

UFO NEWS

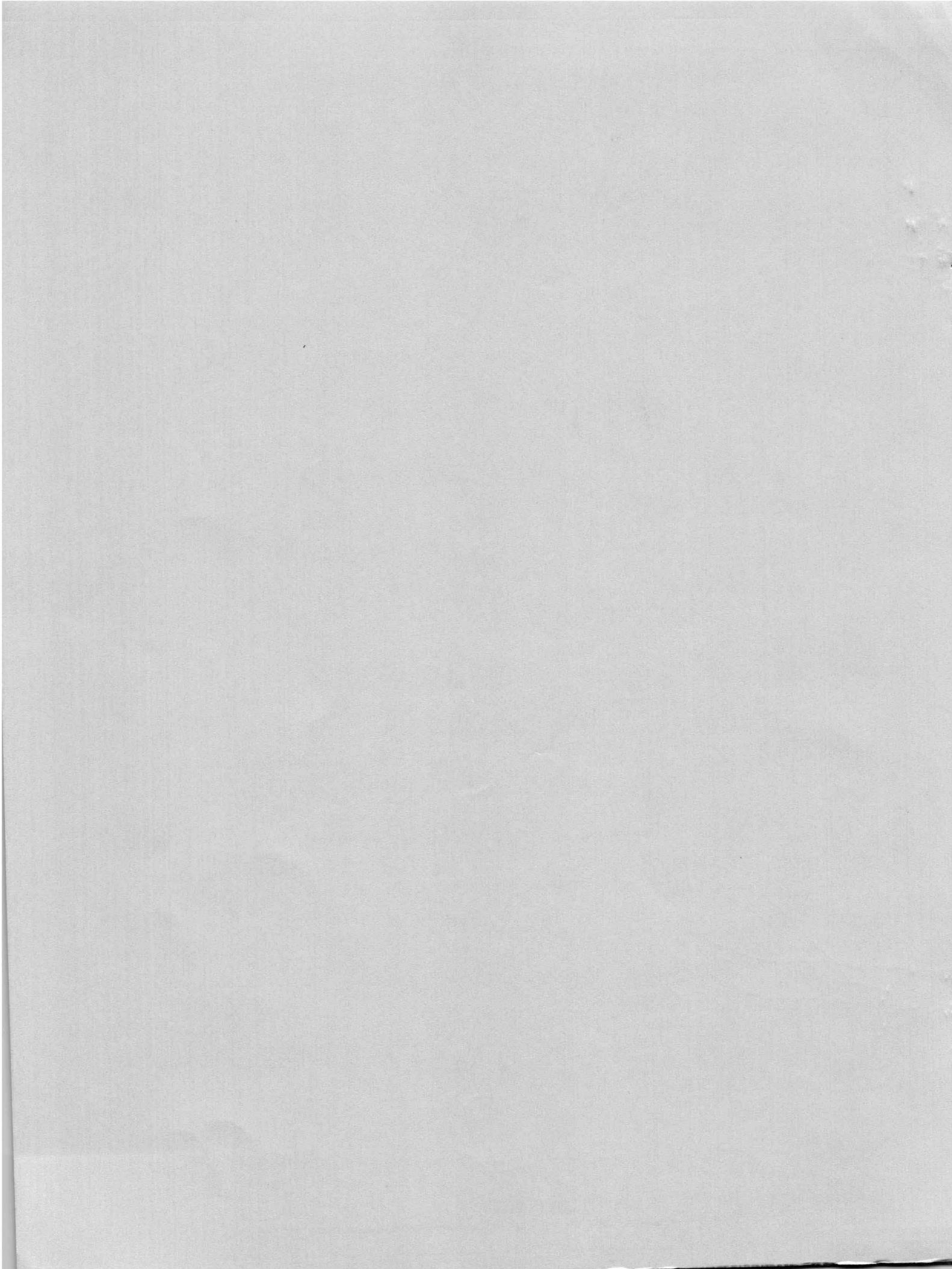
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**AERIAL PHENOMENON
CLIPPING INFORMATION CENTER**

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1381

Strange sights in Nevada skies

As the holiday season approached in December 1896, the citizens of Nevada had more on their minds than parties, gifts and good will. For a month or more, the local press had been picking up accounts of strange glowing lights spotted in the skies over San Francisco, Sacramento and other northern California communities.

Witnesses included those whose testimony on nearly any other subject would be accepted without question. A prominent rancher near Bowman reported the phenomenon as "three very bright lights moving horizontally and easterly at a rate of perhaps one-hundred miles an hour." A Sacramento journalist who claimed to have observed the lights nearby speculated that they might well be "the ghost of Diogenes wasting his time seeking an honest man around the state capital."

Some observers reported seeing a cigar or egg-shaped "aircraft" with wing-like propellers or fan-shaped wheels that revolved rapidly. Others noticed a four-man crew and said they heard them shouting, laughing and singing — "not the whisperings of angels," they reported, "nor the sepulchral mutterings of evil spirits, but the intelligible words and merry laughter of humans." Were they human? A San Francisco attorney, George D. Collins, was certain. Indeed, he claimed to represent the inventor of the craft, a wealthy native of Maine who was seeking a patent.

There also were stories of men who had had contact with the crew — a Camptonville farmer who claimed that he had chatted with a bearded crewman after the craft landed in his field, a San Jose electrician supposedly enlisted to make some repairs who had been rewarded by a trip to Hawaii and back, and two Italian fishermen who had met the crew on a beach near Pacific Grove.

The first Nevada sighting was made on Dec. 2 by Scott Hart, a Renoite sojourning at a ranch some 20 miles north of town. His description of the craft involved only flashing lights, but he said that he heard a voice saying, "We are four degrees too far north, change the course." A Reno Evening Gazette newsman saw something in the sky two days later, "a very bright light," he wrote, "throwing out rays as if from an electric searchlight."

Among the other Renoites who observed lights that night were Harry Martin of the Reno Mercantile Co. and Thomas Brown, Western Union manager. Neither was able to describe anything beyond flickering lights southwest of town.

Professor Nat Wilson of the University's chemistry department did a little better, recalling for a reporter that the craft appeared "as large as an electric arch light" and seemed to be moving toward Reno until it suddenly wheeled and disappeared back over the Sierra Nevada. "I would not like to say that it was an airship," he said, "but it was something very phenomenal." His wife also had witnessed the lights, he told the reporter.

As word of the local sightings spread, other observers came forward, among them L.T. Ste-



Nevada Historical Society

ENCOUNTER: A cartoonist's view of the unusual sightings.

Phillip I. Earl

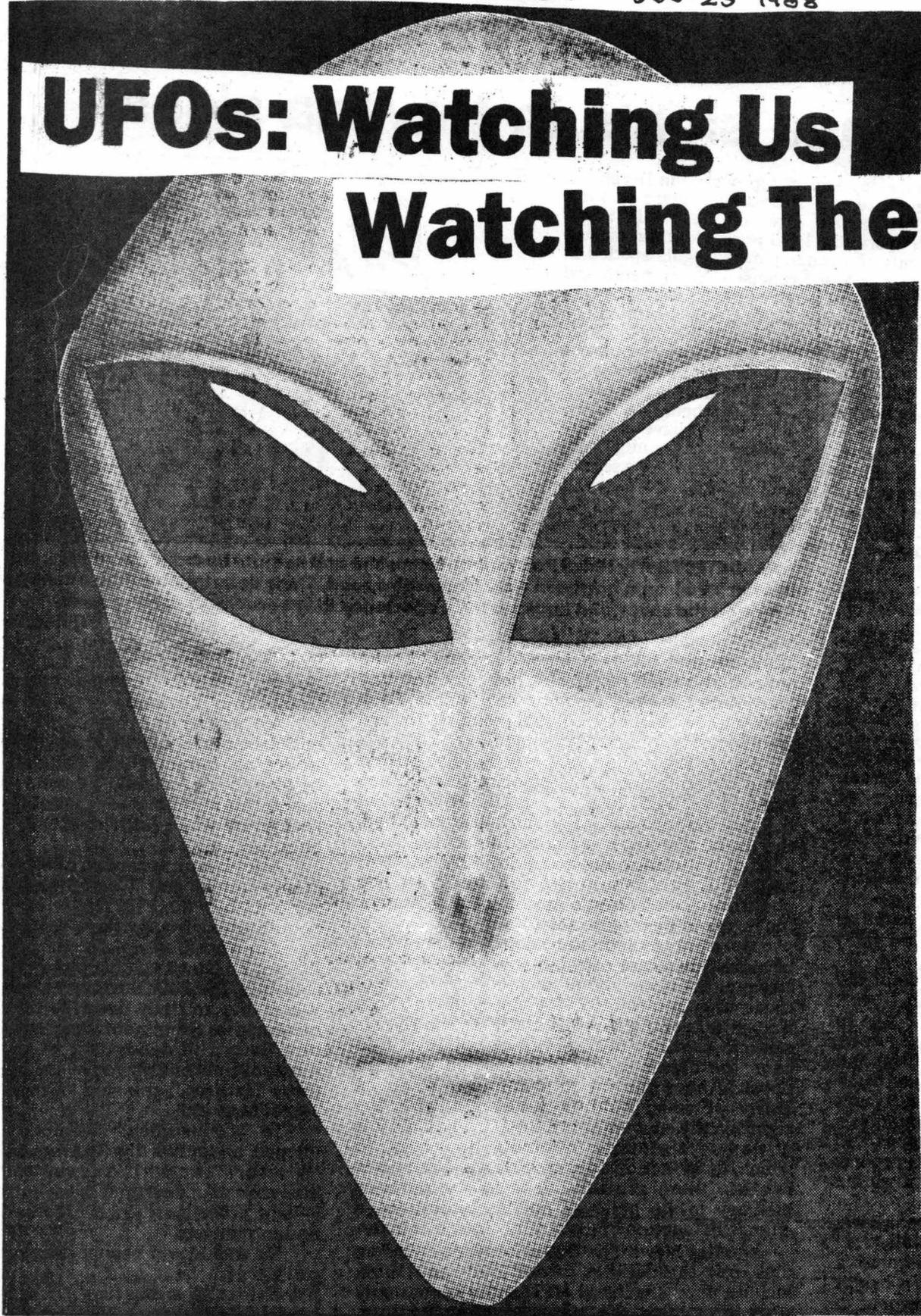
enson, Nevada-California-Oregon Railroad agent at Chat, 25 miles north of Reno, who experienced a sighting on Dec. 4. He said that he did not know what he saw, but was convinced that he experienced something. Railroad crewmen embellished the story with an account of a conversation between the agent and the inventor-pilot in which Stevenson asked for a ride but was refused.

Several reported seeing flickering lights traveling west, but others thought that the phenomenon was merely a cluster of stars masked by a filmy cloud. Another report came in from Empire on Monday, Dec. 7. Jack Garrity, proprietor of Wiggin's Dance Hall, described the lights as "moving like a large turkey buzzard."

Was it really an "airship"? If so, could it have been hidden somewhere until the inventor could file his application for a patent? If this were possible, the U.S. Patent Office should have a record of the invention, but there is none. Where does this leave us?

Phillip I. Earl, curator of the Nevada Historical Society, writes a history column every Sunday.

UFOs: Watching Us Watching Them?



VISITOR? One of the other-worldly "visitors" with whom Whitley Strieber claims contact was drawn by Ted Jacobs for the 1988 bookjacket of Strieber's "Transformation, The Breakthrough." The capricious and wise five-foot-high beings are the focus both of Transformation and an earlier book, "Communion, A True Story" and Strieber says his contact with them has opened up new vistas of awareness for his life. Both books are reviewed within the story on UFOs that starts on this page. The jacket illustration was designed by Cheryl Asherman.

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ABOVE TOP SECRET, THE WORLDWIDE UFO COVER-UP, by Timothy Good (William Morrow and Company, New York, 1988; 592 pp., \$19.95.)

COMMUNION, A TRUE STORY, by Whitley Strieber (Beech Tree Books, William Morrow and Company, New York, 1987; 299 pp., \$17.95.)

TRANSFORMATION, THE BREAKTHROUGH, by Whitley Strieber (Beech Tree Books, William Morrow and Company, New York, 1988; 256 pp., \$18.95).

By PAT HAMMOND
Sunday News Staff

HER FAMILY had told her UFOs were the work of the devil, and that if she ever saw one, the devil would be sure to come after her. And now the woman had seen a UFO, hovering over her car as she drove along a major highway in New Hampshire, and she was — in the words of UFO field investigator Peter R. Geremia of Rye — an absolute physical and mental wreck. The event was to change her life but, in fact, for the better.

The provocative subject of unidentified flying objects is explored in a recently released book, "Above Top Secret, The Worldwide UFO Cover-Up" (Morrow, 1988), by British broadcaster Timothy Good, who invoked the Freedom of Information Act to extricate formerly classified information from the U.S. government.

Two other recent releases, "Communion, A True Story" (Morrow, 1987) and "Transformation, The Breakthrough," (Morrow, 1988) by author Whitley Strieber, relate what Strieber alleges are his own experiences with extraterrestrial beings who abduct him, examine him, admonish him, terrify him, but, in the end, bring him to a new understanding of life.

Good and Strieber have little in common except their interest in UFOs. Good is a journalist, reaching for credible sources from which to learn the truth about UFOs; Strieber, a dreamer from whose pen or word processor spout endless interpretations of the nature of the "visitors" who, he says, have relentlessly pursued him. Strieber devotes pages and pages to the philosophical and theological roles of his visitors.

Saucer-shaped space craft flown by other-worldly little men are seen in art as ancient as that of the Mayan Indians of Central America and the Egyptians. In modern Western civilization, Timothy Good reports, unidentified flying objects were first officially sighted in 1933 when silent, unmarked "ghost" aircraft were reported over parts of Scandinavia, Great Britain and the United States.

But UFO historians consider July 2, 1947, the landmark date for UFOs in the United States. A disk was reportedly seen flying over Roswell, N.M. Reports of that sighting, along with chilling tales of a crash site where tiny human bodies were found inside a wrecked space ship, quickly leaked out and were just as quickly crushed. Only now is the Roswell incident being raised with any official government verification — and even that is questioned in some UFO circles — in Timothy Good's nearly 600-page book, the product of 20 years work.

Sightings have persisted in the years since 1947, despite debunkings and denials on many official levels. People who report having seen UFOs say they do so despite fear of ridicule. As recently as last month, an incident involving an extraterrestrial creature's emerging from a UFO and attempting to abduct a 12-year-old Indiana boy was reported by the boy to his mother. She related the story to a research specialist from New Hampshire, who was in Indiana on a lecture tour.

"The government keeps telling us UFOs are not there, but they have a wealth of information hidden away under the cloak of security . . . If we were to go to court to prove there are UFOs, with the evidence we have, we would win."

— Peter Geremia
UFO Investigator

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The researcher, Ph.D. candidate Kathleen Kalina of Peterborough, conducted an unofficial investigation of the site and relayed her observations to an independent, nationwide UFO investigation organization called the Mutual UFO Network. MUFON turned the case over to an Indiana field investigator. In her preliminary investigation, Kalina found the boy deeply embarrassed, concerned that publicity of the event would make his friends think he was crazy, but he held to his story.

The Indiana investigator is, according to Peter Geremia, currently leaning toward attributing the story to an overactive adolescent imagination. But indelible brown marks etched into the lawn at the site of the alleged spacecraft landing remain unexplained, as well as the behavior of a dog that, according to the boy, barked at the alien, scaring it away: when that same dog crosses the lawn, he gives the markings a wide berth.

Although the incident occurred in Indiana, Geremia believes New Hampshire has a proprietary interest in it because it was a New Hampshire UFO researcher who brought it to light.

Geremia has never seen a UFO, but UFOs fascinate him. UFOlogy — the study of UFOs — occupies the greater part of his waking hours. An electronic technician who programs and maintains flight simulators, Geremia considers himself a "nuts-and-bolts person who is not comfortable with the psychic approach. I want to know what these things are, and what propels them," he said.

Geremia is New Hampshire director of MUFON, a Texas-based network of by-invitation-only members who make it their business to apply investigative techniques to the study of UFO sightings. The network describes itself as grass roots in nature and boasts that its 17 members of its board of directors are mostly Ph.D.s or physicians, knowledgeable in fields ranging from science and medicine to theology, engineering and astronomy.

"The government keeps telling us UFOs are not there," Geremia (pronounced Jeremiah) said recently. "But they have a wealth of information hidden away under the cloak of security. Researchers have repeatedly gone in for information under FOI (the Freedom of Information Act) and have repeatedly been rebuffed.

"If we were to go to court to prove there are UFOs, with the evidence we have, we would win," Geremia said. "What we want from the government is this: Tell us that UFOs are not a threat to the security of the United States and open up your backlog of UFO data. Tell us, did the Roswell incident really take place? Did they recover a crashed craft? I think it is false to assume that the public would react with panic. I think many people would welcome it and say, let's study it."

In his book, "Above Top Secret, The Worldwide UFO Cover-Up," Good painstakingly reviews the history of UFO sightings in the United States and around the world and addresses the roles of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency and National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

"One of the most contentious aspects of the UFO enigma," Good said, "is the allegation that a number of flying saucers have actually crash-landed and been recovered by the military in great secrecy. The claim has been generally dismissed for lack of proof, yet the evidence is compelling. Former U.S. Air Force intelligence officer Leonard Stringfield, for example, has now collected at least 40 such accounts, some of them from first-hand witnesses."

Good quotes Grady L. Barnett, a civil engineer with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, as arriving at a crash site near Socorro, N.M., in early July 1947 and seeing dead bodies that "were like humans but they were not humans. The heads were round, the eyes were small and they had no hair. The eyes were oddly spaced." Barnett's view of the crash site was cut short, he said, when soldiers arrived and said, "The Army is taking over, get out of the way."

But Good notes that the account cannot be considered reliable because it was second-hand, related to friends of Barnett in 1950, and Barnett, having died in 1969, cannot confirm it.

Good includes copies of pages from an alleged briefing document for a top-secret panel called Majestic 12, or MJ-12, created by President Harry S Truman to study UFOs. The Nov. 18, 1952, document, reportedly prepared for President-elect Eisenhower, states that on July 7, 1947, during investigation of the Roswell incident, the bodies of "four small human-like beings (that) had apparently ejected from the craft" were discovered. The paper went on to say that witnesses "were debriefed" and reporters were told that the object under investigation was simply a misguided weather research balloon. Subsequent pages describe biological studies of the bodies and raise the possibility that Mars could have been their point of origin.

Good says there is still no official confirmation of the existence of MJ-12 or of the matters it allegedly reviewed.

"We have a split UFO community on this," Geremia said. "Some believe the document is real. Some believe somebody pulled a hoax on Good."

Another reason Geremia is drawn to UFO studies is his fascination with the concept that aliens might indeed exist. "Can you imagine the impact of aliens on history?" he asked. "I believe if we ever made contact with an alien civilization, it would change the course of history tremendously. Whether it would be beneficial is another question.

"I have no sense of who they are, what they are doing or where they are from," Geremia said, "but the UFOs themselves seem to me to be some type of craft that is capable of maneuvering, capable of being seen or cloaking itself, that leaves physical traces, and that can leave people with injuries. It is a physical, not a psychological, phenomenon.

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"Heavy magnetic fields associated with UFOs, and radiation, have been recorded. We can see the effect of what the craft are doing, but I have a problem with people who go out there and speculate, and with people who say they have conversed with aliens.

"Mine is a commonsense, no nonsense approach," Geremia said. "And I have a real problem with some of the media that, for the sake of filing space, say, 'Ho, ho, ho, the little green men are out today.' They are doing a disservice to the general public."

Geremia said, "We do the best we can, but we are not professional investigators. We're not the ones to do that job. Wouldn't it be nice if the government had an agency with trained investigators and the physical tools available, and would report their findings to the general public? We suspect it never will happen, because it's a no-win situation for the government: It would cost a lot of money, and the expectation of an end result, such as enhanced knowledge, probably could not be fulfilled."

Statistics on UFO sightings over New Hampshire are deceptive. Geremia said that discarding the cases where sightings may be directly attributable to C-5 Air Force cargo aircraft, about 20 UFO reportings in his files defy natural explanation. Of those, 10 are "good" cases, meaning interesting, substantive and presented with credible information. Not included are the numerous sightings of simply lights. Geremia originally weeded these out because he did not have the time to investigate all of them himself. But now, with New Hampshire membership of MUFON up to 20, the "light" cases can be investigated too, Geremia said.

UFO sightings occur most frequently near military bases, nuclear power plants, high voltage power lines and swampy areas that are near power lines, Geremia said. In New Hampshire UFOs are most often reported on Route 125 between Exeter and Barrington, in the Seacoast area around Pease Air Force Base, near the White Mountains, particularly around Conway, and in Claremont and Keene.

And, according to Geremia, New Hampshire UFOlogist John Oswald "would say there was a gangbusters area of UFO activity off Hampton."

When Geremia begins a UFO sighting investigation, he first checks for what he calls "UFO makers." There are two primary UFO makers in New Hampshire, one a Cessna airplane owned by Nitetime Skywriter of Londonderry. The airplane carries a wingtip-to-wingtip advertising light display, readable overhead but appearing at a distance as a curved set of lights resembling a UFO. Geremia said Nitetime Skywriter has been most cooperative in checking its flight logs to see if its Cessna was near a reported UFO site.

The other is the Air Force C-5, one of the largest aircraft in the world. Based in Dover, Del., the huge cargo planes come up to Pease AFB five or six times a year to fly runway patterns. Because it is so big, it seems closer and slower than it actually is. It is lit up with 17 lights, and if the winds are blowing hard, it can't

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be heard, and so may be perceived as soundless. As it advances toward the observer, it appears to be hovering. Geremia said several UFO reports are telephoned in during every C-5 training period.

The third major category of UFO makers is that of natural phenomena, such as planets. If Venus, for instance, is sitting low on the horizon, it is very bright; if a person stares at a bright planet long enough, eventually it will appear to move, he said.

In one of the more dramatic cases Geremia has come across, a woman was driving along a major New Hampshire highway in 1978 when she saw a UFO with markings that so frightened her she underwent amnesia over the incident. Geremia arranged for several hypnotic sessions during which she relived seeing a craft marked with what she believed was a sign of the devil and admitted she felt she was being watched.

When, under hypnosis, she was asked to describe the marks, she became hysterical, and the hypnosis was brought to an end. Although that was as far as the hypnosis went, the woman changed from an insecure person, afraid to drive at night, to a self-assured individual who drove at all hours of the day and night and started her own business.

"Something happened to that lady, probably an abduction," Geremia said, but that will probably never be known.

In October 1984, Keene police Sgt. Jack Zeller and others witnessed an estimated 50-foot-long metallic object with pulsating lights, making no sound except a two-toned hum as it passed directly overhead, around 100 feet. He described it as having no seams, no windows or doors, and no obvious source of power. He was in radio contact with the police station throughout the encounter. Geremia calls the sighting significant because it was a very close sighting and because a police officer witnessed it.

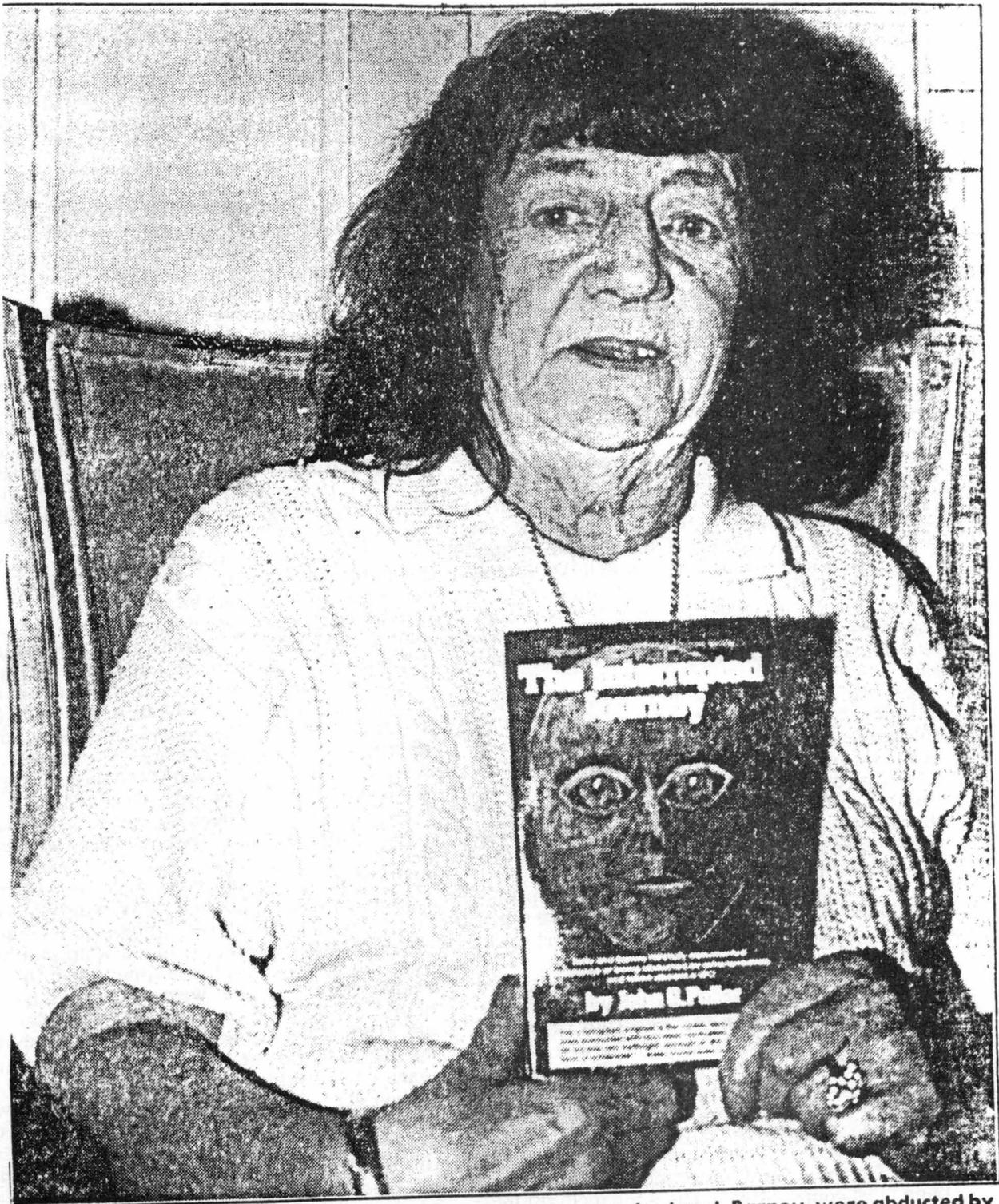
A young married couple driving through Epping on Route 125 on a rainy, windy night in April 1978 saw three red lights in a triangular pattern cross the road, stop, back up and head toward them. The lights stopped over the car, where they hovered without a sound, then drifted across the trees and out of sight. Geremia describes the couple as thoroughly shaken up. The man did not want to report the sighting, fearing it would threaten his scholarship at the University of New Hampshire, but his wife reported it anyway. The man's voice shook as he described the incident to Geremia. Geremia said this sighting is unusual because it occurred in bad weather — most UFO sightings taking place on clear nights.

In the 1970s there were a number of UFO sightings in the Franklin area. Geremia's first case ever, as a rookie investigator, involved a Franklin couple. "He was a bit flaky, but his wife, who corroborated her husband's story, was solid as a rock," Geremia said.

On the night of the sighting the husband, who standing on his porch with his wife, daughter and a friend, flashed the porch

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ABDUCTED? Betty Hill of Portsmouth claims she and her late husband, Barney, were abducted by aliens in 1961 on a northern New Hampshire road. Their description of the aliens generated the picture on the cover of a book on the experience they recalled under hypnosis. (Photo by John Hart)

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lights on and off as a joke. A neighbor who happened to be looking at the sky through binoculars at that moment saw lights flash back. Others witnessed lights zooming toward the house, stopping and racing off.

Later, the couple saw a tilted disk with a dome hovering over a neighboring home. Even later, the wife saw a small, silvery-clad being in the yard and, after she had gone to bed, she heard footsteps, sounding like a "breaking head of lettuce," going around the house. Over succeeding days, a globed head in the underbrush and, later, a bright white light over the husband's car were seen.

Geremia called the sighting important because it is a case of "high strangeness." High strangeness is usually associated with cases of Close Encounters III or IV, he said. In Close Encounters of the First Kind (CE-I), the UFO is seen close enough to observe in detail. In a CE-II case, the object seen has interacted with the physical environment in some way. When an entity of some kind is associated with the sighting, the encounter is a CE-III. The CE-IV is a new designation, referring to cases in which an abduction appears to have taken place because there are time gaps in the person's memory or he believes he has undergone a change of location of a physical change of body.

Sunday News/The Union Leader newsroom files over the decades of the 1970s and 1980s include news stories on UFO sightings at many sites throughout the state including Bedford, Goffstown, Ashland, Merrimack, Kingston, Newport, Colebrook, Franconia, Henniker, Derry and Manchester, and in the Sanbornton and Lake Winnepesaukee areas.

One of the world's landmark UFO cases is that of Betty and Barney Hill, a Portsmouth couple whose alleged abduction by aliens on a remote road in Thornton on Dec. 19, 1961, was the subject of John G. Fuller's 1965 book, "The Interrupted Journey: Two Lost Hours 'Aboard a Flying Saucer.'"

Under separate hypnosis, both revealed similar stories of being taken aboard a space ship by five-foot-high beings and undergoing physical examinations. Under hypnosis, Betty Hill also recalled conversing with "the head alien" who showed her a star map that was to have special significance.

Betty Hill, interviewed this month at her Portsmouth home, defended the credibility of the story. For one thing, she said, a UFO was picked up on radar at Pease AFB that same night. A map she drew under hypnosis, depicting the map of star routes allegedly shown her by the alien, revealed a star pattern not known at the time but since discovered by astronomers, and in any case, never seen in the western hemisphere north of Mexico City. She also displayed marks on the dress she wore the night of the capture and showed the stains where there was a powder. Attempts to analyze the powder have been unsuccessful, she said.

She recalled that although she initially fought the beings, she later conversed with them and invited them to come back to Earth at a later time to meet her friends.

"It's not my decision," she recalled the leader saying, to which Mrs. Hill remembered replying, "Another bureaucracy!"

Asked if the aliens had a sense of humor, Mrs. Hill said yes. "The leader teased me and joked with me. As I looked at a book he had, he said, 'Ha-ha, you think you're going to read that?'" The typeface characters were vertical, she remembered. "I asked if I could take it with me as proof of our experience and he said yes, but the others refused to let me take it."

Mrs. Hill still watches for UFOs, visiting a certain spot in Kingston once or twice a month. "At Kingston I see lights in the sky. For 25 years people have seen UFO landings there, or UFOs flying to that spot, then flying off. I call it headquarters. They are getting their orders for the night," she said.

Betty Hill, who is a 69-year-old retired social worker with a degree in social service from the University of New Hampshire, claims also to have seen UFOs over Lake Winnepesaukee and

from a window of the Red Jacket Inn in North Conway. "UFOs are so common in New Hampshire," she said.

An anthropology and archaeology enthusiast, she visited Yucatan this February, where an Indian guide told her the Mayans believe they originally came to earth by spacecraft from another planet and some day a spacecraft will return to Earth to take them back.

Asked her impression of Whitley Streiber's "Communion" and "Transformation," Mrs. Hill replied that the descriptions given by many people who say they have seen aliens seem to parallel those of aliens in popular fantasy fiction. To guard against phony reports of alien sightings, the Hills developed a credibility test: When they initially described the aliens, they omitted two prominent characteristics. To this day, Betty Hill doesn't say what they were. "I have only met one person — a man — who did see those features," she said. "We will carry that secret forever."

In "Communion," Streiber describes his alleged abduction by five-foot-tall, beetle-like "visitors" and his subsequent efforts to analyze and understand the events that followed — and preceded the visit, as he later learned under hypnosis.

He includes a report proving he passed a polygraph test and a statement from a psychiatrist attesting to his sanity. His experience becomes the basis of a spiritual conversion with theological and philosophical implications.

"I would not be at all surprised if the visitors are real," he writes, "and are slowly coming into contact with us according to an agenda of their own devising, which proceeds as human understanding increases."

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The Strieber books have not escaped the notice of UFO network investigators. The November issue of MUFON UFO Journal contains a paper, "Strieber and the God Hypothesis," by Barry H. Downing, a Princeton Theological Seminary graduate and pastor of a Presbyterian church in upstate New York.

"The publication of 'Transformation: The Breakthrough' will probably leave many MUFON members preferring Shirley MacLaine," Downing writes. "But, like it or not, Strieber will be setting the pace for UFO discussion for some time to come. He has the time to go on the road, and his intelligence enables him to make the unbelievable sound possible."

Downing said that UFO proponents of the God Hypothesis will find material to support their theory in "Transformation." Downing finds the book full of religious symbolism, with many of Strieber's fantasies and revelations comparable to events that shaped the lives of such as Jesus, the Apostle Paul and Martin Luther. Downing said he advanced the parallels "with considerable risk for overstating Strieber's importance in history."

But, he said, "if scientific evidence grows stronger in favor of UFOs — if for instance our government stops its UFO lie — then the God Hypothesis is going to get a serious hearing."

In "Transformation," which is a sequel to "Communion," Strieber tells of advancing from simply communing with the visitors to allowing them to transform his consciousness to a higher plane. "I have emerged from my experience a thousands times stronger than I had ever been before it," Strieber says. "I am not at all afraid, not even of death. Rather it has become another rich potential in my life, a challenge to be met with a peaceful heart and an interested mind."

Strieber critics note that it is hardly with a peaceful heart that the writer reacts when his credibility is under attack. Participants in a recent convention recall his becoming quite upset when criticized. Others observe that, regardless of whether the visitors and the abduction and the other bizarre happenings in the books are real, the books make for lively reading and Strieber is making a killing in the book market.

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MACOMB DA'ILY
DEC 25 1988

THE PLAIN DEALER
JAN-16-89

41E-1760 SKY AND
TELESCOPE MONTHLY
DEC-1988

Unexplained UFO sighted by Selfridge

Radar specialists at the Selfridge Air National Guard Base reported sighting an unidentified flying object early this morning.

Military personnel at the base northeast of Mount Clemens were immediately placed on alert.

"The anticipation here is really something," said Lt. Col. Lou Nigro, air field manager at the base.

"We have been unable to determine exactly what the UFO is but it has been determined from radar reports that the object is rapidly approaching Macomb County and is coming out of the north at a tremendous speed."

Despite the inability of radar to specifically identify the object, Nigro said military satellite operators have a good idea of the origin of the UFO.

"We've determined the UFO consists of one human and nine animals," Nigro said. "The object was first sighted near the North Pole and we've picked up an occasional sound of 'ho, ho, ho.'"

600 say they saw UFOs in Pennsylvania

PITTSBURGH (AP) — More than 600 people in Pennsylvania reported seeing unidentified flying objects or strange creatures last year, according to two UFO researchers.

One Beaver County woman said she saw an object the size of Three Rivers Stadium cross the sky.

Nearly 44% of the 350 cases reported in 1988 to the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained remain unsolved, said director Stan Gordon of Greensburg.

Most UFO sightings usually can be explained by natural phenomena or aircraft, he said.

Paul G. Johnson, a chemistry professor at Duquesne University and head of his own Center for UFO Research, said he received 270 reports in the past year, about twice the normal number.

Both investigators said a hot spot for UFO and Bigfoot sightings is Chestnut Ridge, a heavily wooded mountain range running from West Virginia into Indiana County.

Identified Flying Objects

James Oberg writes that rocket launches provide controlled experiments in which to judge eyewitness testimony about unidentified flying objects (June issue, page 572). He claims that such testimony has been found wanting.

Actually, UFO reports are accurate enough for the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies to explain more than 95 percent of the ones we receive. If eyewitness accounts were generally wildly inaccurate, we wouldn't be able to identify the mundane causes of so many of them.

MARK RODEGHIER
Center for UFO Studies
2457 W. Peterson Ave.
Chicago, Ill. 60659

Mark Rodeghier implies that unsolved UFO cases point to extraordinary events. This can be refuted by considering the converse: if all UFO sightings are caused by mundane stimuli, every one should be solved. But a residue of unsolved cases will result quite naturally, as with murders and traffic accidents. Thus, "unsolved" UFO cases can be most simply attributed to distorted perceptions, memories, or descriptions of ordinary phenomena.

JAMES E. OBERG
Rte. 2, Box 350
Dickinson, Tex. 77539

PETERBOROUGH EVENING
TELEGRAPH
DEC 12 1988

Mystery of 'UFO lights' solved

3128
THE mystery of recent local UFO sightings has been solved.

Experts say the brilliant light in the night skies over the Peterborough area was probably a comet.

The Evening Telegraph reported the first close encounter sighting on October 27 — after a Peterborough baker had been star-struck by a mysterious brilliant-coloured object flashing across the sky on his way to work.

And the following day we reported the spotting of three-year-old Simone Colley of Whittlesey.

She had woken up in the middle of the night to see a bright light hovering outside her window.

CLAIMS

Their claims were backed up by:

● Peterborough artist Eric Carr, who painted a water colour of what he had seen.

● A Radio 2 news bulletin which reported the sighting of a bright object plunging into the North Sea off Suffolk.

● Several sightings of a UFO in Wales reported in the Daily Star newspaper.

All five sightings were on the night of October 27 — when the sky was brilliantly lit by a full moon.

Several witnesses spoke of a dazzling ball of light, with a blue or orange tale which travelled rapidly across the sky.

REPORT

Now a report from UFO investigation team SkyScan believes all five sightings were linked — and suggests what was seen was a comet.

Comets are bright, round objects with a hair-like tale.

They travel across the atmosphere at about 25,000 miles an hour, faster than a space ship.

DARLINGTON & STOCKTON TIMES
YORSHIRE
DEC 23 1988

UFO is space debris

3128
An unidentified flying object was seen to burst into flames in the sky over the Wensleydale area on Tuesday night.

The first sighting of the starry light was by traffic police at Scotch Corner on the A1 just before midnight.

They described it as a bright light over the sky.

There were similar

sightings reported by Durham police and by people in the Harrogate area.

Then, just after midnight, a policeman and a military policeman each reported seeing a UFO. At one point it seemed so close to Richmond Castle that they feared it would crash into the monument.

They then saw it burst

into flames and fall to the ground somewhere between Hunton and West Witton.

Police scoured the area but found nothing. The Air Traffic Control at RAF Leeming said there was no aircraft in the sky at the time and concluded that what was seen was space debris which had combusted and then disintegrated.

PA-D13 BUTLER EAGLE
JAN 18 1988

Investigators of the Unexplained Visit Butler after UFO Sightings

1281
Investigators from the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained were in Butler yesterday collecting data from several residents who saw strange lights in the sky Monday night.

Stan Gordon, director of the volunteer association based in Greensburg, said he has received several reports about sightings in the Center Township area on Monday night.

Several volunteers have traveled to Butler to interview people and track the reports, he said.

Lights in Sky

Among those who reported sightings was Laura Smith of Center Township, who said she saw an unidentified flying object as she drove home from work along Route 308 on Monday. She and several other drivers stopped to watch the lights around 10:15 p.m. about three miles from Clearview Mall, she said.

Since Smith reported her sighting, the PASU has received several other reports, Gordon said.

A youth from Center Township also reported seeing strange lights in the sky around 8:45 p.m. Monday in the same area, his mother says.

The boy was looking through a pair of binoculars when he reportedly saw a ring of blue and red lights in the direction of the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

The ring then suddenly turned into a vertical white light and disappeared, his mother said.

Can Call Hotline

Gordon requests that anyone who saw the lights or other unexplained phenomena at any time call the PASU 24-hour UFO hotline at 838-7768.

He also asks that a brief summary, with an approximate date

and time, and a sketch of what was seen be sent to the PASU, 6 Oak Hill Ave., Greensburg 15601.

Gordon noted that his group has been receiving an increasing number of such reports from throughout Pennsylvania over the past year.

He describes his group as a volunteer scientific clearinghouse that conducts studies into UFO sightings and other phenomena in the state.

SPALDING GUARDIAN LINES
DEC 16 1988

Lights over Spalding

POSTAL worker Alfred Darley spotted bright lights in the sky over Pennygate, Spalding, on Sunday night.

He told the Spalding Guardian: "The sky seemed to light up for a few minutes. Then there was a flash and two minutes later I heard a boom sound."

Mr Darley said the lights were white. Two of his colleagues at Peterborough post office also saw them.

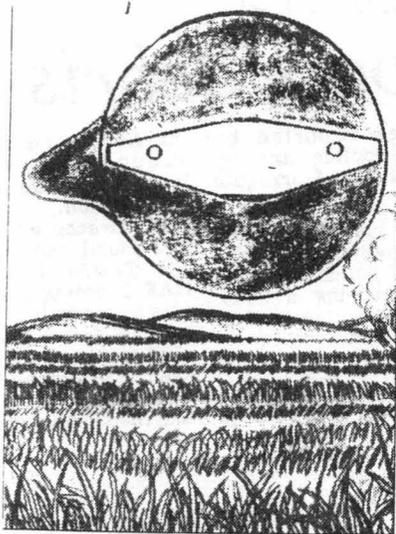
CHAD, MANSFIELD
DEC 7 1988

Objects in the sky

On behalf of Mansfield UFO group and its investigation team A-U-RIS-A I would like to ask the public if anyone saw any strange lights or objects in the sky during the first week of November around the Langwith area, and on 22nd November in the Mansfield area at 5 pm approximately. Anyone with information, contact Mansfield 751889.

6 West Hill Drive,
Mansfield.

L. TRUEMAN



Drawing by Mike Soohy

Sighting near Ebensburg.

Cambria was UFO hotbed

By James W. Siehl
The Tribune-Democrat

Cambria County had an extremely high number of unexplained UFO incidents in 1988, according to Stan Gordon of Greensburg, director of the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained (PASU).

In his annual report, Mr. Gordon said information about unusual incidents was received from people in 25 other counties, as well as from Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland and New Jersey.

The sightings were reported by people of all walks of life, among them police officers and pilots, according to Mr. Gordon.

"In recent years, the typical saucer-shaped UFO is rarely reported. Many witnesses claim to have encountered large, mostly silent, metallic, elongated cigar-shaped objects, as well as large triangular and rectangular-shaped devices," Mr. Gordon said.

He said there is no explanation for 44 percent of the unprecedented 350 UFO cases and other strange incidents the state experienced in 1988, including numerous reports of encounters with the legendary Bigfoot and observations of black panthers and mountain lions.

There also were reports of giant footprints, unusual geological finds, beams of light from the sky coming from no apparent source, fireballs and strange animal killings.

Mr. Gordon said the wave of UFO sightings began in August 1987 and continues to date.

Some cases involve local power failures and reported landings or near-landings of objects — some with physical traces left behind.

"PASU also investigated a number of claims by state residents who felt that they had been temporarily abducted aboard a UFO, physically examined and then released," Mr. Gordon said.

Many of the sightings were concentrated in specific areas for a period of time, according to Mr. Gordon.

Fifty unusual incidents were reported in Cambria County last year, Mr. Gordon said, compared with four in 1987. Most reported sightings of UFOs, but five reported sightings of Bigfoot in the South Fork/New Germany area during August, he said.

Of those, 40 cases including the five Bigfoot sightings, remain a mystery, Mr. Gordon said.

Incidents reported in 1988 in other area counties totaled 1 in Blair; 7, Somerset; 3, Bedford; 15, Indiana; and 137, Westmoreland. Many of the cases reported in those counties have been explained and have been stable in recent years, except Indiana and Westmoreland, which experienced a number of sightings last year of Bigfoot along the Chestnut Mountain Ridge in the Ligonier, Latrobe and Derry areas.

Mr. Gordon said media coverage of his organization in Cambria and Westmoreland counties may account for some of the calls as people are made aware of the service. He said the organization receives practically no crank calls.

Below are some 1988 case highlights:

February — A 60-foot-long object with several rows of lights, described by some as looking like a small cruise ship in the sky, was seen by numerous independent observers between 7:45 and 8:30 p.m. in a 10-mile area bordering Cambria and Somerset counties. The object passed over cars and trees — at times between 50 and 100 feet above the ground. It emitted only a slight humming sound and at times projected multiple beams of light toward the ground.

July — Numerous UFO sightings were reported in Indiana County during the month near the electric generating station near Homer City. For several weeks, residents reported slowly dropping fireballs and strange sounds. On the night of July 17, several witnesses observed two objects with red and green flashing lights make two close passes near the facility. Later, one of the objects made two passes about 200 feet above the ground. It was described as circular and about the size of a large car with four lighted, leg-like projections on the bottom.

Sept. 2 — Ebensburg R. D. On a sunny afternoon, a man sitting by a pond at his rural residence was startled to see an orange/red spherical object come out of the sky from the north.

SWINDON EVENING
ADVERTISER WILTSHIRE
FEB. 11 1989

Couple claim UFO sighting over town

An unidentified flying object with pulsating lights has been seen over Swindon this week.

James Fisher and his wife Doris watched it from the bedroom window of their home in Poplar Avenue, Pinehurst, for more than 20 minutes.

"It was like a chandelier hanging in the sky with red and green lights which changed brightness, a mass of lights in a south-westerly direction and high in the sky Mr Fisher said."

RAF Lyneham lies roughly in that direction from Swindon but a station spokesman did not know of any aircraft that could have resulted in such a sighting.

The couple's sighting follows reports of a UFO over the Cotswolds from members of the public and a policeman.

GLOUCESTER CITIZEN
FEB 10 1989

UFO sight

POLICE and aviation experts are today investigating a UFO sighting just outside Stroud following a vivid description from three people who saw a mysterious object near the A46 at Salmon Springs. It was reported to have been triangular in shape with numerous lights, made no noise and disappeared without trace.

Light, explosion baffle southern Indiana

By **BETH L. ROSENBERG**

STAR STAFF WRITER

A bright flash of light followed by an explosion was reported early Monday by people in several southern Indiana counties, prompting speculation that the source was everything from UFOs to meteors to Santa Claus returning to the North Pole.

James A. Thom, an author who lives in Owen County, said he had just finished tending his horses about 1:15 a.m. when he saw a flickering bright orange flash in the sky. About three minutes later, he said, he heard a rumble.

"I'm a pretty dedicated skywatcher, but I've never seen anything like it," he said. "All the clouds were lit up. Then I heard what sounded like a rumble or a real low, stretched-out crashing sound. It reminded me of an artillery explosion

above the clouds. . . . But it must have been far away because there wasn't anything like lightning and because it all happened at one spot in the sky and nothing built up to it."

Authorities in Bloomington, Brown County and Shelbyville all reported receiving calls describing a bright light and explosion about 1:30 a.m. They tried to explain the mystery sightings by checking for plane crashes, weather-related explanations or any other possible explanation.

"We contacted the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) to see if they had lost anything on their screens or seen anything," said Trooper Rick Wright of the Bloomington State Police Post. "They hadn't."

One person calling state police thought the flash of light accompanied a vehicle from outer space, Wright said.

Deputy John Henry of the Brown County Sheriff's Department said he saw the flash of light while looking out his living room window and then heard thunder.

"It rattled the whole house," he said. "At first, I thought it was lightning. The sky was clear, the moon and stars were out. My next speculation is it would probably be something at Camp Atterbury, which is nearby. Santa wasn't at the top of the list."

Martin S. Burkhead, an associate professor of astronomy at Indiana University in Bloomington, said the reports were classical descriptions of a meteor.

"I did not see it, but it sounds very much like a meteor that broke up fairly low in the Earth's atmosphere," Burkhead said. "If it were low enough in the atmosphere, you can hear it. Since sound travels so much slower than light, the

sound would be much later. Not having more sightings, I really can't say how high or where it landed."

Meteors, sometimes known as "shooting stars," are bits of rocky debris in the solar system that are only observable when they enter the Earth's atmosphere. When the orbits of the Earth and the meteors intersect, he said, the space particles generally burn up and vaporize. Those who saw the light may have seen the end of a larger meteor burning up, Burkhead said.

The possibility of a meteor occurred to Thom, but he also considered the light might be fuel from a high-flying jetliner blowing up or a "taxpayer's nightmare" of a superbomber exploding. Next came thoughts of a celestial occurrence.

"I've seen a meteor, but I never saw one that bright," he said.

ESSEX CHRONICLE CHELMSFORD
FEB 3 1989 (ENG)

UFO OVER TOWN?

THERE was something strange in the night sky above Chelmsford this week.

An Unidentified Flying Object was reported on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday over Chelmsford and police were informed by an ex-RAF man on Wednesday that he and his wife had seen an object in the sky on Tuesday and Wednesday from their home in Patching Hall Lane.

The object was described as "a semi balloon shape, grey at the top with a brown band at the bottom." It was said to be travelling from the South West to the North East across the sky towards Roxwell.

Local man reports 'huge fireball' in sky

By Tim Baker
News-Sun Staff Writer

Ed Boerger said no one thought he was crazy when he entered work yesterday morning claiming to have just seen a "huge fireball" falling from the sky.

"They believed me," he said. "It just seemed ironic that I saw this when that plane crashed about 200 yards from here," he said. Boerger, of 4329 Mumper Rd., works at Micro Enterprises on E. Pleasant St. not far from the Piper Navajo crash site of Tuesday morning

Although Boerger was the only person to report the incident to local police, the Associated Press re-

ported Thursday that a falling star or ball of fire prompted a rash of calls to police and radio and television stations further south in Ohio and Kentucky and as far north as Toledo.

A state geologist believes the object was probably a meteor because the object had a southwest-to-northeast trajectory.

If it was a piece of an old satellite or space debris, it would most likely have a north-to-south trajectory said Mike Hansen, a geologist with the geological survey division of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Ed Boerger said he didn't really know what he saw yesterday morning:

"I had just dropped my wife off at work," said the 43-year-old sales engineer. "It was still dark, and we had commented on the sliver of the moon low on the horizon."

After parking his car on the south side of E. Pleasant St., Boerger said he saw the object as he walked north across the street.

"It was falling south or southeast when it got too low and I lost it," he said.

"Usually falling stars look small like a tennis ball, but this one was huge; it looked to be about the size of a 55-gallon drum. It had a tail with smoke coming off it," Boerger said.

He said he didn't hear it land and that trees and buildings blocked his view of the object when low in the sky.

Boerger said he reads a lot about unidentified flying objects and astronomy and he has seen many falling stars before. "Space junk" is what he initially believed the object to be he said.

Boerger also said the object had no arch in its path and moved more slowly than the falling stars that he has seen.

"I never heard any sound, never heard it land. It could have landed in Canada for all I know," he said. The light that encompassed it was white with an orange tint.

Lew Ramey, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Columbus said meteors are tricky. "They appear to be where you're seeing it. But that can be deceiving," he said.

Boerger called it an "identifiable UFO. No one from space was visiting us or came to reclaim Alf."

He said he was never frightened and believes the incident is explainable.

However, the experience did prompt him to call the Clark County Sheriff's department. Debbie Wooten, dispatcher for the office, logged Boerger's call at 7:17 a.m.

Calls and sightings were reported from the Cincinnati area and neighboring northern Kentucky to Marion, about 50 miles north of Columbus and in Toledo. Federal Aviation Administration officials at Greater Cincinnati International Airport in northern Kentucky said they had no report of missing airplanes.

Dispatcher Pam Fergusson of the Hamilton County Sheriff's department in Cincinnati said she received approximately 15 calls about 7 a.m. reporting the phenomenon or asking question about it. She said sheriff officials had not confirmed the source of the light.

IL-W44 BERWYN CICERO STICKNEY
FOREST VIEW LIFE WEEKLY
JAN 29 -89

Mars triggers UFO sightings

The belief in intelligent life on Mars in the late 1800s is what triggered UFO sightings, according to astronomer David Slavsky.

At that time, scientists built a telescope large enough to see the surface of the planet, Slavsky explained. Astronomer Giovanni Shaperi reported seeing dark lines he called "canali," an Italian word that translates into "channel," like river channel, but English speakers translated it into "canal."

"If these lines really were canals, they would stretch hundreds of thousands miles long," Slavsky noted. "And so the idea started getting brought up in popular culture that there were creatures on Mars building canals thousands of miles long. And if it took us until the 1850s and '60s to build a canal 100 miles long (the Suez Canal in Egypt), how brilliant these creatures must be. This led to an enormous public belief

that there was intelligent life on Mars. Not just intelligent life on Mars, but vastly superior in intellect."

Slavsky noted this belief triggered UFO sightings, and he spoke of newspaper accounts in the 1890s that told of phenomena such as a "strange airship in the night that no one could explain."

By the 1930s, there was a "tremendous belief there was intelligent life nearby," Slavsky said. This resulted in a 1938 fictional radio broadcast "The War of the Worlds," narrated by Orson Wells, about a Martian attack on the Earth.

Numerous space probes have been sent to the planet since the 1960s, and no traces of life or canals constructed by intelligent life were found, Slavsky said.

Gail Siwek

1381

Park The Saucer For A Close Encounter Over Sunday Dinner

OK, Martians. I know you're out there. I'm inviting you to drop that saucer out of the sky, settle down on my front lawn and come in for Sunday dinner.

An odd invite, huh?

Not according to the Mutual UFO Network, Inc., in Lincolnton whose annual UFO update arrived in the mail the other day and told me in headlines:

"UFO Sightings in North Carolina Remain Steady in 1988." "10 North Carolina Cities Report Encounters—many go 'unreported.'"

That is the tip of the UFO iceberg, contends George D. Fawcett, assistant state director and public relations director for MUFON. Being only a cursory reader of supermarket tabloids and an alien to television, I had missed these astonishing developments.

According to MUFON, recent polls show that half of the public says UFOs are for real. A solid 87 percent of our citizenry want "new" congressional hearings on UFOs and have the forethought to stipulate that people giving "eyewitness testimony" be provided "immunity."

("Immunity?" "Immunity" from a straitjacket and nerve pills?)

Plus—and this is the acid test on scientific matters—this past year former President Ronald Reagan revealed for the first time his "own UFO encounter" while governor of California. (Sure that wasn't the \$1.25 trillion budget deficit beginning to loom on the

Admittedly, extraterrestrials are usually too busy to stop their flying saucers and get out. But if I'm willing to make the effort on Sunday dinner, no reason they couldn't meet me half way and take out a few minutes to answer a few questions.

My chances are good. There was a lot of UFO activity in North Carolina in 1988. UFOs visited Princeton, Hamlet, Lexington, Robbins, King, Pinnacle, Denver, Farmville, Lincolnton and Murfreesboro.

That's only about 10 percent of what really happened, Fawcett figures. About 90 percent of the sightings go unreported. "Ridicule, military regulations" and whatever stop people from speaking out, he says.

Imagine that, reticence to speak out in a nation where the First Amendment is sacred and a 30-second divot on the evening news is immortality.

I'm the sort who likes to be prepared for guests, so I telephoned one of the lucky 10 who saw a UFO in 1988. I needed an idea of what I'm in for.

John Hendricks, 23, inserts springs in sofas before they are upholstered. On Dec. 14 at 6:35 a.m. he was taking a break out back of Trend-Line Furniture Corp. in Lincolnton. He was smoking a Marlboro Light when something in the sky caught his eye.

"I was standing there smoking and I seen these lights coming through the woods," he said. "I thought it was an airplane to start with."

"It" became a 65-foot long, diamond-shaped object

traveling silently at 2 mph hour at 150 feet. The UFO had a single, front headlight. Red and white lights lit the bottom.

"I wasn't scared. I knew what it was," Hendricks said.

The experience lasted about two minutes during which he didn't smoke his cigarette. Then he raced inside, drew a diagram on a piece of cardboard and told his co-workers what he had seen.

"I believe in 'em (UFOs) you know," he said. "I was happy that I got to see one. I wanted to see one all my life... Lot of people call you crazy, you know."

I know. So does Fawcett.

"They all appear to be playing with a full deck of cards," he writes of UFO sighters in his newsletter. He predicts "that 1989 ought to be one heck of a year for 'unidentified flying objects' and their pilots."

Particularly their pilots. But we will never know if one doesn't stop by and take advantage of a little Sunday afternoon Southern hospitality.

I'm considering painting a bull's-eye on the roof of my apartment to get their attention. Somebody out there among our 63,906 Sunday readers might have an in with these guys and could steer them to me.

I am about to purchase a second set of dinner forks. Maybe one of the Martians could even teach me which fork to use for what.



**David
Newton**

□ Staff Writer

horizon, Mr. President? Check your astrologer.)

Fawcett gets straight to it in his release.

"The bottom line is that UFOs and their occupants—UFOauts—are crying out for more serious study by both the traditional scientific disciplines, as well as the reputable and impartial news media."

That's where I come in. As a working, professional journalist, I am a member of Fawcett's "reputable and impartial news media."

The best way to clear up this question is to have somebody "reputable and impartial" like me sit down to Sunday dinner with a couple of space aliens.

JAN-23 1989

Etc...

Aliens in N.C.? Keep watching the skies!

George D. Fawcett of Lincolnton, public relations director for the Mutual UFO Network of North Carolina, has turned in his 21st annual report of UFO sightings in the Tar Heel state.

He reports 11 sightings in 1988, three of them around Lincolnton, in the western part of the state between Hickory and Gastonia. But closer to the Triad were sightings May 23 in the Stokes County towns of King and Pinnacle.

About 9 p.m., a husband and wife in King reportedly stood about a hundred feet from a giant yellow-and-red craft "as big as a house," with blue and white lights and an engine noise like an air conditioner humming

A woman in Pinnacle called a newspaper to report seeing the same thing, and recording it on videotape, but hung up without leaving her name, Fawcett said.

Another sighting near the Triad was May 3 in Lexington, more famous for barbecue than for unearthly visitations. Residents reported three hovering UFOs casting beams of light onto the ground. Three 8-foot-wide circles reportedly were found on the site.

One of the most interesting sightings Fawcett reports was April 8 near Lincolnton. A husband and wife and their two children reported an 80-foot silver UFO that buzzed their jeep in broad daylight and remained in view for 15 minutes.

Another woman reported seeing two UFOs during a lonely drive the night of Oct. 1. This was near Denver, across Lake Norman from Davidson. One UFO shone a spotlight beam onto her car, making it shake and producing static on the radio, she said. This reportedly went on for 20 minutes, until the woman managed to drive out from under the craft.

"The UFOs appeared to be cautious in many ways," Fawcett said. Only one of the 11 was seen during the day, and none in a major metropolitan area.

Fawcett said his sources "all appear to be playing with a full deck of cards" and probably represent a small percentage of the actual UFO sightings in North Carolina. "Most sightings go unreported due to ridicule, military regulations, secrecy or lack of information as to where such reports should be made."

For the past 44 years, Fawcett has spent thousands of dollars of his own money investigating reported UFO sightings nationwide. His address is Mutual UFO Network, 602 Battleground Road, Lincolnton, N.C. 28092.

NC-D7 CHARLOTTE OBSERVER JAN 26 1989

UFO Fancier Says They're Still With Us

George Fawcett, the UFO guru from Lincolnton, says there were 11 UFO sightings in 10 locales in North Carolina during 1988.

Fawcett, assistant state director of the Mutual UFO Network, a cooperative of UFO buffs, records N.C. sightings and issues an annual report.



Allen Norwood

The most recent sighting, Fawcett said, came Dec. 14 in Lincolnton, when a furniture company employee spotted a UFO during an early-morning work break.

The pearly white, diamond-shaped object was judged to be 65 feet wide, and said to hover about 150 feet off the ground.

Fawcett said all those who reported sightings "appeared to be playing with a full deck of cards."

No one reported seeing "UFO" printed on the side of a craft, he said. On the other hand, no one

Continued From Page 1B reported "Made In USA," either.

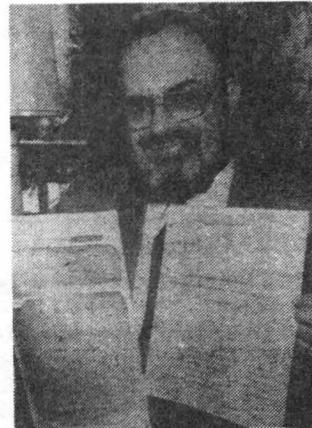
IL-W268 FOX LAKE PRESS WEEKLY JAN 27 1989

Scientist says saucers are real

"Flying Saucers ARE Real" is the title of an illustrated lecture to be presented by nuclear physicist Stanton T. Friedman on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 7:30 p.m. in the College of Lake County Auditorium in Grayslake. Admission is \$2.

Friedman will reveal government documented information on UFO's and scientific data on saucer landings, abductions, and star travel. About 50 slides will illustrate his program and be followed by a question and answer session.

"After more than 30 years of study and investigation, I am convinced that the worldwide evidence is overwhelming that some UFO's are intelligently controlled vehicles originating in other solar systems," said Friedman, whose credentials in-



Stanton Friedman

clude a B.S. and M.S. in physics from the University Chicago.

He also has 14 years industrial and fusion rockets, and nuclear systems for space applications.

For more information and tickets, call the CLC Activities Office at (312)223-6601 ext. 300.

Strange lights were UFOs say men who followed them

TWO unidentified flying objects were spotted hovering above a field beside the A128 late one night last week.

The brightly lit UFOs were seen by two men who were driving along Tilbury Road — and they reckon other motorists must have noticed them as well.

Martin Bennett, a 29-year-old haulage contractor who lives in Godman Road, Chadwell St Mary, said: "I've never seen anything like it before. We slowed down to crawling pace to watch, and other drivers slowed down and stared too when they saw what we were looking at. We would like to contact them to back up our sighting."

The first Mr Bennett saw of last Wednesday night's bizarre sighting was a scattering of bright orange lights, hovering above a field opposite a farmhouse about a quarter of a mile from the railway bridge.

"I noticed it was a bit odd," he said, "because aeroplane lights are usually red, green or white. These lights were very intense, and kept getting brighter and bigger.

"They started off about the size of a pinhead on the windscreen, and ended up about as large as a pencil, but then they suddenly disappeared."

When the car turned a bend, the two men saw an aeroplane, and at first assumed that had been the source of the strange lights.

Then they remembered rounding the bend — and realised the aeroplane was "in completely the opposite direction. When we worked out where the lights had come from and looked over there, we got the shock of our lives," said Mr Bennett.

By this stage, the lights had turned silvery-white.

Martin Bennett's friend Terry Fagan, also from Chadwell St Mary, said: "It's very hard to describe what they looked like. They seemed to glow without any solid centre — a bit like a bright light bulb. They had no firm edges.

"In fact the only thing I can compare the light to is the moon on a very frosty night. It had a halo of light around it about three-quarters the size of the centre light."

Martin recalled: "Terry was leaning right

out of the window to get a better look, and other cars driving past must have noticed because they all slowed down as well."

The pair calculated the objects may have been about 20 feet in diameter, though it was hard to judge their size because they were some way off.

After the mysterious lights had shimmered in the same place for a while, they moved off in the direction of Horndon-on-the-Hill. Though the two men tried to follow them, they gradually lost contact.

"It was late at night, about 11.40pm, but we hadn't touched a drop of alcohol," said Mr Bennett. "I only popped out for a burger because we were hungry!

"And I'm not the type that gets absorbed in science fiction books. I've never seen anything like this before."

Now the two men plan to return to the scene with cameras, hoping to capture any return "visit" by the UFOs on film.

Reports of UFO-sightings have been rife in southern Essex since late summer, reaching a peak in September. Evidence is being collated by the East Anglian UFO research centre at Leiston in Suffolk (tel 0728-830757).

SNEFFIELD STAR DEC 21 1988

MYSTIFIED FOLK SEE LIGHT AS UFO SHOOTS BY

By Mark Calvert

WAS it a bird? Was it a plane? Or was it Father Christmas doing his rounds early?

Whatever it was that shot eerily above the Sheffield night sky, police, the public and even the boffins of the RAF are this afternoon seriously investigating the strange case of the Rivelin Valley UFO.

As the clock struck midnight, calls started flooding in to Hammerton Road Police Station from ter-

rified witnesses reporting a blinding light, with a blue vapour trail, flying mysteriously above Wisewood, Stanington, Crosspool and Walkley.

'Thumping'

Bus driver Philip Hartley watched stunned as the UFO, silently crossing his field of vision, went from horizon to horizon in less than 10 seconds.

Philip, of Robertson Drive, Walkley said: "It was too fast to be a firework or a plane, although, at first, my heart started thumping and I was braced

myself for an air crash.

"I am a firm believer in the unknown and to actually see a UFO is quite frightening."

David Green, who was walking home to Cotswold Road in Malin Bridge when he saw the object, said: "I am not UFO mad, but I am convinced it was something very strange

NEW THEORY OVER STRANGE SIGHTINGS

Were the UFOs on a dark rendezvous?

EXPERTS probing mystery UFO sightings in the skies above Stafford have hit upon a new theory.

The British UFO Research Association has always claimed that the flashing triangular shapes witnessed on many occasions during the summer months were top secret American Stealth fighter planes.

Now it believes that several jets are now rendezvousing in the night sky on mid air refuelling exercises - and that is the real reason why so many people are seeing what they believe are UFOs.

BUFORA, which has dealt with 1,000 sightings in the last 15 months, reveals that there are remarkable similarities between what happened in Stafford and what took place in the sky above Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire last December.

"There is every reason to wonder if the lights were on several aircraft that were fly-

ing much higher than believed and only seemed low because the entire retinue was enormous and misinterpreted as belonging to just one aircraft," said Jenny Randles, director of investigations at BUFORA.

"In that case this would be several jets and at least one rumbling tanker in a mid air refuelling exercise, probably from the US Air Force at a base in southern England. I suspect this might well have been the case," she added.

BUFORA works on the premise that nine out of ten UFO sightings have a conventional explanation and since the first sightings has always claimed that the unusual lights and shapes were in fact secret flights of military aircraft over Britain.

The first sightings came in May and June but the height of activity in the skies came in July when there were three separate reports and David Myatt from Church Eaton

stood underneath an object for 15 minutes.

Flashing orange, red and blue lights and silent movement were common to most sightings which continued until September when a further sighting was reported at Cannock Chase which according to BUFORA is 'notorious' for them.

Stafford MP Bill Cash collated all the information and put the strange sightings to

Defence Minister Roger Freeman for official investigation. All he came up with was that they were probably due to an increase in activity of aircraft waiting to land at Birmingham Airport.

Mr Cash described that explanation as 'laughable' but is not going to be put off and is still keen to hear of any other sightings.

"It is like any other inquiry, you have to take it in steps," said the MP.

SOUTH END EVENING ECHO ESSEX
FEB 9 1989

UFO men probe V-shape spinner

UFO investigators are interviewing a Rochford man who saw a V-shaped object spinning in different directions.

At one stage the noiseless object remained still in the night sky and then a red light left it, returned and the object disappeared.

The mystery craft, whose lights changed from blue to white, red and an orangey red, was seen by the 43 year-old Rochford man about 9pm on Monday.

He asked to remain anonymous in case his

friends ribbed him too much.

Southend airport deputy director John Burton said there was no unusual air activity on Monday night.



He said the coloured lights would have been aircraft re-equipped with strobe-type lights for better visual effect. They would look like a rotating disc.

UFO investigators had 27 calls over the weekend about lights.

The UFO hotline is on Basildon 286079.

SOUTHEND EVENING ECHO
ESSEX

FEB-1-1989

UFO lights

A UFO researcher visiting a family in Great Wakering watched amazed as three bright lights appeared above Rayleigh and Basildon. Mr Martin Bainbridge, a member of East Anglian UFO Society, said at one stage the lights formed a triangle and after about an hour disappeared.

Mr Peter Sayer, 33, builder and decorator, of Beach Court, who was being visited by the UFO researcher, said the lights were definitely not aircraft. Anyone who saw them is asked to ring the UFO hotline, Basildon 286079.

Scientist investigates the Warminster Thing

WEATHER ³¹²⁸ expert Terence Meaden is hoping to solve a 24-year-old UFO mystery which baffled the nation.

Reports of the so-called Warminster Thing brought experts and cranks flocking to the Wiltshire town for all-night sky-watch sessions.

The phenomena were catalogued in books, newspapers, radio and television. Some put it all down to imagination, but others set out to prove that Warminster was at the centre of some sort of intergalactic highway with regular visits from extra-terrestrials.

Some of the more bizarre

reports at the time came from people who were driving around Warminster when their cars suddenly failed and they saw lights or heard strange noises. There were vivid descriptions of inexplicable fast-moving lighted objects in the night sky, whirring noises and physical and mental after-effects on some of the witnesses.

For some years it became Warminster's main claim to fame, and earned the community the unwanted title of the country's flying saucer capital. But slowly interest waned, reports dwindled and the mystery remained just that.

Now physicist Dr Meaden from Bradford on Avon has decided to

review all the evidence and he hopes to re-interview many of the original witnesses.

He says it was 24 years ago on Christmas Day that "A mysterious entity which locals call the 'Thing' made itself known in Warminster and district through its strange noises and rooftop hammerings, which affected the barracks at Knook and several residences in Warminster.

There followed an eventual period with reports of numerous happenings involving moving or hovering lights, unaccountable forces or winds and bizarre sounds. In some of the cases, related by Arthur Shuttlewood in his books, people in the open found themselves struck by inexplicable forces of wind, while in others the engines of moving vehicles inexplicably stalled when in the vicinity of mysterious lighted objects.

"Of most interest of me are experiences regarding unexplained luminous phenomena or forces at ground level in which people, animals, cars or homes were affected, or which involved hovering to vertically moving lights."

Dr Meaden, who works for the Tornado and Storm Research Organisation, says that he would like to interview anyone who was involved at the time. And he also feels there must be more recent cases which have so far gone unreported.

He has some ideas of his own on possible causes and is keeping

an open mind until there has been time for more research. But he is quite positive on the flying saucer theory. "That I regard as totally unacceptable although it will upset a lot of UFO people. That is the kind of answer produced by a non-scientist totally mystified by what has gone on."

Dr Meaden says that once he has completed a study on the Warminster Thing the results will be collated along with other data and may well be published. "I just need hard facts now," he added.

Anyone who can contribute to the investigation should telephone Dr Meaden in confidence at Bradford on Avon 2482 or write to him at 54 Frome Road.

CAMPBELTOWN COURIER
-SCOTLAND-
DEC 9 1988

CAR'S FUSES BLOWN BY A UFO?

TAXI driver Duncan Brown sparked off some controversy after a Close Encounter of the electric kind blew four fuses in his car.

An unexplained bright orange flash travelling across the sky at speed knocked out the headlights on his car when Duncan, of Drumlemble, was travelling along

the Moss Road near Rhoin Farm at six o'clock in the morning, after dropping off a fare.

Baffled at the flash of light, which lasted only a split second, and shocked at suddenly being plunged into total darkness, the taxi driver slammed on the brakes, hoping

his car would stay on the road and that he wouldn't hit anything

"I looked under the bonnet and found four fuses had blown," said Duncan. "Luckily, my hazard warning lights were still working, so I was able to drive home with them on, but had to go slowly as I could hardly see a thing.

Westport

"The light was a bright orange, and flashed across the sky from the direction of Westport towards Machrihanish. It travelled at some rate, going quite a distance in the second or so it lasted.

"I must say, I thought at first it was a bolt of lightning, but it was a fine, dry morning, and not the sort of weather you normally associate lightning with."

Later in the day, Duncan mentioned his strange experience to a US serviceman, who reported the bright light to the RAF base. He thought there may be a logical explanation. The light could have had something to do with aircraft taking off or landing at Machrihanish, or perhaps it had been a freak bolt of lightning, which would have been recorded by the base's Met office.

Enquiries, however, revealed nothing that could explain the bright orange flare in the sky.

Closed

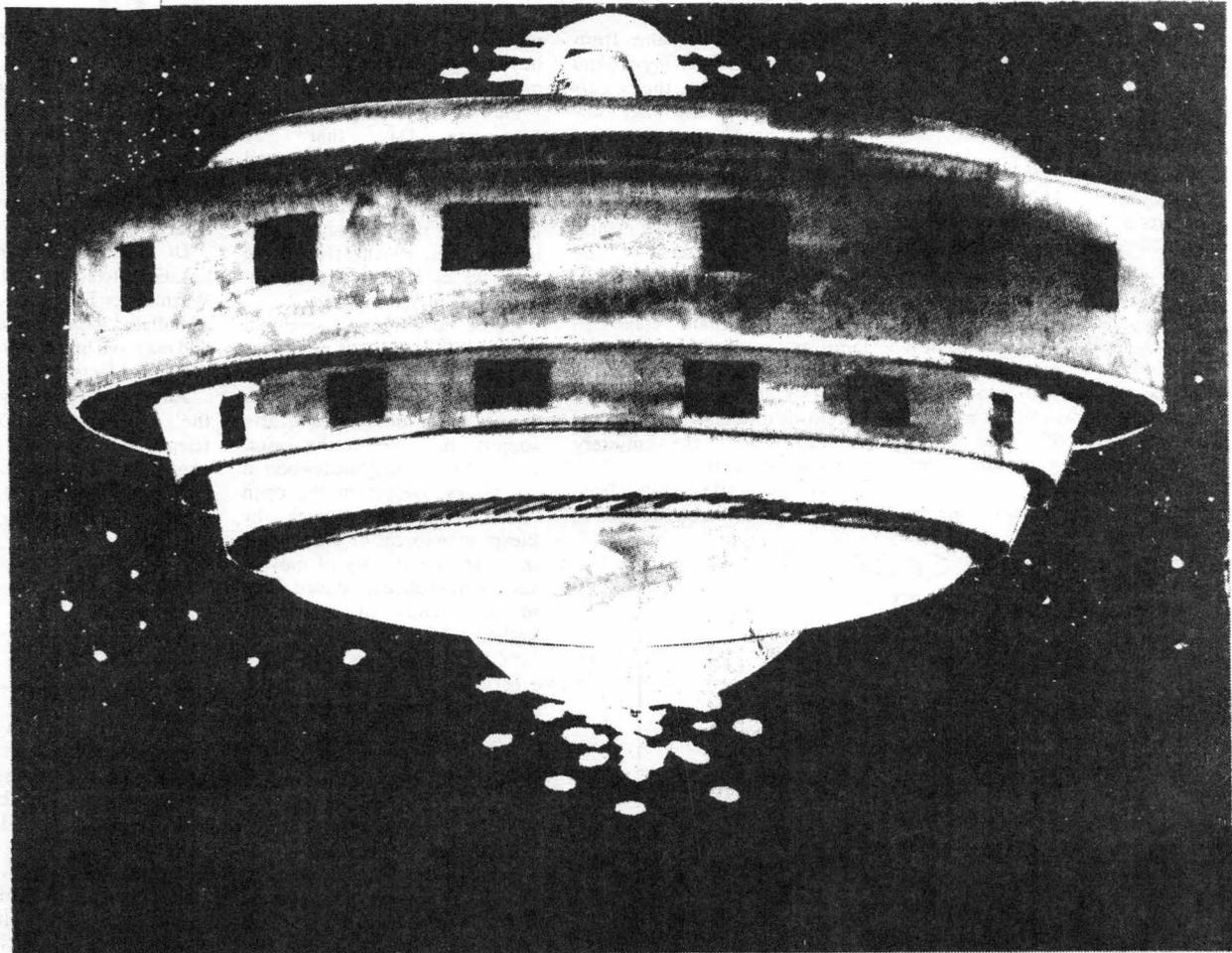
"The Met office was manned that morning from five thirty onwards, and no electrical activity was recorded or forecast," said a spokesman. "The airfield was closed, so there was no traffic in or out."

"We can offer no explanation for this light."

Faced with this news, Duncan was nonplussed. "I don't believe in UFOs," he said. "I was sure the flash had been lightning, but I'm told lightning is never orange. With this news from the RAF base, I don't know what to think, now.

"This is the sort of thing people laugh about. All I know is, it happened."

'State of siege'



Tribune illustration by JIM BREDECK

This illustration, which duplicates a drawing created by Ed, shows the color and shape of

the spacecraft that Ed says he photographed in Gulf Breeze.

Ed's UFO encounters have made his life hell

By JENNIFER TUCKER
Tribune Staff Writer

GULF BREEZE — Ed isn't the "UFO type."

He's a WASPish baby boomer with a kid in college and a two-car garage. As a custom-home builder in a community full of custom homes, he depends on personal referrals for his livelihood.

He doesn't seem to need the money he could earn from a best seller based on his experiences. Yet local sources indicate he has recently signed a book contract.

Nevertheless, Ed is the guy who has taken all the photographs, made all the noise, caused all the fury. Just over a year ago, Ed says, a UFO appeared in front of his house in Gulf Breeze and he immediately took several photographs of the craft

Ed walked into the street to get a closer look and a "blue beam" shot down from the ship, temporarily paralyzing him, he says. At the same time, Ed says he heard a loud "hum" and was instructed by an authoritative voice to "be still."

Within seconds, he says, he was raised off the ground, then thrown to the concrete as the craft disappeared. From that moment on, Ed says, a resonant "hum" always preceded the appearance of the UFO.

Seven months later, after 21 encounters resulting in more than 30 photographs and one videotape, Ed says he was abducted again. This time, the aliens removed the hum and he has not seen or photographed a UFO since, he says.

To Ed, 42, this was no phantom object, no trick of nature or imagination. It was real. It made his life a living hell.

And it forced him to defend himself, he says, not against the aliens, but against the people who call him crazy.

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Words pound

"Look," Ed says in one of a series of telephone interviews, his words pounding with the passion of a clenched fist. "Before Nov. 10, 1987, I wouldn't have be-

lieved in UFOs either unless one landed in my front yard.

"Uh, no pun intended."

Ed guffaws like Gulliver in a land of Lilliputians.

If Ed has been enlightened with truths no scientist knows, then it is wisdom learned reluctantly. He can barely get through a sentence without revealing his fears or defending his position.

He describes the experience as "a state of siege."

Yet, he doesn't plead for understanding. And he doesn't expect it, really. Besides the photographs themselves, Ed's take-it-or-leave-it attitude is his most convincing argument.

And it's an argument he can't win, critics say, not with a pocket full of Polaroids.

Ed, meanwhile, has remained anonymous because he fears his fate. "I would always be known as the UFO guy."

He'd rather be known as a good businessman, a good father and a good buddy to the kids he says he's kept off the streets by welcoming them into his home.

"No, no, no. It was an awful experience. If you ever take a photograph (of a UFO), do not show it to anybody. Put it in a drawer and show it to your grandkids," he says wearily.

Ed's story is lengthy and strange, and he knows it. He says his first encounter, in November 1987, resulted in five blurry color photographs he made with a 17-year-old Polaroid camera.

Take a picture

"Put yourself in the mood of peacefully sitting in your office and looking out your front window and you see something that ... looks like it just escaped a Steven Spielberg movie," he says. "You figure you better take a picture of it."

Ed's humor about his experience is as revealing as it is disarming. Like a schoolboy trying to explain a pock-marked report card, Ed uses humor to cushion the blow. His laughter bounces

See EXAMS, Page 6F

1381 CT. Exams conclude Ed is sane and honest

■ From Page 1F

and rolls like a runaway basketball, but his words slam into listeners' ears with the power of a Michael Jordan slam dunk.

For months, Ed snapped dozens of pictures. Many were taken near his home, situated in the sleepy center of town next to a large, overgrown field.

Others were taken at Shoreline Park, a spot facing the skinny barrier island called Pensacola Beach. Stray kittens crowd the wooded park, whose main features are a whitewashed gazebo and a good stretch of concrete.

Still others were taken along deserted county roads, whose curves are familiar to Ed, the builder.

Skeptics and believers agree — the photographs are remarkably unidentifiable. The craft (or crafts) captured on film are mostly spherical in shape, with dark, recessed points that Ed surmises are windows. Lights encircle the bottom of the craft and a round bulb is perched on top.

In many instances, Ed snapped the pictures in what he describes as frenzied fear, at dusk or near dawn. Moreover, the craft maneuvered so rapidly that Ed says his opportunities for precise pictures were limited.

Alien encounters

He also was having alien encounters Ed says he couldn't capture on film. On several occasions, Ed says, he was pursued by a "blue beam" of light that shot from the craft.

He says a bowl full of bubbling residue was found in his back yard after one late-night visit. The Mutual UFO Network, which initiated investigation of Ed's claims, had the substance analyzed at independent chemical laboratories in Florida and Texas. These revealed a strange liquid high in magnesium

and trace elements, Ed says.

More frightening were face-to-face meetings with the aliens themselves — what scientists call an encounter of the third kind.

The first time he saw one of the "creatures," Ed says he was awakened at 3 a.m. by the now-familiar hum that preceded their visits. When he peered out the glass doors of his bedroom, Ed says, he was face to face with a childlike creature clad in gray.

He says he saw more of these creatures at a later date, an experience that produced one of the most dramatic photographs in Ed's portfolio.

In it, the craft is pictured hovering just above the road, lights reflecting on the wet pavement. Moments after he took this picture, Ed says he realized the craft was moving toward him so he slid from the truck and crawled underneath it.

From his prone position, Ed says he could see a blue beam flash from the craft several times, each time depositing a creature on the road.

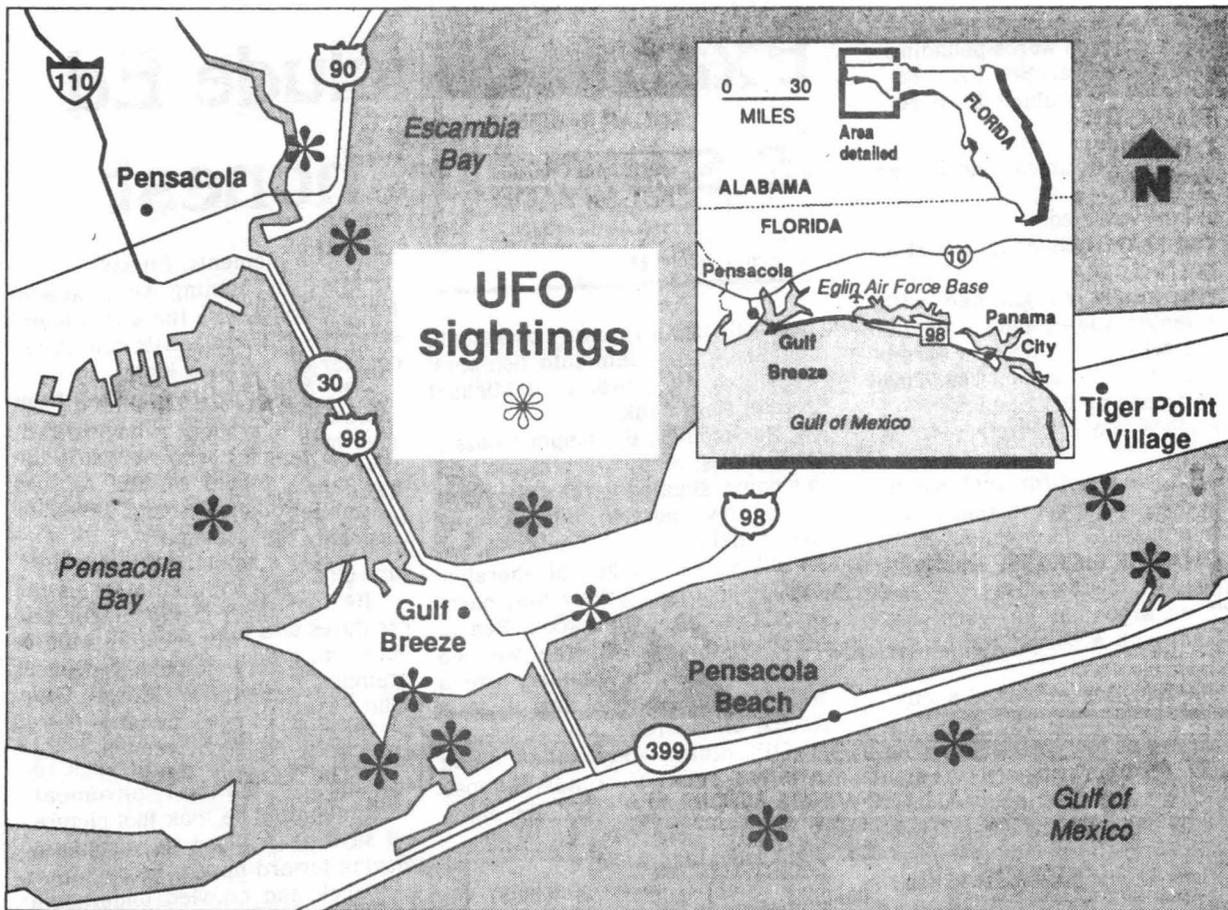
He assumed the creatures were "after him" and, riddled with terror, he jumped back in the truck and sped away. He didn't even think about taking a picture, he says.

Officials visit

After Ed's photographs began to appear in the Gulf Breeze Sentinel newspaper — with his approval but without his name — Ed says he was visited by two men who identified themselves as U.S. Air Force personnel. Wielding badges printed with "Air Force Special Security Services," the visitors behaved "very aggressively" and demanded Ed turn over his photographs, he says.

Ed refused, explaining they were in the hands of professional photographic analysts. (Many were; others were still in Ed's possession.)

By spring, two major UFO organizations — the Mutual UFO Net-



Tribune map by VAUGHN HUGHES

work and the Center for UFO Studies — had been in touch with Ed. So had dozens of media representatives, including the National Enquirer, which Ed says turned down the story because one analysis tentatively labeled the photographs a hoax.

With that, the seed of suspicion was planted. And Ed, who states vehemently, "My word is my bond," was forced into a corner full of accusations.

After taking 24 photographs with his old Polaroid, Ed began using cameras and film provided by UFO researchers — unbroken packages and factory-perfect equipment. He produced 11 photographs with the new equipment supplied by UFO investigators.

Ed also built a so-called stereo camera that allowed him to take two pictures simultaneously, creating a 3-D effect. With this camera, he took about eight photographs.

"If I hadn't taken any pictures with these cameras, I would have been branded guilty by non-photography," he says, sarcastically.

By using mathematical equations, analysts studying the photographs could determine its distance from the camera and its size. Most often, these conclusions placed the craft 65 to 180 feet from the camera, at an approximate size of 12 feet in diameter and 9 feet high.

Unusual occurrence

These estimates correspond quite precisely to an unusual occurrence in Gulf Breeze during the spring. A circular patch of dead grass was discovered on the high school grounds, and lab analysis by UFO investigators revealed the grass wasn't killed by disease or suffocated by petroleum derivatives.

The patch had a 12-foot diameter.

In addition to providing his photographs for publication, Ed agreed to numerous psychological exams, a lie-detector test that included a five-hour interview, and an electronic voice analysis.

In each case, investigators concluded Ed was sane and honest.

"There was never any question that what happened, happened," Ed says. "But I don't know why me — why I was privy to these things.

"I didn't feel 'chosen,' I felt abused," he says. "I was tormented,

a prisoner in my own house. I surrounded myself with people at work and family at home.

"My kids never knew if Daddy was going to go away and not come back."

Ed says he took the photographs to the local newspaper because he felt a kind of civic duty to warn nearby residents. Yet his reward from skeptics was name-calling tirades that labeled him "everything from an agitated fool to a schizophrenic," Ed says.

People trying to discredit him, he says, have played "hide-n-seek with the truth" while distorting the facts to fit their opinion.

Classic campaign

"What this is is a classic disinformation campaign by the debunkers in order to brand me as loony tunes," Ed says, his voice rising in defense. "They ran out of legitimate scientific criticisms of the photographic evidence. You have to keep in mind that none of these debunk-

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PAGE

ers have ever talked to any of the other witnesses."

Dozens of independent eyewitnesses in Gulf Breeze and Pensacola have reported seeing UFOs in the last year, and many of these reports coincide with the appearance of Ed's photographs.

Yet Ed has been criticized for being alone in his torment — the only one able to take photographs of the craft.

"Look, where are you at 3 a.m.? It would have been pretty bizarre to have a mass of people around me at 3 a.m.," he says.

Moreover, Ed says his closest neighbors have seen the UFO. But they are afraid of ridicule.

Currently, Ed says he has no plans to make his identity public or to sell the detailed, chronological log that he's written about the ordeal. (Sources in Gulf Breeze, however, report Ed has signed a lucrative book contract.)

"I have no monetary motive here," he says. "Sometimes, I think

a book might be the right thing to do for public education, but it might not be the right thing for my family.

"What might be a lot of money to some people is not enough for me to sell my soul," Ed says.

After long conversations, Ed's words are punctuated by sighs instead of laughter. He sounds less enthusiastic about the subject and more excited by the solitude he's enjoyed for several months.

"Not to be frivolous, but I'm still the same old Ed. I've still got my feet on the ground.

"But it has affected me almost daily," he says, chuckling softly. "I'll be doing mundane chores, like pumping gas or buying bolts at the hardware store. And I'll look around and wonder.

"I wonder if they (the aliens) need gas. Or on a rainy, miserable day, I wonder if they are getting wet.

"It's just ... I know they are out there."

He did, however, take out-of-focus pictures when the kids' talk turned to ghost stories.

"I did not recreate that photo repeatedly and intentionally at parties. No," Ed says. His rage also swells at the suggestion these gatherings were "ritual seances."

"Kids like to tell ghost stories ... and if that sounds like a ritual seance, I'll kiss your butt," he says, angrily.

Bill's mother, Linda Chepult, says her son has been unfairly criticized for his honesty, and his reputation has been sullied by those who believe the UFO pictures are real.

"The whole thing has gone to such an extreme that for an average person with reasonable intelligence, it's hard to believe," she says. "But I don't think Ed will ever come out and tell the truth because too many prominent people have supported him.

"And besides," Linda adds, "I didn't like the seances and the blobs appearing over the kids' heads."

Bill explains he has no reason to lie about what he saw or heard at Ed's house. "I believe in life on other planets," Bill says, "but I don't believe they are coming to Gulf Breeze."

Ed, meanwhile, says he won't be labeled a liar so easily.

"I'm standing up for my honesty," Ed says. "I'm not going to let somebody call me a liar without standing up and saying they are wrong.

"Listen, the most important thing to me is my family. It is my first responsibility," Ed says. "Why would I want to make this up?"

LEIGH JOURNAL LANCES
FEB-2 1989

Photographs in question

By JENNIFER TUCKER
Tribune Staff Writer

GULF BREEZE — The controversy in Gulf Breeze is not limited to a pocketful of Polaroids.

It is made more puzzling by new explanations and startling accusations that threaten the credibility of Ed, the principal photographer of UFOs in Gulf Breeze.

At the center of the debate is a teenager and his mother.

And an old photograph that turned up several weeks ago.

Seventeen-year-old Bill, who refuses to reveal his real name, was one of a group of kids who spent a lot of time at Ed's house during the last three years. He says they participated in games and activities designed to help forget the smallness of their city.

Gulf Breeze has no movie theater, bowling alley or skating rink, and is situated in dry Santa Rosa county.

Nevertheless, he and his friends used to have a lot of fun at Ed's house, Bill says. Among the activities were so-called "spooky" games — seances, ghost stories and the like.

Often, Bill says, Ed would take Polaroid photographs of the players and some of the pictures would reveal a "phantom ... foggy thing" next to the image of the person.

"It was all in fun," Bill says. "It got everybody spooked and stuff. One time, Bill says, Ed asked his

house guests something like, "Wouldn't it be great if we did an ultimate joke?" Although Ed never revealed his plans, Bill believes the answer appeared in the form of a UFO.

"Because I saw the pictures he took of the ghost thing, I figured this has got to be it ... the prank," Bill says. "Ed never told anyone how he did the photographs. We all thought it was trick photography."

Ed bristles at the notion that he has pulled a sophisticated prank.

"First, I categorically deny that I ever used those exact words," Ed says. "There is nothing

that I have ever done that can be construed as a prank."

And that includes the "ghost" photograph revealed only weeks ago, he adds.

This photograph, of a young girl and a fuzzy white blur, were the combined result of a 17-year-old camera, a film defect, and a game room full of mirrors and glass, Ed explains. He attributes the blur to reflections off glass.

UFO watcher's appeal

UFO sightings in the north-west have increased in recent weeks and local investigator Steve Balon wants to hear from anyone who saw anything strange in the sky north of Tyldesley around 8.30pm on Saturday.

Steve, of Woodlands

Avenue, Pennington, Leigh, has received details of a "sighting" north of Shakerley Common.

"It relates with similar sightings in recent weeks on moorland near Bolton and in the north Manchester area," said Steve who would welcome information from anyone regarding the latest sightings. If you can help, write to him at the above address.

Journal excerpts reveal Ed's fear

The Gulf Breeze Sentinel published many of Ed's photographs as he presented them, even creating a special edition to showcase these images. The following are excerpts from Ed's commentary that accompanied the photographs appearing in the special section.

■ ■ ■
"After taking those original five photos in my front yard, what was unreported was the UFO shot a blue beam that froze and lifted me from the ground. The blue beam keeps you from moving even your eyelids, and your chest cannot expand, so you have to pant to breathe. While in the blue beam, the UFO can talk to you using telepathy."

MUM ■ ■ ■
"A strange hum began in my head ... I really thought I was going crazy but when I went outside, I again saw the UFO appear in the same spot in the sky ... Finally, there was a telepathic voice com-

mand that I 'step forward.' I thought to myself, 'No way' and took another picture. The voice said in another language, 'Photographs are prohibited.' "

■ ■ ■
"The UFO was hovering at the back of the house as I went out with gun and camera in hand. I pointed the camera and the gun. I wasn't really going to shoot. I was just scared. The UFO winked out."

■ ■ ■
"At 3:30 a.m., we were in bed when I heard the dog bark. I jumped up and pulled up quickly the blind on the French door. There standing only 12 inches from my face was a shielded creature looking straight back into my eyes. I fell back and it turned to leave. When I recovered and ran out, the UFO was overhead ... The UFO stopped me from following the creature so that the UFO could shoot over and beam the creature up in

the blue beam."

■ ■ ■
"At one in the morning, the sound of a waterfall rushed into my head. The UFO was out back, glowing bright orange to pale orange. It seemed to be having trouble and then dumped liquid and steam from its bottom. I took a total of five pictures on this sighting with one picture looking straight up into its power source."

■ ■ ■
"At 2 a.m., the hum returned and when we checked in the front I saw and photographed a totally different UFO, which seemed to have an energy veil shooting from the bottom."

■ ■ ■
"The sightings have changed me and my family and, if given the chance, I would simply not have taken the first picture which led to the next and next, until my contact with the UFO has become overwhelming."

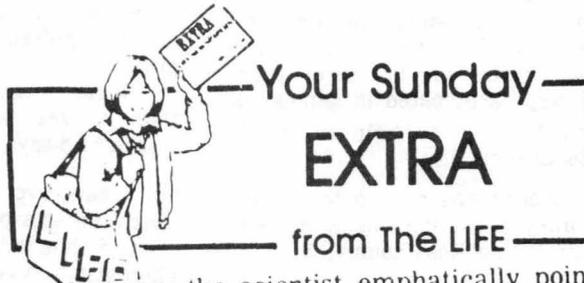
IL-W44 BERWYN CICERO STICKNEY FOREST VIEW
JAN 29 1989

Speaker explores outer space myths

By GAIL SIWEK

Despite innumerable reports of UFOs in the past 41 years, astronomer David Slavsky said there is no evidence guided crafts from other planets ever visited the Earth.

"In 41 years of intensive study, there is not one physical, tangible documentable fact" to prove the Earth had visitors from other planets, Slavsky, who teaches at Loyola University in Chicago and is featured regularly on a WBEZ-FM radio program, told an audience at the Cicero Public Library, "I am sadly forced to the conclusion if there are UFOs, they haven't been here yet."



However, the scientist emphatically pointed out his conclusion stems from reason and not desire.

"No one in this room would be happier than I would be if there really were UFOs that really were crafts from another planet and were coming here for whatever they were coming here for. And if it's true that they're abducting people and taking them away, take me. I want to

go. Take me next. They wouldn't have to force me. They won't have to find me in a swamp in Mississippi. I'll give them my name, my address — I'm listed in the Chicago phone directory. Come take me. I'll go meet them some place if it's inconvenient for them. I want to go."

Slavsky explained the "current rash" of UFO sightings dates back to 1947 when an airplane pilot flying over Mount Rainier in the state of Washington saw what Slavsky described as

(Continued from page 1)

"little whitish silver disks that seem to be skipping in the sky" or as what the pilot described as "flying saucers."

'Nocturnal lights'

Through the 1940s and '50s, UFO sightings were mainly "nocturnal lights" in the sky, Slavsky noted.

"In the '60s, things seemed to step up," he said, noting landings of these crafts began to be reported. He said the reports evolved to claims of abductions, and that the aliens flying the crafts were said to be performing genetic experiments on their victims.

Slavsky stated more UFO cases are solved than murder cases. He said 92 to 95 percent of UFOs are found to be "very simple everyday things," but that FBI statistics state 25 percent of murders go unsolved.

He added most UFOs turn out to be astronomical objects, such as planets, and advertising planes, because of their blinking lights. He noted Mars, visible in the Eastern sky, has moved as close "as it has even been" to the Earth in the last 17 years, appearing as an "orange-red blob," and that the planet is frequently reported as a UFO.

The astronomer said reports of abductions by aliens also appear to be unfounded.

One of the most "hotly discussed" cases was of an interracial couple in New Hampshire who claim to have spent five hours on a UFO. According to the psychiatrist who questioned the couple, Slavsky said, "When you look at the symbolism of the story they tell, what they're responding to is the stress of an interracial marriage in a small New England community in the 1960s."

Slavsky also disputed the theory of a government cover-up regarding UFOs. He said there is a simple way to test this theory. If someone thinks he or she sees a UFO, call a U.S. Air Force or naval base. If there is a government cover-up, Slavsky said the reply would be, "Don't move. Don't talk to anyone else, and we'll send an investigator right out."

would sink in water in less than one minute.

"If there was any thing to this, do you think the (Federal Aviation Administration) would let commercial jet liners fly over this region?"

The Air Force or Navy instead would tell the caller to contact the police department or Center for UFO Studies, the scientist said. If there was a cover-up, the Air Force or Navy would not refer the caller to a public place.

Slavsky stressed he would not encourage anyone to call an Air Force or naval base unless they "really think they have something."

Slavsky said he believes the theory of the disappearances of airplanes and ships in the Bermuda Triangle being caused by extraterrestrial beings is a hoax. He said square mile per square mile, more ships are lost in the Great Lakes because of turbulent weather.

He contended the famous case of Flight 19, a group of five airplanes from Florida lost in the Bermuda Triangle in 1945 was a case of inexperienced pilots who were lost in a storm and not a mysterious disappearance as the popular theory stated.

He said what is written in books about the Bermuda Triangle does not tell that the pilots were heard from coast to coast over their radios by Air Force and naval bases calling, "Mayday, mayday, we don't know where we are."

Plane would sink

He added the of type of plane involved

Despite his skepticism regarding UFOs being guided crafts from other planets, Slavsky said he believes there is life on other planets.

"If you ask the scientific community do other planets have life, astronomers and physicist will tell you, 'Oh yeah, sure.' Evolutionary biologist will tell you no."

Slavsky said he has no evidence to back up his claim that he refers to as his "philosophical prejudice," but the odds are in his favor. He explained there are 400 billion stars in the galaxy and about 10 percent are estimated to have planets, which adds up to 40 billion planetary systems in the galaxy.

Many evolutionary biologists do not agree the odds favor life on other worlds. "They make the argument and they do all sorts of fancy calculations to show that there is a probably of a 1 in 100 billion chance that life evolved on the Earth," Slavsky noted, adding they argue that our evolutionary process is too hectic, chaotic and random to be repeated more than 1 in 100 billion times.

Disputes argument

Slavsky disputed this argument, saying, "Whenever we thought we've been that special, we've been wrong."

Conversely, he said, "If the sequence of going from simple, single-celled creatures to advanced things like us is as improbable as 1 in 100 billion, then we're it. And does anybody know how probable that is? Not on this planet." //

Universal power: Contacts by prayer, UFOs share roots

By Marjorie Mayfield
Staff writer

One minute she was in her bedroom, and the next she was looking back at Earth from a spaceship "the size of Scope," the young woman said, alternately weeping and laughing, tugging her skirt farther over her knees.

Aliens have since come for her almost nightly, she said. They have operated on her with lasers and told her that she will marry a certain famous singer. His body has been taken over by one of them. "I feel scared," confided the woman, single and in her 20s.

She was not speaking to her psychiatrist. She was sharing her story with a public gathering of about 30 people at Health & Harmony, the newest store to join the burgeoning New Age subculture in Virginia Beach.

Within the subculture, organizations vary enormously in their practice of New Age belief in hidden powers transforming and ordering the universe.

Health & Harmony holds down one extreme. Opened a little more than a year ago in Kempsville Plaza on Princess Anne Road in Virginia Beach, the store offers free lectures and forums on the full kaleidoscope of the New Age, from meditations with crystals each full moon to support groups on UFO encounters.

"Many beginners come here to be nurtured. . . . We're an open door," said Pat Glass, a co-owner.

On the other end of the spectrum is tiny Christpoint Community Church, founded in 1984.

"And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love," the congregation of fewer than 20 sang lustily on a recent Sunday to guitar accompaniment.

Lively but low-key, Christpoint is led by a minister, who through decades of trial has arrived at what she considers best and most responsible in the New Age.

The result looks much like other Christian services. Christpoint accepts the idea of reincarnation but gives greater emphasis to peace and empowerment of the feminine. Sin is too negative a concept for many New Agers, but Christpoint members say a confession each Sunday.

Meeting upstairs in The Heritage Store on Laskin Road, they pass a communion cup. They end with a "healing prayer circle" that looks about like any faith healers laying on hands.

The minister, the Rev. Pamela Bro Benetz, 41, sees herself serving as "a bridge, . . . trying to bring the traditional into relationship with the new."

Christpoint and the owners of Health & Harmony, three women who belong to a study group mixing prayer and psychic powers, share certain core New Age ideas:

■ A belief in the goodness of creation rather than in mankind as essentially fallen.

■ A sense of God within as well as without, so that one listens to an internal voice of the divine rather than following rigid doctrine.

■ An ecumenism accepting the "oneness" of all faiths.

Where the two organizations and many New Age groups tend to differ is on how such ideas should be put before the public.

Benetz is concerned with a lack of accountability in the New Age. "We don't want another Jim Jones," she said, referring to the cultist who led his followers to mass suicide in South America in 1978.

She is cautious of the sensational direction the New Age seems to be taking. "We try to stay grounded in the Bible," she said.

At Health & Harmony, partners Glass, Frances Horton and Linda Powers, in scheduling events for their education room, see little point in trying to discern which groups and gurus put the movement to good use.

"Everybody who walks into that room is an adult, and they can discern what they want to believe and what they want to discard," Horton said. "We're not here to do it for someone."

Instead of incredulity, the woman with the UFO story met with understanding, even accounts corroborating hers. Another woman began speaking of a blond alien in a silver space suit. "You know him, too?" the first asked eagerly. "He's very good-looking, right?"

The meeting was open to the public and sponsored by a support group for people who believe they have had UFO encounters. Some said they believe that the "space brothers" are preparing Earth to enter another dimension. The person directing the meeting demanded that a reporter not use names.

Health & Harmony also signed psychic Daniel Clay to give "channelings," or sessions to receive information from sources outside the ordinary, at \$20 per group session or \$65 per individual session.

Psychics attribute the source of their channeled information differently. Clay, 30, of Troutdale in the Virginia mountains, said he channels "the collective unconscious" while in trance. Many psychics claim that departed spirits speak through them.

Clay said he follows instructions left by Virginia Beach's late psychic Edgar Cayce, also said to have derived his wisdom from the unconscious.

But while Cayce spoke in a normal voice, Clay breaks into the same deep, accented tones and stilted, abstract language of psychics who claim that dead souls are speaking.

"See you not that the Second Coming is in all of man? And that the Christ-consciousness is in all of man?" Clay asked, leaning forward, eyes closed, one finger raised, during a monologue before a small group.

One woman asked what to do about her weight problem. Without hesitation, Clay, an auto mechanic before he took to the traveling psychic circuit, advised two weeks of herbal tea "for the cleansing of the blood and the lymphatic system" and a month of eating fruit only.

Before the trance, Clay described how it would feel for him. "I generally see light. It's like you're surrounded by light. You're in it. A pulsating light."