. had listened to our plea to erect this cairn. And so a world first had been accomplished and we at SPI and SRUFO were extremely proud that we had accomplished the commemoration of such an important UFO event. Back at the L.D.C., chief executive, Jim Pollock, said that the missing plaque would be replaced in the near future.

**BOB'S TROUSERS
IN MUSEUM!**

I'm quite sure that UFO witness, Robert Taylor, could never in his wildest imagination have envisaged that the trousers he wore on that eventful morning back on November 9th, 1979, when he encountered his UFO, would have ended up in a glass showcase in a museum in London, but that is what happened.

I was contacted by one John Lundberg during May, 1993, who informed me about his upcoming UFO museum. This museum, he told me, would specialise in objects, photographs and memorabilia regarding the UFO issue. He stated that he was aware that I now had these famous trousers in my possession and he asked if I would be kind enough to loan them to him for display. I, of course, agreed, but only on the absolute certainty that he would not lose or damage them and that they would be returned as soon as the display was over. This he agreed.

He went on to say that the trousers would undoubtedly be the 'star exhibit' in the exhibition, indeed his exhibition was titled, "*UFOs And How To See Them*". This was also the title of author, Jenny Randles', current book and Jenny was assisting John in the setting up of this exhibition. And so Bob's famous trousers winged their way south and ended up for a short while under glass at the 'Bipasha Ghosh', a private gallery which was



located on the Thames in Rotherhithe. This exhibition coincided with the release of the UFO movie, *Fire In The Sky*, which concerned the abduction of Travis Walton, an American logger who was 'space-napped' by a UFO back in 1975.

I remember speaking to Bob Taylor a few weeks after I had sent his trousers down to London and he was quite amazed at the reaction and interest shown in his trousers. Indeed, he found it all quite funny. People have asked me why I haven't returned these trousers back to Mr Taylor. My reason for this is, I honestly feel that it is in ufology's best interest that these trousers remain with the SPI research group, to not only inform the public about this impressive case, but to also physically show them these trousers which strongly back up the witness testimony.

UFO items and artifacts are few and far between. I remember from memory, Joe Simonton's oatmeal cookies that he said were given to him by members of a flying saucer crew. Most ufologists suspect that this case is a hoax. There has been residue allegedly left by flying saucers as they have 'touched down' at certain worldwide locations. We have photographs, video film and witness testimony, but to actually have a pair of trousers which have allegedly been in contact with "Something!" from goodness knows where, then it makes the study of this subject all the more worthwhile to me. I have lost count of the times that I have taken along these trousers to lectures that I have given. People always like to see and feel these trousers and hear the history that is attached to them. My following story, is a prime example of such a lecture and it was one which was to leave a lasting impression on me.

I never thought that I would see the day when I went back to school, well I did, and would you believe, it was as a teacher! Me, a teacher!! I received a telephone call from a teacher at my local primary school (Abercromby) in my then home town of Tullibody. She informed me that her class were doing a project on space, which, as the days wore on, extended itself to cover UFOs and spacemen. The class had seen me appear on the first series of the London Weekend Television show, *Strange But True?*, and thought it

would be a good idea to ask me to come along to their school and give them a talk on UFOs. I replied that I would be only too happy to come along and so a date was set and, armed with my UFO photographs and drawings (and Bob Taylor's trousers), I set off to walk the short distance to Abercromby Primary School.

I had no sooner set off on my journey, than I got caught in a torrential down-pour, which although dampened me, to say the least, did not dampen my enthusiasm to speak to these young schoolchildren. Arriving at the school, I was met by a teacher and was quickly shown to a classroom, in which I found around 30 schoolchildren between the ages of 10 and 13, busily writing away.

All around the circumference of the classroom were paintings, drawings and models of UFOs, spacemen and planets. The kids had clearly been busy. Their depictions of aliens were probably true to their age group, for there were many 'wee green men' on the walls with antenna sticking out of their heads. Ah, the innocence of it all.

Soon, it was down to business and the challenge of talking to schoolchildren rather than adults was one that I had been looking forward to for days. Memories of my own school days came flooding back as I looked around the classroom. As I looked forward, all I could see was a sea of small, tiny faces, sitting at small desks, all looking up at me in anticipation of me telling them stories of men from Mars. That old familiar blackboard, that never ages, contained pre-written questions on it for the kids to answer when I was gone. Questions like (a) 'What did you think of Mr Robinson's talk?' (b) 'Did any part of Mr Robinson's talk frighten you?' (c) 'How many UFO sightings have there been in Bonnybridge?'

The shuffling of feet and the noise of the chairs being pulled in soon abated and silence prevailed. Young eyes and young minds were now fixed solely on me. I was probably their first real life person who would discuss with them other realities and other possibilities, quite a thought indeed, and something that they would certainly not find in their school books. I began by asking, "How many of you actually believe in UFOs?" At this a flurry of

arms thrust straight up into the air with a quickness that about bowled me over. I then asked, "Does anybody *not believe* in UFOs?" and at this, one solitary boy slowly and gingerly put his hand up into the air with the eyes of all his classmates fixed in deep surprise at him. I stated, "I think that you are slightly outnumbered here son..." and with that the whole class erupted in laughter. I then went on to discuss with the class numerous UFO cases, both past and present. I also illustrated my talk with extracts from UFO videos. The attention I was given by this class was really something else. They were quiet and attentive, something I recall that *my* school class never was all those years ago!

I went on to discuss some of Scotland's more interesting UFO cases, some of which came from the Bonnybridge area. All too soon, though, it was over, as I had reached [the end of] my allotted time. However, I did have time to take some questions from these young and enquiring minds.

I was roughly into my third answer when it struck me that, 'Hey, this is brilliant. The questions being asked belonged not to young school children, but to adults who had studied the subject for years!!' I just couldn't believe the questions that were being put to me e.g. 'Which planets were most likely to support life?', 'Which country experiences more UFO sightings than any other country?' and 'Did the Cash/Landrum families really experience radiation burns?' (this was in connection with a famous American UFO incident in which two families came into close contact with a diamond-shaped UFO which left the families with radiation burns of the hands). Listening to these questions, I felt that someone was clearly doing their homework. Most of the questions were being asked by one particular girl, or maybe I shouldn't use the word 'girl'. Perhaps I should mention her as someone who asked questions like a nuclear physicist, such was her thought-provoking and inspired questions that she directed at me. The class could have asked questions all day and I could have answered them all day, but the commanding voice of the teacher (female and quite nice too!) brought question time to a close. I thanked all of the young pupils for being so attentive

and inquisitive and wished them well with their project. To round off my visit, I invited all the class forward to inspect some of the UFO photographs and drawings that I had brought along with me. Most of the class, however, were more interested in looking at and touching Bob Taylor's trousers.

These young children were absolutely fascinated by them and groups of four came forward to inspect the trousers. As they did so, I observed that the looks on their little faces, as they each held the trousers in turn, were of deep fascination. As I looked at them, I wondered what was going through their minds. Would any of these children show an interest in UFOs as they grew older? I would like to think so. The teacher then ushered the children back to their seats, after which a young girl stood up and said, "Primary 7 would like to thank you very much, Mr Robinson, for coming along to Abercromby Primary School and talking to us about UFOs." That short speech made my day and I left the school feeling a million dollars.

One of the main things that I had left with the schoolchildren was my statement that each and every one of them should make up their own minds and not to believe all that they read or heard. I stated that knowledge comes through searching and if they wished to take up this subject later on in life, then they should be very careful. They should have an open mind and weigh up all the possibilities before reaching their own conclusions. A week or so later, I received over 30 hand written letters and drawings hand-delivered to my door, all written by this class who thanked me once more for coming to their school.

That story illustrates how very important it is to have items like that of Mr Taylor's trousers. Some readers might find this quite funny and I suppose in reality it is. But at the end of the day, Bob Taylor claims that the rips made in those trousers came solely through the grip of those rod-like projections from the two spherical balls that rolled out from underneath the large UFO that he saw. I have lightheartedly referred to these trousers in the press, as the 'Turin Shroud of ufology'. It may be a lighthearted statement, but I do honestly

feel that these trousers play an important role in the education process of the public to the reality of the UFO phenomenon and I will continue to discuss the Bob Taylor Incident, as well as showing these famous, ripped trousers at whatever function that I happen to attend (or will have me!). I think probably the most unusual place in which I have taken these trousers with me, when I've given a lecture, has got to be Shotts Prison, in Lanarkshire, and my next story concerns the appearance of these trousers at a location in which I never envisaged I would be in. This is what happened...

BOB'S TROUSERS GO TO PRISON!

Lecturing to a captive audience is one thing, but lecturing to a captive audience, who won't be leaving the building that you are lecturing in for at least another 30 years, is another, but then again, this wasn't to be a normal lecture! Far from it. This was a lecture of which I personally had a wee bit of the 'shakes' about and that was *before* I even got there. The venue of this lecture wasn't a town hall or ladies' sewing circle, this was Shotts Prison in deepest Lanarkshire, home to some of Scotland's most hardened criminals. SPI had been invited by the governor of Shotts Prison, who himself was contacted by an inmate who had read an article about SPI and its involvement with the UFO sightings in Bonnybridge. The inmate felt that SPI should come to the prison and let the other inmates know

what was going on. This inmate had taken his idea to the governor, who, after listening to him, passed it and a short while later, I received a phone call from a prison officer, asking me if we'd like to do it.

Some might argue that SPI should not have become involved with this type of education through either a moral or political angle. Perhaps they are right, who's really to know?! All I knew was that it would be a challenge, whether it was right to do it or not, I really don't know. Suffice it to say, that Billy Devlin (someone who had assisted me greatly in my SPI work and who I deeply admire), felt that we should go ahead and do it. As it was to turn out, we were to lecture in the 'Special Unit' of Shotts Prison. This was a particular area of the prison which housed eight of the most hardened and troublesome Category 'A' criminals in Scotland.

The 'Special Unit' was initially introduced in Glasgow's Barlinnie Prison, which housed the notorious murderer, Jimmy Boyle, who has since served his sentence and now lives quietly with his wife back in the community. Barlinnie's 'Special Unit' was shut down a number of years ago and was introduced into Shotts Prison a few years back. The day duly arrived and both Billy and I nervously approached the security gatehouse of Shotts Prison. A prison official, behind a large, glass screen, took our names and Billy had to hand in his mobile phone. We were then ushered into a



room which housed a metal detection unit, much the same as you'll find at any airport terminal. After taking the coins and keys out of our pockets (I kept my eye on the coins, well I didn't want anyone to nick them did I?!), I walked through the unit. No beeps, I was safe. Billy and I were then ushered into the 'Special Unit' by a prison officer, who was built like a brick out-house. He'd be the type of guy you wouldn't want to upset unless of course you were on the phone to him from Australia! The 'Special Unit' itself was actually quite small, smaller than I had imagined. Apart from the small cells, it housed a large gym and two craft rooms for woodwork and the like. What amazed me was the fact that there was a number of saws, hammers and chisels all lying freely about on the various work-benches.

I asked one of the inmates, "Doesn't this tempt you?" His answer was, "No, we don't want to spoil it for ourselves. We are not going to do anything silly in this place." Indeed. A large snooker table featured impressively in the centre of the room, on which a couple of inmates were enjoying a game. The whole atmosphere 'appeared' relaxed, but, underneath it all, you still very much knew that this was a secure unit and that these were no ordinary men. They were here for a purpose, paying their debt to society for, well, I guess you know what.

Both Billy and I began to sort out our slides and other pieces of items that we would both be using for our talk. By now, several prison inmates had sat down, as well as the prison governor and the prison minister. Some of the prisoners' wives were also in attendance. I must admit, I was a wee bit apprehensive as I looked around at those prisoners sitting before me (some of them had more tattoos than Edinburgh has seen in many a year!!). Just before I started my lecture, my thoughts went back to the previous day's *Daily Mail*, which ran a short piece about both Billy and I doing this lecture. The paper had contacted Labour MP, John McFall, who was quoted as saying, "This talk is a gross waste of public money. Rather than talking about Unidentified Flying Objects, it would seem to make more sense for prisoners to be addressed in identifiable issues for constructive rehabilitation. Talking about flashing lights in the sky is hardly likely to set

them on the right track for joining society."

John was perhaps correct, but our planned lecture was part of an incentive by the Scottish Office to rehabilitate long term prisoners and if they (the prison) felt that a talk on UFOs would be beneficial to the prisoners, then who were we to disagree with them? Also quoted in that *Daily Mail* piece of November, 1995, was local MP, Dr John Reid. John was more open to the idea that this talk might prove beneficial, for he was quoted as saying, "If it were a one-off, then it would certainly be a little bizarre to talk about flying saucers, but as one of the series of lectures aimed at general rehabilitation, I don't see anything wrong with it.

"Boredom amongst life prisoners is a serious problem that must be tackled. Talks such as these stimulate and generate interest amongst the prisoners and that can only be to the good."

By now, I had started my talk and was well into it, so much so, that I had lost track of time and had run slap bang into Billy's allotted time, in which he was to follow me with a talk on ghosts and the supernatural. I looked over to Billy and I could see that he was not pleased with me for 'stealing his time' and so I quickly wound up with the Robert Taylor case and passed the trousers round for all to see. Again, like in all other lectures that I have given, when I've showed these trousers, they are the cause of great debate and this was still the case, even here, in a controlled environment.

After some questions and general chit chat with the prisoners, both Billy and I were ushered out of the 'Special Unit' and through to the security gate-house. Normally, after SPI lectures and meetings, everyone usually goes over to the nearest pub for a pint, but somehow on this occasion, I didn't think that the governor would allow his 'Special Unit' inmates to trek over to the nearest hostelry to indulge in alcoholic beverages, so I kept quiet on that one. After getting an ear roasting from Billy Devlin in the car going home about him not getting his chance to speak (after preparing for it all week with family and friends all wishing him well), I apologised profusely and offered to lick his boots till

the next UFO landing). I got away with that one, but was shocked to find, on my arrival home, that when I opened my briefcase, I found that I had mistakenly taken one of the Special Unit's video tapes (I had been using extracts from video tapes during my lecture). "Oh no", I thought to myself, "This is tragic, the inmates will be going spare".

The video, incidentally, was *The Wall* by Pink Floyd. I immediately phoned Shotts Prison and explained what I had done and the exact words of the prison officer, to whom I spoke on the phone, were, "Is that right, you know you can get the jail for that?" I gave a half-hearted laugh and promised to return it the next day. Again, this story is to illustrate to you, the reader, about the types of locations in which one finds themselves when giving a lecture. I've often wondered where I would find myself lecturing next: an ASDA superstore, the Robert Brothers Circus?! I'll tell you what, after lecturing at a top maximum security prison, nothing would surprise me anymore.

The Livingston UFO Incident was a classic and was instrumental in projecting my ufological interest to dizzy heights. Again, it's working at the sharp end of cases such as this, that make you recognise how important the study of UFOs really is.

Robert eventually retired and left his family home in Deans, near Livingston, to set up roots in the small and picturesque town of Blairgowrie in Perthshire. It was no surprise to Bob, then, when two crop circles were found in a farmer's field near Blairgowrie back in June, 1990. Laurence Blair Oliphant, who farms the Ardblair Estate, discovered two crop circles in a field of fully-matured grass, ripe for haymaking, near his home at Ardblair Castle. The 2 to 3 feet high grass had been completely flattened in a well-defined circle with the stalks forming a spiral pattern from the centre outwards. The largest circle measured around 70 feet, whilst the other was half that size. Both circles were found on the slope of a hill. By the time Ron Halliday and I got to the site to try and inspect them for ourselves, both circles were no longer there. However, having spoken with

Mr Oliphant at great length, he convinced us both that no hoaxers could have made these circles and that nothing like this had ever happened on his property before. There are those who would have us believe that crop circles are the direct result of alien intervention. I, myself, am not too convinced that this is so. My own belief is that 99.9% of all crop circles (especially in Britain) are cleverly-made hoaxes. The remaining percentage I believe may be due to some form of wind effect.

I could, of course, be wrong, and I am aware that there have been many strange luminous 'light forms' that have been seen floating above crop fields just prior to a crop circle being found. I am also aware that strange, small balls of light have been seen and photographed entering and leaving crop circles. What could these be? I haven't a clue. But if I was to hang my hat on this one, I would have to say that, as for me, the jury is still out. And so Bob Taylor moved to Blairgowrie, no doubt feeling that he had escaped the gaze and attention of the world's media. He did for a while, but the paparazzi eventually caught up with him and re-kindled the flames of his famous case.

In summing up what must be Scotland's first and most serious UFO close encounter, I'd say this: There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever, that Bob Taylor saw what he saw, that, as far as I'm concerned, will never be in dispute. There are those who say that he made it all up, including the holes in the grass. We have Stuart Campbell, who feels that the event, which he believes did happen, has a rational and mundane explanation.

Who is right, and who is wrong ?

We could talk and discuss this case forever and perhaps never agree on what really did happen. At the end of the day, however, only one man, and one man alone, knows the full answer and that man is Robert Taylor.

Malcolm Robinson
SPI.



Back in 2003, I received a letter from the Netherlands. The letter was from a gentleman introducing himself as an avid skywatcher and genuine UFO enthusiast and researcher. That man was Jan Blei. Jan became a regular contributor to UFO Magazine up to March 2004 when the business was closed down.

I am happy to announce that Jan is back with us and his *Diary of a Skywatcher* column will be a regular feature of UFODATA Magazine.

About Jan:

Jan Blei lives in the Netherlands, is a columnist for www.ufoplaza.nl and talk show host of the internet broadcasting show "Shoreline", available at the same site, moderated by webmaster Rick Speelman from Groningen.

Jan is married to Christien, father of three young children and a dedicated follower of UFO related and astronomical topics.

Sunday, November 26th turned out to be a remarkable day in the life of Mr. and Mrs. van Dyke. They were driving south on Kooistreet (Dutch road name) from Scheerwolde to Giethoorn, two small villages in the

central part of Holland. They were visiting their son, daughter-in-law and children and had left home to start their drive at 6.30 PM. It was a dark and cloudy evening and as they drove, they chatted proudly about their grandchildren, like all grandparents do.

They recall laughing out loud about little Johnny-boy, who made his first phone call to them a few hours before they had left the house. "Grandma and grandpa coming?...drink coffee?" "A wonderful boy," Mrs van Dyke murmurs. "Sure is," her husband replies.

Their journey takes them through a rural part of Holland. Farm buildings and farmhouses are scattered both sides of the road for most of the trip.

Nearing the end of the ride, with about twenty minutes left of their journey and leaving the last of the rural buildings in Kooistreet behind them, they head towards Thijssencanal. The road turns sharply to the left and the journey becomes very quiet, the only sound heard in the car is that of the heater and the muffled noise of the engine.



Suddenly Mrs van Dyke notices the strange, purple glow around the head and shoulders of her husband and also enveloping the front of their car. "William...what is that?" she cries. She holds her breath and turns around to look behind her: nothing but darkness. Immediately she realizes that "the light" is hovering above the left side of the car. "Stop, William...stop," she whispers, but her husband does not reply and drives on just a little bit slower. "Leave it," he says: "It's nothing."

"I want to look outside, just stop the car."

At that moment, an intense, purple glow is radiating over the bonnet and through the windows, Mrs van Dyke stares in amazement at this fluorescing, purple-blue object that, with astounding speed, takes a new position in the night sky.

"My Go,d" she whispers, totally bewildered. "What is that?" In a reflex, she opens the window, sticks her head outside and stares at the pulsating object.

Mr. van Dyke steers his car to the left. Then the object takes another sharp turn, speeds towards the horizon and changes into a flashing, blue light that

slowly disappears behind the trees and out of sight. That night they tell their story to their son and daughter-in-law.

"You've seen a UFO, mum," her son replies. "Joefooo...Joefooo!" little Johnny-boy yells.

The next day she contacts the local newspaper to inquire if anybody else had seen this weird phenomena or if there was any other reports on record for that night.

There were none.

The news editor for the paper thoughtfully passed my phone number to the van Dykes, suggesting I might be able to help. Sure enough that same evening at 6.30 PM, my telephone was ringing.

So what's the message?

Every year, thousands of people worldwide are witnessing things they can't comprehend or explain, a strange phenomenon that is haunting mankind since his birth.

The scientific community does not make any progress in putting the phenomena on the agenda. What's left

are the stories of all those Mr. and Mrs van Dykes around the globe. They deserve a platform, a printed platform like *UFO Magazine*, that with the sudden passing of Graham Birdsall sadly vanished in the air.

But not for long and that's breaking news: *UFODATA* fills the gap.

We're back in business and no matter what the scientific community dictates us to believe, the only story that matters is the story of all those individuals that are confronted with a bizarre phenomenon that sorely deserves our attention and explanation.

A 'big hurray' for Russel Callaghan and his team and a wink to Graham, a man we'll never forget.

My advice: listen to the people: "The truth is down here".

Jan Blei

Check out
Jan's website
www.ufoplaza.nl



Berwyn Mountains

'a scientific point of view'

Andrew Pike BSc, MSc, FRAS

UFODATA Magazine are pleased to welcome professional astronomer, Andrew Pike, as our space and astronomy correspondent. Andrew is known around the UFO community and has never been afraid to use the word UFO in many scientific articles.

In this article, Andrew does what many would be investigators forget to do when looking at specific cases and that is look at the science behind it. There many views and several theories as to what might or might not have crashed on a Welsh mountainside on a cold, winter's evening back in 1974.

The Berwyn Mountain case is still shrouded in mystery over thirty years after the event, so what does a scientist make of the claims surrounding this case...?

On 23 January, 1974, it is claimed a UFO crashed into Berwyn Mountain in North Wales. Now, over 30 years later two new scientific reports have been produced on this incident. The first was published by the Royal Astronomical Society (RAS) in October and its conclusions and investigations centre around the incident being an earthquake and possible associated earthquake lights or RAF exercises. Certainly there is an element of truth to this but the full story has much, much more to it.

To begin with there was another report published in late November which looked at a wider possibility and came in response to the fact many sympathetic to the UFO cause felt we were being sold short. Whereas the conclusion was clear no UFOs were involved, there were some UFO connections which needed to be addressed. I have read both reports and what follows is based on those two and a third which I personally authored way back in 1982 which looked at UFO connections in the greatest detail of the three. So to a certain extent this is an update of the current investigations.

First, a little background on the 1982 report. Because of my involvement in that investigation, I was sent a copy of the November 2006 report for my consideration since, unlike the RAS one, it was not formally published. There are many elements which are common, but even the more 'UFO sympathetic' November 2006 report misses out some significant points which were included in my report in 1982.

The 1982 report was actually written-up from an investigation in mid-1980 when I, together with four other scientists, went to North Wales to look into the 1974 incident following some new clues. The report was not compiled until 1982 because only a few months after we went to North Wales, we found ourselves involved in investigating a UFO encounter which occurred in Rendlesham Forest during Christmas 1980. That later investigation filled much of the year and so Berwyn Mountain was put on hold. On hold that is until we found connections between the two events!

Much of 1982 saw a low for the Rendlesham investigation so for much of that year we had the chance to take a much needed breathing space to pull all these incidents together. Just as well, because in 1983 the Rendlesham incident hit the newspapers with considerable force and we were back down in Suffolk again for much of the year.

The reason we looked into Berwyn Mountain's UFO incident was because we had new details about sightings of a melting, metallic UFO surrounded by army troops. At the time we did not know that, some six months later, the same story would break in Rendlesham Forest when 30 airmen surrounded a melting, distorting, metal-like UFO.

The Berwyn UFO was said to be



cylindrical and one of the new sources of information, who I will call Chris, said he viewed this on the main road to the crash site. Chris was standing on a hill which overlooked the road where he could see a cylin-

drical, melting object with several army officials keeping guard. The story took a further twist when Chris told us he knew of six fishermen who saw several cylindrical objects come out of the Irish Sea and head towards North Wales. At the time all these new sources seemed to be genuine and sincere, but things would take a turn for the worse.

We then encountered a man who had been spreading stories amongst locals about UFOs and in particular a UFO crash retrieval on Berwyn Mountain. As we looked into this we found that many of the stories being told to us were second-hand and clearly led back to this man.

Further investigations showed he was a ufologist and associated with a group called APEN. By the end of our investigation we found much of the data had been the result of this individual's desire to get a story for a magazine. The incident would take a further twist when we got to Rendlesham six months later.

There again, we encountered the same man, but this time he had officials from the government after him. We discovered he had called on a forestry worker, but refused to identify himself. He also started sniffing around locals and attempted to plant false information.

Again locals were being fed rubbish about UFOs and aliens at Rendlesham that Christmas in 1980 and, again, we had to sort the fact from this disinformation. We did a good job and were even able to give information to the authorities about the individual, who at one point was suspected of being involved with the IRA! His warped efforts harmed the investigations no end and did himself no favours.

All this made our job more difficult, both at Berwyn Mountain and Rendlesham. So far as Berwyn was concerned, the science shone through the disinformation. Stories that something had crashed into the mountain first surfaced at 20:38h on 23 January, 1974, when scores of people in North Wales and Cheshire phoned the police to report a mysteri-



ous bang and rumbling. At Gwynedd police HQ, in Colwyn Bay, 6 officers and 3 civilians were flooded by calls. RAF Valley in Anglesey was alerted, as well as air traffic control at Preston, both of which treated it as a plane crash. Within an hour, 10 officers and the emergency services were searching on the mountain. This is no doubt the source of reports that many flashlights could be seen on the mountainside. RAF mountain rescue also joined in and with so many uniformed men and women around, it is not surprising locals thought more of it than there really was. The APEN ufologist fed on this for his own warped ends. The recent RAS report together with my own and the November 2006 report all conclude there was no evidence that the area was out of bounds to locals, although obviously with a suspected air crash locals would need to be kept at bay, but this was no more than expected. It was also clear from my investigation our rouge ufologist had played this part up amongst locals for years.

Very early on two possible alternatives were put forward. One was the fact an earthquake had been detected in the area at just the time of the bang and rumbling, the other was that a meteorite had hit the mountain.

The meteorite theory was quickly proved wrong. For one thing the earthquake measured something like a magnitude 4, later revised to magnitude 3.5. For that to be caused by a meteorite it would have had to be so large a huge crater would be left. Two astronomers, one in a light aircraft and one in a helicopter looked in vain for the crater which should have stuck out like a sore thumb. They found no crater and no meteorite.

Students, astronomers and amateurs all searched the mountainside for any meteorite debris and found nothing. Again, this added to the number for flashlights seen on the mountainside for days later, which were often taken as army troops looking for aliens and a crashed UFO.

The origins of a meteorite impact came from the Isle of Man Police, who had reports that a fireball was seen heading towards North Wales. This was also confirmed by the Anglesey coastguard, who described it as green. Coastguards and officials in Lancashire and Cumberland also reported green flashes. These were later put down to a meteor shower. Despite much effort from astronomers at universities in Leeds, Liverpool, Durham and Keele no meteorite was ever found. Nevertheless, a 3.5 magnitude earthquake did happen. This data has been refined by the RAS report and it is clear that this quake was so big it could not have been triggered by a meteorite impact without leaving a huge scar in the mountainside. I came to the same conclusion in my report in 1982.

As well as the meteor shower, there were reports of other strange lights. These sometimes took on the form of UFO sightings. At 21:58h on 23 January 1974, about an hour after the quake, a flying sphere was reported in Betwys-Y-Coed. The following morning UFO reports were still coming in.

For example, there was a report at Gobowen at 9:15h of a disc with a revolving, coloured set of lights, seen for 10 minutes. It is tempting to put these down to earthquake lights. However, such displays do not happen with minor quakes like the one at Berwyn mountain. So, this point is still one open to debate.

UFO sightings on the night happened after the quake struck and so are unlikely to be a UFO coming in and then crashing. It does, however, allow the slight possibility that they were earthquake lights, or similar, occurring after the quake.

Another possibility, put forward by the RAS report is that there were many reports of RAF photo-flash night bombing exercises at the time. These could have been mistaken for UFOs and, with a bang and rumbling from the earthquake, all could have been concluded as a UFO crash. This, followed by scores of RAF rescue officials, scientists looking for meteorites and emergency services looking for a crashed plane, might have led to a UFO crash/retrieval story. The fact a ufologist was on hand to spread disinformation about his own subject did not help matters.

As things stand today, the Berwyn Mountain UFO incident was at the time of a rare earthquake on UK soil. We also know for certain that army and RAF officials were looking for a crashed plane and the meteorite story is now known to be a non-starter. However, is it possible something crashed other than a meteorite and triggered an earthquake, a genuine UFO maybe? If it did it would have had to be large, even a large meteorite would have been needed to trigger the earthquake, a large UFO would have been more obvious, leaving considerable debris and more scars in the mountainside, none of which were found the following day when scientists started to look for a meteorite. It was either a miracle of a clean up by the army or no UFO crashed that night.

It seems likely that this was not a UFO crash but a simple earthquake and some associated meteor shower

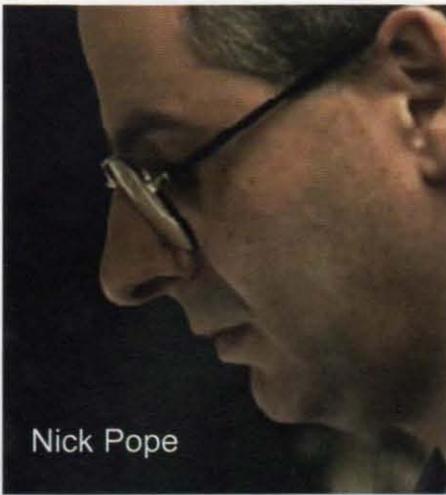
activity and RAF exercises in the area. Many civilian scientists, students and amateur astronomers searched the mountain and found nothing, no meteorite debris, no UFO debris.

One point I take issue with in the RAS report is the suggestion that locals confused the 1974 UFO incident with a 1982 incident involving a crashed Harrier, which did result in the sealing off of the mountain from civilians. My report of 1982 was based on data from 1980 and this suggested the sealing off idea came from 1980 and the dishonest ufologist, spreading disinformation, not the 1982 Harrier crash. Moreover the same ufologist returned to the area in the 1990s to spread more disinformation, involving alien bodies being taken to Porton Down for examination. In 1974 and 1980 there was no knowledge of this amongst locals and there was not a single person we spoke to who mentioned this alien body retrieval event, until the mid 1990s.

These reports do not answer all the questions, but they do go some considerable way to pointing the finger away from a UFO crash and towards natural phenomena and human disinformation. The latter, I am sorry to say, came largely from one dishonest ufologist on this occasion and not the powers-that-be.

Andrew Pike





Since announcing his resignation from the MoD, Nick Pope is never out of the media, so it seems.

On 30 and 31 March, 1993 there was a series of UFO sightings in the UK involving over a hundred witnesses. Many of these were police officers and military personnel. The UFO also flew directly over two RAF bases. What follows is the extraordinary story of what has been dubbed *The British UFO Mystery*.

Overview

The first sighting took place on 30 March at around 8.30pm in Somerset. This was followed by a sighting at 9pm in the Quantock Hills. The witness was a police officer who, together with a group of scouts, had seen a craft that he described as looking "like two Concorde flying side by side and joined together." The reports came in thick and fast and when I arrived at work the following morning, I received a steady stream of reports. It was soon clear that I had a major UFO event on my hands. One of the most interesting reports came from a member of the public in Rugely, Staffordshire, who reported a UFO that he estimated as being 200 metres in diameter. He and other family members told me how they had chased the object in their car and got extremely close to it, believing it had landed in a nearby field. When they got there a few seconds later, there was nothing to be seen. Many of the descriptions related to a triangular-shaped craft or of the lights perceived as being on the underside of such a craft. Indeed, in an apparent coincidence, these sightings occurred three years to the very day after the famous wave of sightings in Belgium

that had led to F-16 fighters being scrambled to intercept a UFO being tracked on radar.

RAF Cosford

The UFO was seen by a patrol of RAF Police based at RAF Cosford. Their official police report (classified Police In Confidence) stated that the UFO passed over the base "at great velocity ... at an altitude of approximately 1000 feet." It described two white lights with a faint, red glow at the rear, with no engine noise being heard. The RAF Police report also contained details of a number of civilian UFO sightings that they had been made aware of in the course of making enquiries with other military bases, civil airports and local police.

RAF Shawbury

Later on that night, the Meteorological Officer at RAF Shawbury saw the UFO. He described to me how it had moved slowly across the countryside towards the base, at a speed of no more than 30 or 40 mph. He saw the UFO fire a narrow beam of light (like a laser) at the ground and saw the light sweeping backwards and forwards across the field beyond the perimeter fence, as if it were looking for something. He heard an unpleasant, low-frequency humming sound coming from the craft and said he could feel as well as hear this - rather like standing in front of a bass speaker.

He estimated the size of the craft to be midway between a C-130 Hercules transport aircraft and a Boeing 747. Then he told me that the light beam had retracted in an unnatural way and that the craft had suddenly accelerated away to the horizon many times faster than a military aircraft. Here was an experienced RAF officer, who regularly saw aircraft and helicopters, telling me about something he said was quite unlike anything he's ever seen in his life. The MoD party line about UFOs being of 'no defence significance' was looking decidedly shaky. What was I supposed to say to him? I wondered. Don't worry, it was probably just a weather balloon! I corresponded with him recently about this but, unlike some sceptics, I intend to respect witness confidentiality and won't name him.

How Many Reports?

For a number of reasons, UFOs are notoriously under-reported. The two main factors here are fear of disbelief and/or ridicule and the fact that many people do not know who to contact with details of their sightings. While there were standing instructions that UFO reports sent to military bases, civil airports and police stations should be forwarded to the MoD for investigation, this national reporting system did not always work. The casefile on the 30/31 March, 1993, UFO incident makes it clear that there were many more sightings than ever reached the Department. One throwaway line from a signal, reporting how police officers in Liskeard, Cornwall, had seen a UFO, stated that the object was "seen by other police officers throughout Devon and Cornwall." We can only guess at the number of sightings that went unreported that night.

Radar

I launched a detailed investigation into these sightings, working closely with the RAF, colleagues in the Defence Intelligence Staff and personnel at the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales. One of the first things that I did was order that radar tapes be impounded and sent to me at MoD Main Building in Whitehall. The radar data was downloaded onto standard VHS video cassettes and arrived shortly thereafter. I watched it with the relevant RAF specialists, who told me that there were a few odd radar returns, but that they were inconclusive. Radar is not an exact science and in certain circumstances, false returns can be generated.

Aircraft

Later, a more formal assessment of the radar data was made. Unfortunately, one of the radar heads was not working on primary radar during the reporting period, so only aircraft working Secondary Surveillance Radar could be seen. But with this and with other checks, what we were able to do was build up a picture of all aircraft and helicopters activity over the UK, so that we could factor them into the investigation and eliminate them from our enquiries if appropriate.

RAF Fylingdales and Cosmos 2238

The Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales, with its powerful, space-tracking radars, was an important part of my UFO investigation. They quickly alerted me to the fact that there had been a re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere of a Russian rocket, carrying a communications satellite, Cosmos 2238. We postulated that this was a possible explanation for a cluster of UFO sightings that occurred at around 1.10am on 31st March. As an interesting footnote, ufologists such as Jenny Randles have previously claimed that some UFOs may be interested in re-entries!

Ufologists

Most ufologists had not even heard about this case until I wrote about it in 1996, in my first book, *Open Skies Closed Minds*. One ufologist who had been very closely involved was Doug Cooper. I worked closely with him during the course of my official investigation, as part of a new, more open, policy that I had instigated. Some ufologists like Doug had welcomed this but others, sadly, saw me as a sinister Man-in-Black and refused to have anything to do with the MoD, believing that we were part of a conspiracy to cover-up the truth about UFOs. Doug shared with me his own report into the wave of sightings. Like us, he had concluded that the Cosmos 2238 re-entry was the probable explanation for the cluster of sightings at 1.10am. But there were some interesting gems in his report, including a reference to one of the UFO sightings having unnerved cattle in a field, which were reported as having been restless somewhere between midnight and 1am. The witnesses then described their absolute astonishment at seeing all the cows standing in a circular formation in the middle of the field, all completely silent.

The British UFO Mystery

On 1 November, 2006, Channel Five showed a one-hour documentary on this case, entitled *"The British UFO Mystery"*. The investigative documentary was part of Channel Five's second *"Stranger Than Fiction"* series. The production company,

Steel Spyda, tried a new approach. They obtained the MoD's casefile on the incident (which ran to 105 pages of documentation) and based the programme around that.

Sceptics

Sceptics leapt on the Cosmos 2238 explanation (which MoD had known about at the time) to explain the cluster of 1.10am sightings and promptly tried to shoehorn all the other sightings into this, suggesting that witnesses who had seen the UFO at any other time must have got the time wrong - sometimes by several hours!

Black Projects

A theory often put forward to explain some of the most spectacular UFO sightings is that they might be prototype aircraft or UAVs. Of course, at any time we will be test flying various things that you won't see at the Farnborough airshow for several years, but the bottom line is that we test fly such things in certain areas so, at least within government, we can differentiate between black projects and UFOs. In view of the controversy about Aurora (an alleged hypersonic replacement for the SR-71 Blackbird) we did, in the case of the March, 1993, UFO sightings, raise the issue with the US authorities, through the British Embassy in Washington. Was it possible that something had gone wrong with the normal processes for overflight of another country and could our UFO sightings be attributable to some US prototype?

The answer I got back was extraordinary. The Americans had been having their own sightings of these large, triangular-shaped UFOs and wanted to know if the RAF might have such a craft, capable of moving from a virtual hover to speeds of several thousand mph in an instant. We wish we had! The interesting thing about this was that somebody in the US was still clearly taking an interest in UFOs, despite the apparent disengagement from the subject in 1969 with the closing down of Project Blue Book.

Sadly, a letter to the US Embassy about Aurora was the only document missing from the casefile released to Steel Spyda following their FOIA request for documents relating to the March, 1993, UFO sightings.

Jodrell Bank Observatory

Intriguingly, even the cluster of 1.10am sightings might not all be explained by the Cosmos 2238 re-entry. The sceptics were torpedoed by Professor Ian Morrison, Director of the Jodrell Bank Observatory (and hardly a believer in UFOs!) who, in speaking about these sightings on *"The British UFO Mystery"*, said, "Sometimes people see a pattern of lights that stay pretty much in formation for maybe several minutes at a time and, to be honest, I don't believe that can be the break up of space junk or anything else. Those things are short-lived and they all leave streaks and the relative positions may well change as they travel."

Conclusion

Given the MoD's 'no defence significance' conclusion on UFOs, it seems fitting to conclude with quotes from MoD documents which contradict the usual stance. In a briefing that I prepared for my Head of Division on 16 April, 1993, I wrote:

"It seems that an unidentified object of unknown origin was operating in the UK Air Defence Region without being detected on radar; this would appear to be of considerable defence significance, and I recommend that we investigate further, within MoD or with the US authorities".

My Head of Division was normally sceptical about the UFO phenomenon, but on this occasion he agreed with my conclusion. His 22 April, 1993, brief to the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (one of the UK's most senior RAF officers) stated:

"In summary, there would seem to be some evidence on this occasion that an unidentified object (or objects) of unknown origin was operating over the UK."

This is about as close the MoD will ever get to saying that there's more to UFOs than misidentifications or hoaxes.

Nick writes a regular column for UFODATA in each issue...