

UFO

NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE

#2 CANEY VALLEY DRIVE • PLUMERVILLE, ARKANSAS 72127 USA EDITOR/PUBLISHER: LUCIUS FARISH

April 1998
Number 345

TRIBUNE-REVIEW, Greensburg, PA - March 21, 1998

Looking for answers

Area man investigates UFO, Bigfoot reports

By Maryann G. Eidemiller
FOR THE TRIBUNE-REVIEW

The bright light rose above the southeastern horizon just before dawn, more brilliant than anything in the sky except the moon. Suspended, it appeared to flicker, blink off and ... did it just move, too?

The phone rang at Stan Gordon's UFO hotline in Greensburg, but he wasn't surprised. The caller was looking at Venus rising, which in mid-March is particularly spectacular.

"At certain times of the year there are bright stars and planets, even what looks like bright flashes of red, blue and green in the sky," Gordon said. "Certain atmospheric conditions or high cloud layers will make them look like they appear and disappear or even move around. Quite often people in a car will think that something is following them."

A writer, lecturer, consultant and winner of awards in the field, Gordon founded a UFO study group in the 1970s and was later state director for the international Mutual UFO Network based in Texas. He is now recognized worldwide as an independent researcher and investigator into the unexplained.

But most seemingly strange events, he's quick to note, are readily explained.

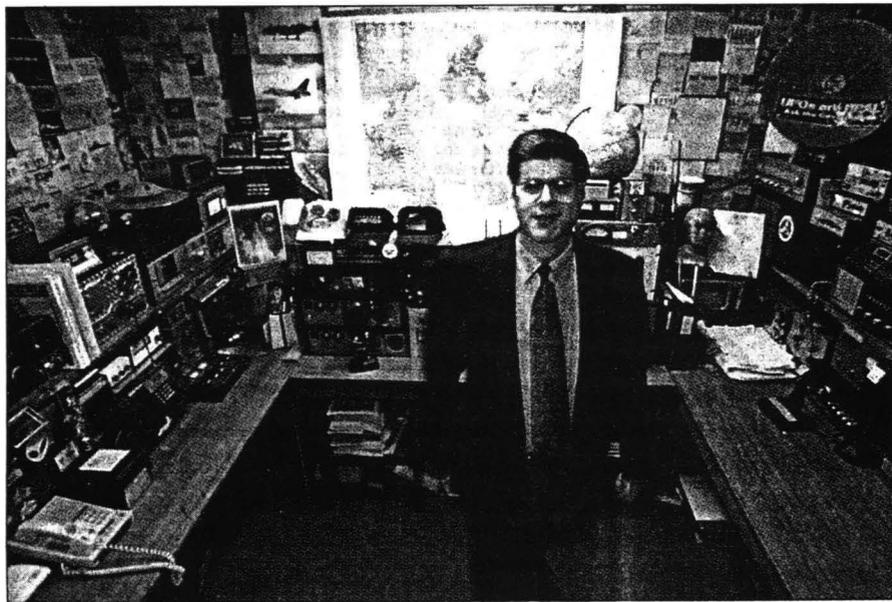
Gordon tracks the night skies and is familiar with how known aircraft can appear from the ground. He knows what satellites are passing over and what aeronautical events are scheduled. The walls of his communications room are lined with shortwave radios, computers, a fax machine and state-of-the-art electronics equipment that can put him in touch with scientists, news media, law enforcement and other UFO investigators around the world.

Gordon himself has never witnessed anything that can't be explained. More than 90 percent of the reports he receives also involve natural or manmade objects and events.

What he's concerned about are the ones that defy resolution. Last year, there were seven such incidents in the region.

One was an alleged Bigfoot sighting at about 3 a.m. March 12. It happened in the Chestnut Ridge area of Derry Township, where similar sightings have been reported. This time, witnesses said the creature was white. Gordon doesn't think it was a prank.

"I can tell you that they were



Eric McCandless/Tribune-Review

Stan Gordon's office is filled with communications devices that help him sort out sightings.

scared and they weren't seeking any publicity," he said. "I interviewed them a number of times and they gave me a tremendous amount of details that have not been publicized, key little details that people would not normally know."

While Gordon hesitates to divulge certain information, he acknowledges that there are common denominators in most reports. Descriptions of how the creatures walk, move and sound have remained consistent since the first recorded eyewitness account in 1931 near Indian Head in Fayette County.

Gordon has made casts of footprints and collected hair samples left behind by alleged Bigfoot creatures. Their origin, after analysis, remains inconclusive.

The creature itself is a mystery. Called Bigfoot here, Sasquatch in the Northwest by Native Americans who have long believed and Yeti (the Abominable Snowman) in the Himalaya Mountains, it has inspired myth, serious research and skepticism.

Most people who think they've seen something don't want to say anything for fear of looking foolish. Yet Gordon has talked to what he believes are fully rational witnesses with nothing to gain by making a report. Many are former skeptics, such as a woman who lived near Ohio.

"She wasn't afraid of anything," Gordon said.

She changed her mind one night in 1974 when she went out behind

'The most common (sightings) are the misidentification of Venus and the helicopters that fly over Chestnut Ridge.'

— Jim Brown
UFO RESEARCHER

her home, armed with a loaded shotgun, to see why the dogs were fussing.

"She turned on the light and there was this tall, hairy big ape or something, she said, with its hands straight up over its head," Gordon related. "She fired right into it and there was this bright flash of light, like someone had taken a picture."

Her son-in-law who lived nearby heard the commotion and came outside with a gun, only to find himself surrounded by "glowing red eyes." He started shooting, too. He later told the police and Gordon that there was also a strange object with lights hovering over the trees. State troopers investigating the incident found bullets embedded in trees and noted that the family's usually aggressive dogs were quiet and acting "very strange."

According to Gordon, there have been reports around the world of Bigfoot-type creatures seeming to disappear in a flash, or being impervious to bullets.

"We don't know what this

means," he added, "except that maybe we're dealing with a phenomenon that has both physical and nonphysical components."

The rest of last year's unexplained incidents involved UFOs, not creatures. On April 13, several people in the South Hills spent 20 minutes watching lights high in the sky. They were bright as the moon, rectangular in a vertical position and not moving.

On April 22 near New Stanton, several people saw an elongated "cigar-shaped object" hovering over a structure about 1,000 feet away.

"They said that all of a sudden, something like a vertical compartment opened up and emitted a real bright orange light that stayed on for a while," Gordon said.

The light went out when the compartment closed, and the object disappeared. It became visible again a short time later.

At about 8:25 p.m. June 14 near South Park, 11 friends at a party spotted a dark object with two bright oval lights in the sky. Several of them watched through high-powered binoculars.

"This report came from reliable people, and one of them has a scientific background," Gordon said. "Then later that same evening in Latrobe, another witness reported a similar object that apparently dropped down over the Chestnut Ridge and came toward this person."

Whatever it was glided silently

over a house about 100 feet above the tree line. It agitated some dogs in the area and moved out of sight.

In August, UFO researcher Scott Corrales of Bradford told Gordon that a fisherman at Lake Chataqua, N.Y., reported a daylight sighting of a shiny, spinning metallic object that appeared to be moving toward Warren, Pa.

Jim Brown, a UFO researcher who lives in Smithfield, Fayette County, covers that region and northern West Virginia. About 5 per-

cent of the calls are unexplained.

"The most common are the misidentification of Venus and the helicopters that fly over Chestnut Ridge," said Brown, who is an electronics technician affiliated with West Virginia University in Morgantown. "A lot of helicopters fly between the hospitals in Uniontown and Morgantown, and we get calls when they're circling around accident scenes where firemen set up floodlights for landing. It's pretty obvious what that is."

There was no explanation, however, for what a hunter saw while working his dogs near Republic, Fayette County. It was around 7:30 p.m. Sept. 14 when he walked to the top of a hill near his home and spotted a large black object in front of a tree. It was only 150 feet away and although the sun was behind the man, the object did not reflect any light.

"It passed the tree line and the field and moved to the south edge of the trees," Brown said. "He's not sure if it changed shape or simply

rotated up on end. But at this point it became triangular shaped with round corners."

The witness had been taking pictures of his dogs. He pointed the camera at the object and shot his two remaining frames. The object disappeared down around the tree line and was gone. So was one of the beagles, last seen running into the woods.

The witness and a relative found nothing unusual when they returned to the scene, but the remaining dog acted strange. The other dog returned

on its own about four weeks later.

Although the photos of the beagles were "excellent," the last two pictures were overexposed, Brown said, as if the lens had been pointed at the sun. However, the setting sun had been behind the witness, and tree trunks visible in the ruined photos verified that the man had focused toward the woods.

"The lightest area is where the object would be," Brown said. "We're having the photos professionally computer enhanced, but I don't think they'll be able to pull out any details."

Near dusk on Oct. 2, a woman in Clarion, Clarion County, heard a high, intense vibrating sound surrounding her home. She was on her way out when her very frightened daughter ran in. The girl, age 9, said that a saucer-shaped object topped with a dome was outside.

She said it had lights on the bottom, and fire came out on two ends.

"The mother said that the girl was very serious, had no interest in space ships and never made up stories," Gordon said. "She was also quite upset by the whole experience."

On Oct. 9, a man driving near Norvelt claimed that a large "stingray-shaped" object hovered about 500 feet above his car.

"He observed it for a period of time and gave us a lot of details," Gordon said. "But I don't want to get into them because I'm hoping that someone else will come forward with more information."

On the night of Oct. 30, a number of people in Jeannette, Beaver, and several areas of Allegheny County reported similar formations of colored lights that appeared to be performing unusual maneuvers. Some described it as an elongated object rising low above the trees. Airplanes? Gordon doesn't think so.

"You can pretty much rule out conventional aircraft because of the unusual maneuverability and configuration of lights," he said. "These people were very credible, too, and they were pretty upset and convinced that they saw something unusual."

What it was has yet to be explained.

Anyone with any information about UFO, Bigfoot or other unexplained incidents, either current or from the past, can contact Gordon's hotline 24 hours a day at (724) 838-7768. All information is kept confidential.

HERALD, Circleville, OH

Feb. 10, 1998

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

At 2:41 a.m. today the Sheriff's Office received a UFO report from a Tarlton woman. Dispatcher Luke Danner said the woman reported a stationary object with red and yellow lights, in a generally southwest direction from the village. A deputy was dispatched to the area but found nothing. The woman's husband also reported seeing the object, Danner said.

CR: J. Fry/COUD-I

SKYWATCH DIARY

BY CAROLE BAKER

Well, I hope that everyone's Thanksgiving was as enjoyable as mine! Good food, good friends and good times, what more could we wish for? Even though, being from England originally, I did not grow up with this unique American holiday, after the first few years, it has become my favorite holiday, next to Christmas. I hope that with all the commercialism that surrounds Christmas these days, with the stores putting out Christmas trimmings, etc. right after Halloween, that Thanksgiving and its unique message will not be lost for the generations to come. The story of the Pilgrims and their survival in this New World is one of courage and fortitude. I always wonder what those original voyagers on the Mayflower would think of America today.

Between the hectic schedule of the past holiday week, the weather here on the Gulf Coast and trying to fight off the flu, I have to admit that for the first time in a long while I have not personally been to Shoreline Park this week. My sources tell me that things have been quiet there though, no visitors and no sightings to report. The one night we had planned to schedule skywatching, the weather beat us out. Saturday brought on a whole day and night of torrential rain and strong winds. We received over four inches of rain in Pensacola and some nearby areas received even more. North of Pensacola there were flash floods.

Staying close to home and eating up leftovers has provided time to catch up on reading downloads from the internet and to catch up on e-mail and letters, and to browse through some materials regarding the UFO phenomenon. Last week we touched upon the "Jane" photographs. I was thinking a lot about this during the week. It is an interesting aspect to the Ed Walters case in many ways and led me to look again at the Chapter in Ed Walter's book "The Gulf Breeze Sightings." (William Morrow and Company, Inc. 1990, ISBN#0-380-70870-1) that deals with "Jane" telephoning Ed Walters about the pictures she sent to him.

The "Jane" photographs were

taken in June 1986. From the description of his conversation with "Jane" in his book "The Gulf Breeze Sightings," it seems that Ed Walters was the only person ever to interview this witness. She apparently called him out of the blue one night, the night after his name had been revealed to a number of people at Shoreline Park. Presumably, either "Jane" was among that group or someone who knew her and knew about the pictures she had taken was present. It is interesting to note that "Jane's" pictures were taken with a 35mm camera, providing negatives (which "Jane" destroyed), whereas all of Ed Walter's pictures were taken using Polaroid cameras. If a person was afraid that people would find certain photographs, why would they keep the actual prints and destroy the negatives? The prints could more easily be recognized than two frames on a strip of negative film, hidden away in a box in a closet perhaps. Also, of course, destruction of the negatives means that photoanalysis is limited to dealing with the prints only, as it was in the Ed Walters case due to his pictures being taken with Polaroid cameras. There are also a couple of questions that come to mind when reading the account of the conversation Ed Walters had with this witness. She states that she had gone to Shoreline Park to photograph the sunset. Now, even from the dock, there is not the greatest view of the sunset, it is far better to go over to Fort Pickens where you can actually see the sun fall below the horizon. Secondly, she says that when she saw the "flash of light" above the treeline, she was heading back up the hill, out of the Park. "Jane" states she had stopped "and focused one more time on the sunset" at the bottom of the hill. Now, anyone who has been to Shoreline Park will realize that at the bottom of the hill, one would have difficulty focusing on anything but trees or the Sound and Santa Rosa Island skyline (facing south). The road is very narrow, and the trees come to within five feet of the blacktop, leaving a very narrow opening to the sky. Even the north side of the parking lot is hemmed in by trees, so taking a sunset picture from this position would be

impossible. Also "Jane" states that as soon as she saw the flash of light streak above the treetops she "knew what it was." Ed Walters states in his book that she was very sure on this point. Presumably then she had seen similar anomalous "flashes of light" on previous occasions and identified them as a UFO.

There has been much conjecture about these two photographs and about the witness "Jane." One of the particularly interesting aspects here is that Ed and Frances Walters were the only people ever to talk to this witness. Since she would not come forward, no investigators ever interviewed her and it is not clear from Ed's book whether or not the photographs she sent him were ever analyzed in the way that the Ed Walters' photographs were. Since "Jane" was one of the corroborating witnesses to the sightings of the "Ed Walters Craft" (her photographs show an object very similar to those photographed by Ed Walters beginning in November 1987) it would be hoped that the investigators in the Ed Walters case would have had "Jane's" two photographs analyzed. In fact, since the Gulf Breeze Research Team, as they came to be known, have access to both Bruce Maccabee and Jeff Sainio, both of whom are able to do as much as is possible to determine the authenticity of such photographs (and video), it is a shame that many photographs and video are left unanalyzed.

I had time to review this year's Skywatch Diaries, and it is clear that we are having a slow year in terms of sightings to report. Still, hope springs eternal and with four weeks left in 1997, we still have the opportunity to find ourselves in the middle of a "flap." I did hear of some sightings by a man east of Tiger Point, near the ZOO, in Gulf Breeze recently and I am awaiting further information on them from Bill Ford, the local MUFON group's investigator. As soon as any details are available, I will include them here.

If you want to contact me, please e-mail me at Cbakerswd@aol.com or write to me at P.O. Box 17152, Pensacola, FL 32522-7152, thank you. And remember - Keep Looking Up!

Documentary looks at Kecksburg UFO questions

By Maryann G. Eidemiller

FOR THE TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Something happened in Kecksburg on Dec. 9, 1965.

The official government explanation is that a meteorite landed in the rural Mt. Pleasant Township village. Some residents claim that nothing happened at all, so please, just leave them alone.

There are eyewitness accounts, however, of a big metal object in the woods, armed soldiers, men in white NASA uniforms and a military convoy speeding out of town.

Stan Gordon of Greensburg, an internationally recognized researcher into the unexplained, has long pondered the Kecksburg incident. Three decades later, there are still so many questions that he filmed and produced a 92-minute documentary, "Kecksburg: The Untold Story."

"Something happened," he said, "and a lot of people would really like to know what it was. Some people also went through a lot of personal upheaval over this and are finally coming forward."

The recently released video covers some new information on the event that became a hot potato in official explanations and drew battle lines between townsfolk. There are allegations of missing documents, of a government cover-up.

Maybe even a body.

The facts: On the late afternoon in question, an orange "fireball" was heavily tracked over Canada, Michigan and Ohio. In the sky over Cleveland, it appeared to make a slight turn toward Pennsylvania.

At about 4:47 p.m., several people near Kecksburg saw something gliding overhead and lowering into the woods. One phoned WHJB-Radio news director John Murphy and soon the area

a flatbed truck. It carried a large object covered by a tarp, and he was ordered to shoot to kill anyone who attempted to enter the hangar without security clearance.

That's what almost happened to two truck drivers who delivered a load of radiation- and moisture-resistant bricks on Dec. 12. Curious to know what was so secretive, they sneaked inside where a dozen men in white suits worked around a metal object. The intruders were soon facing guns and threats and told to forget what they saw.

In his initial interview with Gordon, the man called only "Myron" alluded to hearing about "occupants," but didn't elaborate.

Gordon went back to Myron two years ago to film his statement. But Myron changed his story. Now old and sick, he was eager to "tell everything" before it was "too late."

Nobody had told him about occupants in the craft, he admitted. He himself had seen a body under a sheet. Its left hand was hanging out, there were three fingers that he noticed and the "lizard-like skin" was green or brown.

"I just got chills when he told me this," Gordon said. "I had no idea."

Gordon is quick to clarify that if there was such a body, it wasn't necessarily alien. It could have been a human burned from fire or radiation.

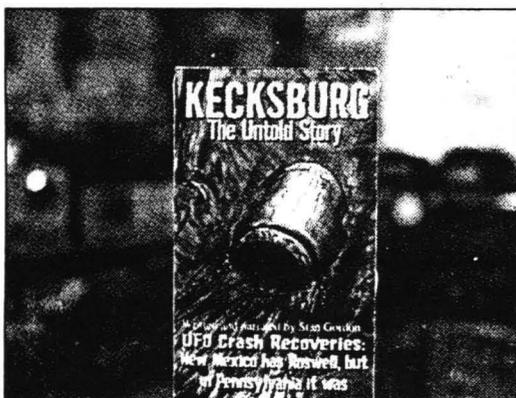
Also in the video, Dr. William G. Everett related that a late colleague at the Falk Clinic in Oakland confided about a mysterious patient brought in by military officers.

According to Everett, they told the other doctor that the teen-ager had been "burned" in Kecksburg.

"He said the corneas of both eyes were white and opaque, and that he had never seen anything so startling," Everett said. The other doctor was allegedly advised to "not make any notes" about the patient.

The documentary has many more interviews: A former dispatcher for the Greensburg Police Department recalls a prominent state trooper making remarks off the record. The wife of the late John Murphy tells about his excitement over a special broadcast that didn't happen because several men who visited Murphy at the radio station confiscated the recording.

Stone states in Gordon's video that while he was in the Army he saw documents about Kecksburg. It was "quite clear," he said, that there was "an object," that it was recovered by the military and that investiga-



was swarming with curiosity seekers, firemen, state police and soldiers.

The U.S. Army acknowledged that only three men were summoned from an airborne unit west of Pittsburgh and that they found nothing unusual and left with nothing.

The people in Gordon's documentary remember it differently.

No one will ever convince John Hays and his mother, Lillian, that there were only three military personnel in Kecksburg.

They saw more at their own house, including men in white "moon suits" with NASA emblems. From upstairs windows John Hays, then 10, watched a flatbed truck go into the woods empty and come back loaded. The next day, he and his brother saw that "the tree tops were busted off and busted down."

Bill Bulebush was in the woods right after the object was reported down. What he saw was big and metallic, and it was "sizzling" and "embedded into the ground," he said. There was a ring around the end with "backwards writing."

Volunteer fireman Jim Romansky thought the symbols looked like "hieroglyphics."

Two men in overcoats came down, Romansky

tors were ordered to "even lie" to keep such "information from the public."

Linda Moulton Howe is not surprised. The author of three books on the unexplained, she told Gordon last summer that a former CIA source confirmed to her that an unknown object crashed in Kecksburg.

"He told me without hesitation that it was an extraterrestrial satellite that had been orbiting our planet, and for some unknown reason it came out of orbit and crashed," she told the Tribune-Review in a phone interview from her home near Philadelphia.

Howe has a master's degree in communications and has been a producer for several television stations around the nation, focusing on medicine, science and the environment. In 1980 she won a regional Emmy Award for her nationally aired documentary, "A Strange Harvest." It probed mysterious animal mutilations and kindled so much response that Howe's journalistic interest turned to the unexplained and what she describes as a government cover-up of UFO activity.

"Roswell (N.M.) is only one crash site," Howe said about the most famous alleged UFO recovery. "That's the one the media has pushed most, but there are dozens of others. Kecksburg is one of them."

That's what Gordon has always believed, but he's not sure what any of it means. The object, he said, could have been a Soviet satellite that was recovered and, against United Nations agreement, not returned. Or it could have come from somewhere else.

"What was so important that the military responded so quickly, and where did the orders come from?" he mused.

The Freedom of Information Act gives Americans access to documents that don't pose a threat to national security. Gordon tried for years to track down NASA Fragology Files on Kecksburg. It wasn't until 1996 that a letter from the Washington National Records Center informed him that it was not known "if the records were destroyed or have been misplaced."

Now, the only records of what happened in Kecksburg exist in the memories of the people who were there.

"Kecksburg: The Untold Story" can be ordered from Stan Gordon Productions by calling (888) UFO-VIEW. Cost is \$29.95 plus shipping and handling. Anyone with any information about Kecksburg can contact Gordon at (724) 838-7768.

said, and told the firemen to "get out."

Larry Snyder and a couple of buddies drove to Kecksburg to see what was going on. "We didn't get very far," he said in the documentary. "Armed military" personnel claimed that a meteorite had landed, and ordered them to leave. They tried getting into the woods from another direction, but met up with more uniformed men.

"I remember walking up to a state cop," former Tribune-Review reporter Bob Gatty recalled in the video. "I said I want to go down. He said, 'You can't.'"

Pittsburgh jazz musician Jerry Betters felt even less welcome. When he and friends heard radio reports and went to see what happened, they were met by "soldiers with guns" coming out of the woods, he related.

"They cocked their guns and put them on us," he said. "The guns were pointed at us."

Ernie Hoffman, then a reporter for the Tribune-Review, said he pulled off the road to watch the treeline. A military flatbed truck came out and "on the back there was something under a tarp." The next day he read Gatty's story and felt "disappointed" by the official explanation of a meteorite.

Gordon considers himself a skeptic with an open mind. In this case, he was skeptical of the official explanation. For one thing, the object was tracked at just a fraction of the speed of the slowest meteorites known. There are also too many witnesses who saw a bell- or acorn-shaped object in the woods.

After NBC's "Unsolved Mysteries" aired a segment on Kecksburg in 1990, Gordon heard from people who saw a similar object in Ohio.

One was a member of the Army air police at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. He said he was put on "red alert" in the early morning hours of Dec. 10 to await the back-gate arrival of

UFOs a lifetime passion for local investigator

By BILL HEWITT
LTN Staff Writer

If a flying saucer was to beam down little green men, folks might wonder who to call – the SWAT team, a priest, Welcome Wagon? But in Lincoln County there is no need to wonder; George D. Fawcett is the man.

His fascination with UFOs began when he was a boy scout. He kept a scrapbook filled with clippings from WWII. One particular entry captured his imagination:

Paris, Dec. 13, 1944. The Associated Press. "As Allied armies ground out new gains on the western front today, the Germans were disclosed to have thrown a new "device" into the war – mysterious silvery balls which float in the air."

But the Germans never used this mystery weapon. Fawcett wondered why. That is until he saw something during his senior year at Lynchburg College.

It was 10:15 a.m. Not a cloud in the sky and Fawcett was walking all alone in front of the administration building on campus. "It looked like a large tractor tire but orange against a dark blue sky. It was about 300 feet high and that same distance away. I watched the object for four and a half minutes. It moved up and down like a yo-yo on a string, and then it took off at a 45 degree angle," Fawcett said.

That same night in Staunton, Va., according to Fawcett, a woman reported an orange UFO that exploded in her backyard and set her lawn on fire.

After graduating, Fawcett joined the army. While he was stationed at Fort Davis in the Panama Canal Zone, his passion for saucers nearly got him into trouble. "I spoke to 300 people about flying saucers and it made the headlines. As soon as I got back to the barracks, I got a phone call from the Army Information Office asking me to submit my materials in triplicate," said Fawcett. Fortunately,

his stint in the army was ending, and nothing ever came of it.

So he turned in his army fatigues for a pair of binoculars, a pad and pen, and began his life-long work as a UFO investigator.

Fawcett, a Mount Airy native, (He played basketball with Andy Griffith) moved to Lincolnton in 1975 where he has burned up the roads researching sightings:

- Vale: Two women walked out on the front porch.

"We saw lights flashing in a field not more than 2000 feet from our house. Apparently, they spotted us and flew directly over our heads. It appeared as though it separated into several (pieces). Then, after some time, they all disappeared into the horizon," one of the women said.

- Lincolnton: A woman was about to go to sleep. She

was attracted by a "blast like a freight train" coming in her door. Looking out her bedroom window, she saw something shaped like the planet Saturn hovering outside her home. She "felt its heat and heard its humming." The dogs were strangely silent, she said. She hid behind the curtains. "It flew away."

- West Lincoln County: A family was headed on a fishing trip.

"I thought it was a plane falling, but it had no wings. It looked like two pie plates together," said the father. His daughter added, "I've never seen anything like it. It made me wonder what it really was."

- Lake Norman: A man was in his backyard feeding his dogs. "I couldn't believe what I saw, so I blinked my eyes. When I opened them, the pyramid-shaped flying vehicle was gone," he said.

Fawcett estimates that he has traveled 200,000 miles over the past 54 years investigating similar sightings. And he is concerned. According to Faw-

cett, documents released through the Freedom of Information Act reveal that, "UFOs are real. They are not natural phenomena. They are not conventional objects, but are unconventional objects with a high degree of technology. They represent a threat to our national security and to our survival."

Two weeks ago Fawcett's life work was crated up and sent to the UFO Research Center at Roswell, N.M. The museum insured the 36,000 item collection for \$250,000. It contains books, photographs and over a thousand UFO sightings.

The museum has welcomed over 350,000 visitors since it opened its doors in 1992. "I like the fact that they present the facts to the people and let them make up their own mind," Fawcett said.

Now, when visitors peruse the museum, they will learn about Fawcett's work and the ethereal connection Lincoln County has with other worlds.



LTN photo by Joseph Brymer

UFO MEMORABILIA: George Fawcett shows off some of the memorabilia he has collected in his years as a UFO investigator. Fawcett estimates he has traveled 200,000 miles over a 54-year period to investigate sightings of UFOs.

THE Search FOR VISITORS

Montgomery chapter of UFO group meets for discussions and maintains a hotline for anyone who has experienced what they believe is an alien encounter.

By LISA KOZLESKI
Of The Morning Call

Go ahead.
Admit it.
You're curious.

You saw "Contact" and "Close Encounters," and you follow "The X-Files" with more than a passing fancy. You hungrily read book jackets and tabloid headlines, occasionally succumbing to your urge to get the whole story. And you might, just for fun, surf the Web looking for news about the encounters, abductions, crashes and catastrophes not usually found in your morning newspaper.

If the alphabet world of UFOs and ETs intrigues you the way preaching or politics captivates others, at least you can be sure you are not alone.

And if your intrigue goes beyond mere curiosity, you won't have to go far to find a group of others who share your passion. Just check out the Mutual UFO Network of the five-county Delaware Valley region, whose members meet monthly to discuss the hottest topics in a field whose boundaries are as limitless as the universe and beyond.

Although statistics on the "curious" are understandably hard to come by, those who try to count suggest looking at the numbers of people watching shows such as "The X-Files" —

which 12.3 million households tuned into last week — as well as the number of books and magazines available and purchased each day by a wide range of people around the country.

"I think the recent numbers show that about 50 percent of the population in America is interested in UFOs . . . and would call themselves curious," said Kevin Randale, an Iowa author of several books about UFOs and the Roswell incident whose most popular work has sold more than 200,000 copies.

And then there are those who are more than curious, "the die-hards," as Randale calls them, who belong to groups such as the Mutual UFO Network — an international UFO organization with headquarters in Texas and more than 6,000 members around the world.

There are about 60 members of the southeastern Pennsylvania section of the Mutual UFO Network, which meets monthly at the General Lafayette Inn in Lafayette Hill on Germantown Pike. Last month's gathering featured a talk by Temple University history professor David Jacobs, who discussed his

latest book on UFOs. This month's meeting, at 10 a.m. Saturday, will offer a general discussion of UFOs.

In addition, the local chapter maintains a 24-hour hotline where anyone who has seen a UFO or experienced what they believe is an alien encounter can leave a message to report the incident and request an investigation.

Tom Carey, the chapter's regional section director and a senior financial analyst for Cigna Corp. of Philadelphia, said the hotline receives about seven calls each week — some crank, some hangups, but usually at least two or three that are serious reports.

"I used to check out everything," said Carey, the region's UFO field investigator, "but now I only go out on what I think are the good ones — the close encounter sightings. The lights in the sky I give to someone else."

Carey said a typical report usually comes from one person who believes they saw an unidentified flying object, like the Bucks County man who reported seeing a spinning, silver disk in Middletown Township in July. Carey records these events, including drawings and specific details, and files the information to compare to other reported sightings.

But occasionally Carey investigates atypical reports, like that received Aug. 9 from pilots of a Swissair flight leaving Philadelphia for Boston.

The pilots told the National Transportation Safety Board that a long, wingless, spherical object sped by the Boeing 757 at an altitude of 23,000, coming within 50 feet of the transAtlantic jet.

"They said it was so fast they didn't have time to take evasive action," Carey said. "This one is tough to investigate, though, because the union won't let the pilots talk yet. But we have a colleague who is pilot working on it, too."

The NTSB said the object was probably a weather balloon.

Carey, of Lower Moreland, said he continues to be intrigued with UFOs because their existence has yet to be proven conclusively.

"On any given day, I can still be persuaded either way on this," he explained. "With all the film-making equipment and videocameras

we have, well, I haven't seen a lot of [evidence] that convinces me — nothing that jumps out and makes you say, 'Yeah, this is it!'

"But on the other side of the coin, there have been so many reports from credible people, people who have nothing to gain and a lot to lose," he added. "I guess I am doing this in part to see if there is an answer."

Carey and Randale, both of whom insist on approaching investigations dispassionately and scientifically, agree that one of the best incidents to point to as "proof" is the crash at Roswell, N.M., in 1947.

"The big headline around the world on July 8, 1947, was the only time that the U.S. government actually said it had a flying disk, a UFO," said Carey, who has been to the New Mexico crash site a half dozen times. "The story that they captured a flying saucer lasted only a few hours before the cover-up began and they started saying it was a weather balloon."

What makes Roswell different from other reports is the sheer number of independent witnesses who told the same story of an alien craft that crashed and killed crew members, Carey said.

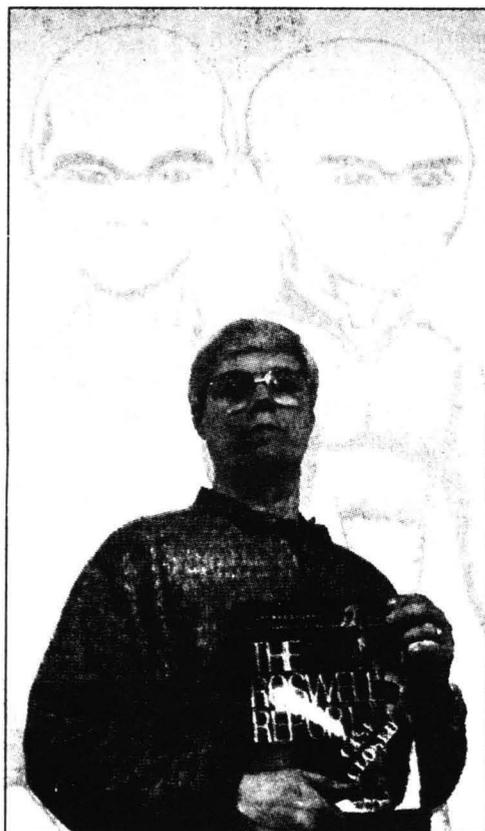
But until infallible proof is produced, Carey and Randale say they will "keep chasing the facts."

Not only could there be much to learn from these encounters, writes MUFON UFO Journal editor Dennis Stacy, but "should the skeptics prove right . . . and UFOs turn out to be nothing more than a convoluted space age myth of our own making, surely our perceptions of the phenomenon will tell us much about the contents and inner working . . . of the human mind and perhaps consciousness itself."

He concludes that it "can hardly be against human nature, or the scientific method . . . to ask and to seek answers to those questions."

And so the search goes on.

▲
To report a UFO or alien encounter, call the network hotline at (215) 947-4740. Although a Mutual UFO Network group has not formed in the Lehigh Valley area, the Lehigh Valley regional investigator, Jerold Seiple, can be reached at (610) 866-4370.



Tom Carey of Lower Moreland, director of Mutual UFO Network, stands in front of a slide depicting an artist's rendition of aliens that some say landed in Roswell, N.M., in 1947.

GEOFFREY DUNN
Special to
The Morning Call

LINCOLN TIMES-NEWS, Lincolnton, NC - April 8, 1998 CR: G. Fawcett

UFO evidence has accumulated

Bill Hewitt's excellent interview with me and my lifelong pursuit of the UFO enigma (March 30 Lincoln Times-News) has been well received by area readers and out-of-town subscribers.

It has brought forth phone calls from Cherryville, Lincoln County and others who had previous "encounters" from Arkansas.

What is important for readers of your newspaper is that not only flyovers have occurred, but photographs have been taken, car chases have occurred, near-landings have been reported,

UFO occupants have been observed, pilot and radar trackings have been documented, electromagnetic effects have been noted. Severe animal reactions, physiological effects by humans, etc., are all part of the evidence accumulated over the years.

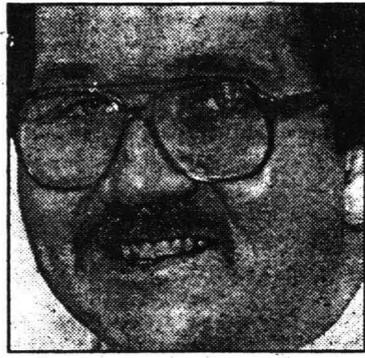
And local, state and national UFO activity is both persistent and consistent in over 174 nations over the past five decades and more. These are some of the reasons why United Nations hearings on UFOs were held in New York in 1978 for two days.

GEORGE D. FAWCETT
Field Investigator
MUFON-NC, Inc
Lincolnton

Big Foot Spotted On The Ridge Once More

Dispatches

by John M. Jennings



Comes in the mail my favorite correspondence of the year, unless a fat check from Publishers Clearinghouse should arrive: UFO hunter Stan Gordon, who was this area's Mister X-files before Agent Muldowney was in diapers.

Gordon says he is semi-retired from his 40-year avocation of tracking reports of UFOs, Big Foot and other unexplained phenomena, but he still prepares a yearly report on the calls that come into his Greensburg HQ. Knowing my interest in the unexplained—someone please tell me why Hillary stays married to Bill—he makes sure that I receive a copy.

As frequently the case, the Chestnut Ridge plays a big role in Gordon's yearly report, especially when it comes to tales of Big Foot, the eight-foot-tall hairy monster with a rotten smell and a shy disposition. (Wait till the men who want to open that limestone quarry on the Ridge get a load of *him*.)

There indeed was a fresh (well, as fresh as these things get) sighting of

Big Foot on the Ridge in 1997, Gordon reports. In past years BF has been seen up and down the Ligonier Valley and roaming around the Ridge. Presumably most observers can tell the difference between a hairy eight foot humanoid and a big bear.

But Chestnut Ridge also featured in a UFO sighting from June 14, when witnesses in the South Park area near Pittsburgh observed two bright oval shaped lights that appeared to be side by side with a dark structure between them. That same night a witness saw the same object over Chestnut Ridge, and said it began to descend. The dogs in the area began to go nuts as the object approached, and it took off over the observer's home.

Other highlights from Gordon's report:

In August a spinning object was observed in the daytime by a fisherman at Lake Ctatauqua, N.Y. The shiny metallic object was last seen headed for Warren, Pa.

In Fayette County in the early

evening of Sept. 14, a witness reported seeing a black object, 10 to 15 feet long, 30 feet above the ground, "looking like a triangle on its side." Shortly a brilliant light rose from the woods.

At about dusk on Oct. 2, a witness near Clarion saw a strange object hovering 150 feet up, looking like a flat metallic aircraft with a dome at the top. There were very bright lights underneath. At the same time, other people heard vibrations in the area.

Near Norvelt, Westmoreland County on Oct. 9, a motorist reported a large sting-ray shaped object flew slowly over his car. On the night of Oct. 30, several independent reports were received in the Greater Pittsburgh area of multi-colored lights making unusual maneuvers.

As always, Gordon invites people who have witnessed things they can't explain—everything from lights in the sky to strange animals, undetermined explosive sounds to religious miracles, crop circles to geological finds—to call him at 838-7768.

OBSERVER, Charlotte, NC - March 23, 1998 CR: G. Fawcett

UFO lecturer reveals own 'X-Files'

By KATHY HAIGHT
Staff Writer

Instead of watching "The X-Files" on TV Sunday night, Jeffrey McEneny did his kids one better.

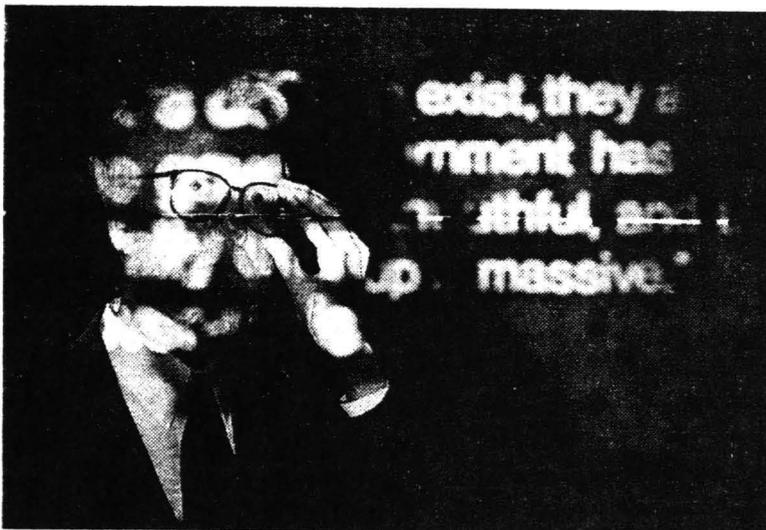
He took them to Queens College to hear alien encounter theories come to life in a talk by UFO researcher Robert Hastings.

"We love 'The X-Files,'" said McEneny, who owns a Charlotte chemical manufacturing company. "My kids are scared of aliens. This is like going to see a horror film — and confronting one's fears."

McEneny, his son Phillip, 14, and daughter Ashley, 11, were among the 200-plus curious, skeptical and die-hard believers who came to Queens' Dana Auditorium for Hastings' talk.

A lab analyst for a computer chip manufacturer in Albuquerque, N.M., Hastings has studied UFOs since 1973 and lectured about them on the college circuit since 1981.

His interest, he said, began in high school when he saw five strange objects on an Air Force



UFO expert Robert Hastings of Albuquerque, N.M., prepares for his presentation at Queens College Sunday night.

radar screen at the base where his dad was stationed in Montana.

"They were performing maneuvers and traveling at speeds beyond the capability of any aircraft,"

he said.

Bearded, bespectacled and gesturing behind a lectern, the 47-year-old speaker looked and sounded like an anthropology pro-

fessor discussing a tribe that just happens to be from outer space.

His 90-minute talk included a slide show of grainy photos of flying discs accompanied by documents he said were obtained from the government under the Freedom of Information Act.

"Despite repeated denials to the public, behind the scenes at the highest levels of the military and intelligence community, they not only accept UFOs' validity but judge them to be a national security matter," Hastings said.

Even before the program began, folks in the audience like Gastonia musician David Carson were convinced the government knows more than it lets on about space visitors.

"I'm sure they're aware of something," said Carson, who said he saw a flying, boomerang-shaped object one night while driving near Maryland's Chesapeake Bay.

"I don't know about all the little men and things like that, but that event piqued my interest."

SKYWATCH DIARY

BY CAROLE BAKER

Saturday night found us skywatching at Shoreline Park on one of the coldest nights so far this year. There were just three of us at the Park to skywatch, and it was a beautiful night, except for the plummeting temperatures! The sky was exceptionally clear and the air was very still, the Sound very calm. We were able to stand it for about two hours until despite very heavy wool socks and layers of clothing we began to feel like icicles ourselves! No sightings to report unfortunately, but it was fun to be outside and experience one of nature's extremes—intense radiational cooling!

Last week I mentioned a man who is reporting sightings from the area of The ZOO in Gulf Breeze and thanks to Bill Ford, I now have some more information regarding these sightings to relate. It seems this witness, and several other people, including his wife are having multiple sightings from their vantage point near The ZOO. Watching from the south shore of Gulf Breeze looking across to Santa Rosa Island recently, they report witnessing a craft which appeared as a round object, with a "bubble" appearance on top, with red lights along the bottom. This object was in the vicinity of Big Sabine when they noticed that two red lights swooped in and around the craft, stopped, then swooped off to the east, south of their position, followed closely by the craft. The group of witnesses state that they are logging between nine and fifteen sights a year and that this year, 1997, has been a good year for sightings. They used to skywatch in an area close to Redfish Point, but moved to the south shore due to the construction of the new bridge. This situation obviously bears further investigation and Bill Ford and I plan to skywatch with this group in the very near future to try and share a sighting with them, and perhaps even take some photographs. More on this later.

While Bill and I were discussing this case in my living room the other evening, he mentioned receiving a call regarding another sighting and asked to telephone the witness right there and

then so that we could both share the information. This is what was reported. A witness in her backyard close to the junction of Fairfield Drive and "W" Street in Pensacola was outside at about 5:15 p.m. on Wednesday, December 10, looking at the cloudy formations and the sunset. The witness states that it was getting dark but that there was "still a little light" in the sky. In the western sky she noticed lights "like stars" that were moving. She states at this point that she could clearly identify Venus, and that one of the objects appeared just below Venus. A few were close to overhead of her position and some south of her position but they were in the western quadrant of the sky moving on an east to west path. She watched them for over 30 minutes and states that there were "over a dozen" moving parallel with each other in the same direction. She thought about it being a meteor shower, but realized that they were lasting too long for that and were maintaining a steady and direct course. "They were all moving in a set direction, then one turned back to the east" the witness reports. She heard a helicopter at one point moving on a south to north path, west of her position and states that the "helicopter passed beneath the objects," leading her to believe they must have been quite high up in the sky. The witness lost sight of these objects after around 30 minutes because her view was obscured by an adjacent oak tree and the increasing cloud cover. She felt that these objects were too high to be planes and did not mention any contrail associated with them. This sighting reminds me greatly of the video from Mexico City of, as Jaime Maussou put it "flotillas" of ships in the sky at one time. If anyone else saw this event, we would be grateful to receive any further information available about it.

We received a flyer this week regarding the upcoming 7th Annual International UFO Congress Convention, UFO Film Festival and EBE Awards to be held February 1-7, 1998 in Laughlin, Nevada. Their flyer lists a full week of action-packed events and speakers. Speakers

include Jaime Maussou, Jim Marrs, Forest Crawford, Jim Diletosso, Col. Philip Corso (Ret.), Valerie Ovarov, Dr. Nick Begich, Col. Wendelle Stevens (Ret.), A. J. Gevaerd, Prof. Sun Shi Li, Barry Chamish and our own local contribution, Col. Donald Ware (Ret.) to name but a few. Don Ware will present a new lecture entitled "Ten Year History of Gulf Breeze Sightings." Now, we all locally are aware of just how amazing Don Ware is, but surely he will have to become a miracle worker, rather than a Lightworker to be able to cover the hundreds of sightings, experiences and witnesses that have been reported in Gulf Breeze during the last ten years on a mere one hour lecture! The list of potential speakers at this event runs over 30 and more are yet to be confirmed but more information and an up-to-the-minute list of confirmed speakers can be obtained by calling or writing to: International UFO Congress, 9975 Wadsworth Pkwy., #K2-274, Westminster CO 80021, phone (303) 543-9443, fax (303) 543-8667.

Our friend J. Michael Long from Laurel, Mississippi who recently visited Shoreline Park, was very disappointed to find that there is little to no information available on the Internet about sightings in Mississippi and as far as J. Michael can determine, there is not much reporting going on in that state either. So, he has decided to try and change the situation by developing a website with information on current and historical sightings in Mississippi. He is appealing for witnesses, past and present to come forward and contact him, and for anyone to forward any information, newsclippings, etc. that he may be able to use. Of course, J. Michael is familiar with the famous Parker/Hickson case which occurred in Pascagoula, Mississippi in October 1973. J. Michael can be contacted at: jmichael/ufo/index.html.

If you wish to contact me, please e-mail me at Cbakerswd@aol.com or write to me at P. O. Box 17152, Pensacola, FL 32577-7152, thank you. And remember - Keep Looking Up!

No laughing matter

'UFO' base ruling gives government too much secrecy

The not-so-secret Air Force base about 100 miles north of Las Vegas has provided Americans with plenty of laughs. The Air Force for years refused to acknowledge the existence of the base — known as Area 51, or Dreamland — despite plenty of evidence that it was there, such as aerial photographs shot by Russian satellites and published in magazines.

The continuing shroud of secrecy fuels ridiculous rumors that the base near State Route 375 is where the federal government houses all the UFOs it has captured, even the aliens themselves. The Nevada Transportation Board got into the act, renaming the road the "Extraterrestrial Highway." So did the nearby outpost of Rachel, which renamed its only motel the "Little A'Le'Inn," with a sign pronouncing "Earthlings Welcome."

Yet a recent court ruling involving the base is no laughing matter for the American public, particularly for those who think their health has been damaged by their work on a military base. Walter Kasza, a sheet-metal worker, reportedly worked on the base for seven years, installing cooling systems for a defense contractor. Doctors were unable to determine why his skin later cracked and bled. Ultimately they found kidney cancer, but it was too late. Other workers reported that they and Kasza were exposed to clouds of poisonous smoke as hazardous waste was burned in huge open trenches on the base. Kasza's widow and four other current and former workers decided to sue the federal government. While govern-



Overmyer + Newsart

ment lawyers refused to disclose any information about handling of hazardous wastes, President Clinton issued an order exempting the base from all environmental laws.

This month an appellate court wrongly protected the government by declaring that everything involving the base is a state secret, including how it handles hazardous materials. "The government may use the state secrets

privilege to withhold a broad range of information," Judge Pamela Ann Rymer wrote on behalf of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. "Accordingly, if seemingly innocuous information is part of a classified mosaic, the state secrets privilege may be invoked to bar its disclosure." In this case, the declaration of secrecy has been so sweeping that even an attorney for the plaintiffs, a George Washington University law professor, has had his office and files declared classified. Even some unclassified information under the ruling can be kept out of courts.

The ruling is overly broad and downright dangerous. It leaves the door wide open for the government to obfuscate a range of wrongdoings by claiming that the information surrounding these events cannot be untangled from legitimate state secrets. Court rulings should give government the incentive to separate legitimate secrets from court matters, not the other way around. It is difficult to fathom why the courts are making the pursuit of justice even more difficult. Unless this ruling is overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court, which we hope it is, when the military is guilty of horrible things, it will get the last laugh.

TIMES, New York, NY - March 26, 1998

Steven H. Schiff, 51, New Mexico Congressman

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., March 25 (AP) — Representative Steven H. Schiff, the five-term Republican Congressman from New Mexico who helped research the ethics case against Speaker Newt Gingrich, died today at his home here. He was 51.

The cause was aggressive squamous-cell skin cancer.

Absent from Washington since last April, Mr. Schiff had continued to conduct Congressional business from home. Because of his illness, he had announced in January that he would not seek re-election this November.

Mr. Schiff was elected to Congress from the First Congressional District in 1988. As one of two Republicans on the ethics subcommittee investigating accusations that Mr. Gingrich had used tax-exempt groups for partisan goals, he was credited with helping create a compromise early last year in which Mr. Gingrich agreed to pay a \$300,000 penalty to reimburse the Government for investigative costs.

Mr. Schiff signed a letter to fellow Republicans declaring that the signers knew of no reason Gingrich should not continue as House Speak-



Associated Press

Representative Steven H. Schiff

er. In a comment that drew criticism from Democrats, he said the Speaker's misleading statements on the accusations resulted from "a comedy of errors."

He also gained headlines in 1993,

A Republican credited with a deal on Gingrich.

reopening a Federal investigation into the so-called Roswell Incident in which extraterrestrial beings were purported to have crashed northwest of Roswell, N.M., in 1947.

Mr. Schiff asked the General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of Congress, to seek Air Force documents relating to the incident. The Air Force said a secret high-tech spy balloon crashed, not an alien spacecraft.

A Chicago native, Mr. Schiff attended law school in New Mexico. He was a colonel in the Air Force Reserve, and served brief stints on active duty in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf after the war with Iraq.



FLIP PUTTHOFF / THE MORNING NEWS

UFO artist Wes Crum talks with a customer at the convention.

The truth is out there, say Eureka UFO fans

The 10th annual UFO Conference continued in Eureka Springs with discussions on crop circles, alien abduction and other close encounters.

Scott Butki
The Morning News

EUREKA SPRINGS — Between surreal confessions, conspiracy theories and accusations against governments and the news media, there was a more traditional moment Saturday at the 10th annual UFO Conference.

That moment occurred when Lou Farrish was thanked for his hard work organizing the conference in Eureka Springs.

Before beginning her presentation, Linda Moulton Howe of Jamesson, Pa., handed Farrish a gift and read aloud the inscription: "To Lou Farrish, with gratitude for maintaining a forum for determining truth in Eureka Springs from 1988 to 1998."

But with that exception, much of the conference Saturday would frustrate skeptics, impress and interest believers and leave those in between unsure just how to react.

Howe, for example, spent more than 30 minutes describing — with videotaped accompaniment — the amazing detail in crop circles that have appeared around the world, but most frequently in England, in recent years. Some of the patterns found in the wheat fields are incredibly complex, containing more than 100 separate circles. One was shaped as a square with about 700 rectangle shapes inside.

Two British men claimed a few years ago that they had created all of the crop circles as part of a complicated hoax.

At one point, Howe stopped and asked how they could have possibly managed it.

Later, after some in the crowd of more than 200 leaned forward while viewing picture after picture of intricate crop circles, she asked, "How many of

you saw these in the news media?" The response was laughter. Few seem to know about it because of the lack of news coverage, she said.

Nancy Talbott of Cambridge, Mass., was scheduled Saturday night to follow up on the crop circle topic, explaining the results of scientific tests of the soil under the crop circles.

Earlier in the day, Jeanne Robinson of Kirbyville, Mo., shared some intimate details of her life. Her first encounter with "non-humans" occurred when she was 4 years old, she said. That first time aliens took a "chunk of tissue" from one of her arms, she said. She was mad and scared because "the bogeyman had me," she said.

In future alien abductions, she said she was "probed, experimented on, manipulated and guided," she said.

She said she was later shown an alien baby and told that she was its natural mother.

More recently, she said the aliens told her that she, in addition to her two human children, was the mother of a total of 18 alien babies, she said.

In recent years, she said she has received telepathic messages suggesting something is amiss. "Nobody knows what is going on or what is coming. But something is!" she said.

She criticized how the government and news media treat people like her. They should be listening to them "instead of treating us as jokes," she said.

For every person like her that speaks publicly about being abducted, there are 20 others afraid to tell what happened to them, she said.

In addition to the speakers, there were vendors downstairs selling a variety of wares, from T-shirts with pictures of an alien and the message, "Trust no one," to pictures, shirts, books and videotapes of crop circles.

In the parking lots were cars with personalized license plates bearing such names as "UFO Tofu" and "UFO Pilot."

Those cars, one of them belonging to a T-shirt vendor, will presumably be driven away today when the conference comes to a close at noon.

Interesting Happenings in Your Own Backyard...

by Tom Manni

Filer's Files #9-1998
MUFON
Skywatch Investigations
George A. Filer: MUFON
Eastern Director
March 5, 1998

Increased UFO activity near New Jersey, New York, Alabama and Australia coasts.

On March 5, 1998 information regarding a UFO

nomenon. Over the past two months, there have been official reports filed in Toms River and on Long Beach Island near the Barnegat Lighthouse. On February 19, at 4:30 PM, Ellis Smith, his nine year old son and his five year old daughter watched a UFO perform aerobatics over Toms River. "We were driving home from the theater in Toms River," Smith reported, "when I noticed about 20 miles to the southwest what appeared to be an instant contrail behind a very bright white light." The conditions were clear and there was still plenty of daylight. According to the report, the craft stopped and very, very slowly began to level out. It took about three minutes for it to complete what appeared to be a J-shaped maneuver, then glowed very brightly, changing sizes, and then appeared to change into a very large, bright, solid object with a mist-like substance surrounding it. The UFO repeated these maneuvers six times, with each maneuver lasting approximately four minutes. According to Smith, "it looked to us like the saucer slowed down, then turned into a ball, then hazed up" before vanishing.

On February 4, the

sighting in Ocean Grove was posted on the World Wide Web by George Filer, the Eastern Director of the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON).

This organization tracks and investigates UFO sightings throughout the world and posts information regarding these incidents on the Internet for world wide consumption. The catalyst for this particular report, or X-File if you will, was the sighting on February 27th of an Unidentified Flying Object

weekend Islander News, Manahawkin, New Jersey, carried a photograph of a disc shaped UFO near the Barnegat Lighthouse. This UFO appears quite large, an estimated fifty feet in diameter and is a typical saucer shape. The local Coast Guard Station reported that unidentified craft are frequently seen along the New Jersey coastline.

Another sighting was reported to MUFON on February 26 by Andrew Cavaseno and his daughter as they were driving westbound on the Southern State Parkway on the south shore of Long Island. After pulling his car to a stop on the side of the road, they observed a series of stationary lights in a small "arch" shape. The object itself was reported to be dark and about the size of a large stadium. After observing for almost fifteen minutes, it literally "switched off" according to Cavaseno. If there is one common thread among these sightings, other than the fact that they all occurred in February of this year, is that they were all seen within a relatively close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean.

It's important to note that nearly two thirds of the Earth's surface is covered by water and it seems logical that UFO's or Unidentified

Submerged Objects (USO's) could hide in this vast area. A New Jersey resident, Ivan Sanderson, wrote a book called "Invisible Residents", that discusses numerous records of eyewitness accounts that took place in lakes, seas and oceans around the world. For example, in August 1954, Dutch Sea Captain Jan Bos reported observing a strange moonlike object rising out of the Atlantic Ocean some 90 miles east of Cape Cod Light. Similar reports along the New Jersey coast have been told for years. Navy submarines and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute research ships have picked up the sounds of fast moving craft in the deep waters off Puerto Rico. Hydrophones and sonar equipment have recorded rapidly moving underwater craft at estimated depths of over 30,000 feet, which is far too deep for any submarine to operate. In the Bristol Channel, as well as the Long Island Sound, there have often been reports taken from eyewitnesses who claim to have seen large craft diving into these bodies of water and then disappearing. Perhaps there is in fact a link between large bodies of water and the proliferation of sightings. Again, due to the

home in Neptune Township just a few miles from the previous sighting earlier that day.

In order to verify any other eyewitness accounts of these craft, we will not divulge any details regarding size, color or physical makeup except for the obvious fact that they were indeed unidentifiable flying objects. Unfortunately, if we were to publicize details regarding the physical appearance of these UFO's, we

"ridicule factor" most UFO sightings are not reported, which significantly hinders the investigative process.

While we may have some compelling evidence to answer the question, "why here?", we're still groping with the question, "why now?" Recently, the entire subject of UFO's has had a renaissance in the media. There are entire sections devoted to this topic in most major book stores and the depth of research done by these authors seems to illustrate the intense interest in this topic. Over the past 20 years, there have also been a series of major movie projects devoted to the topic of UFO's and the possibility of extraterrestrial life.

Currently, on television we have cable companies which offer the Sci-Fi channel as part of their basic packages. On network television, Fox offers the X-Files, which deals with all forms of paranormal activity including the possibility of UFO's as well as extraterrestrial life forms.

This attempt to mainstream the concept of UFO's and extraterrestrial life forms has made it somewhat easier for people to summon the courage to go public with their experiences in spite of the aforementioned "ridicule

would be inviting copycat versions of these sightings by folks who spend hours in front of the television watching the Jerry Springer Show, etc. Unfortunately, another problem that UFO investigators have to deal with is the fear of ridicule that has resulted in many sightings going unreported because people worry that they'll be labeled as mentally unstable if they go public with their experiences.

Why here...and why

factor." It's estimated that only one out of ten "sightings" are actually reported, however, it's very difficult to quantify unreported events.

There's one other aspect of this UFO business that should be discussed and that's the meaning of the term UFO. As most of you have probably figured out by now, UFO stands for Unidentified Flying Object. Unfortunately, this term has been linked with little green men from Mars, purple people eaters, etc. Perhaps we should simply use this term in a literal sense; objects that are flying that we are unable to identify. This opens the possibility that these objects could be some sort of military aircraft being tested by the government. A majority of the populace believe this is a plausible explanation for these aerial sightings, however, dyed in the wool UFO investigators feel this is just an explanation that people are more comfortable believing, as opposed to beings from unknown regions of the universe. Their contention is that it's both arrogant and naive to assume that we're the sole form of life in this or other solar systems.

Now, let's get back to Ocean Grove and the sighting over the Great Auditorium, since that's where this whole thing started for myself and my neighbor, who first reported this astounding event.

After posting notices in various public places in the Grove, it became apparent that he was the only one who witnessed this aerial phenomenon...or at least he was the only one with the courage to come forward with this information.

When his phone rang one morning last week, he was greeted by the voice of Dr. Bruce Cornet, a noted UFO investigator who currently makes his home in Red Bank, New Jersey. Dr. Cornet was extremely excited over this sighting, in particular, because it occurred in broad daylight and additionally due to the extremely detailed report which my neighbor was able to provide to the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON). With no hesitation, Dr. Cornet made arrangements to meet us at the sight of this aerial phenomenon, at which time he would begin an official field investigation of this event.

Next week, in part two of this series, I will describe, in detail, Dr. Cornet's work as I observed it. We will also feature the interview I was privileged to conduct with Dr. Cornet, upon completion of his initial investigation. In the meantime, I again request that anyone with information regarding the incident on February 27th, please call 775-3950.

Next week, in part two of this series, I will describe, in detail, Dr. Cornet's work as I observed it. We will also feature the interview I was privileged to conduct with Dr. Cornet, upon completion of his initial investigation. In the meantime, I again request that anyone with information regarding the incident on February 27th, please call 775-3950.

Part Two: Interesting Happenings

by Tom Manni

X-File 22798
Ocean Grove, New Jersey
March 3, 1998
11:00 AM

Some days it's just really cold at the shore, but this was nothing compared to the chill that would later overtake us on this freezing day in early March. The sun can be shining and the skies can be clear, but when the wind blows off the ocean in March, it goes right through to your bones....or at least it felt that way while we waited for UFO investigator Dr. Bruce Cornet. The lovely bride, myself and my neighbor Allen were huddled outside the Great Auditorium awaiting the arrival of Dr. Cornet. We were chattering nervously because, quite frankly, we just didn't know what to expect. None of us had ever seen a UFO, (until Allen's sighting the week prior) and none of us had ever met someone who claimed to be a real UFO investigator. We had taken the liberty of checking out his website on the internet, (www.orionworks.com/bcornet) so we knew he was legitimate. As we stood talking, he suddenly came strolling up to us and we immediately introduced ourselves to this esteemed expert in the field of paranormal activity. He was wearing a red wool cap, which he had pulled down over his

ears, a black leather jacket, jeans and black loafers.

The lovely bride and I faded into the background after the intros so as not to get in the way of this field investigation. Dr. Cornet first began by asking Allen some basic factual information that he recorded with a small handheld tape recorder. He then asked Allen to recreate the sighting by actually retracing his exact steps from prior to the sighting right through to the ending. During the course of this re-enactment, Allen mentioned that a short time after the sighting, a black military helicopter, with what appeared to be a machine gun turret had flown directly over the Great Auditorium where the UFO had appeared. Well, wouldn't you know it.... just as he was telling this to Dr. Cornet, an exact replica of this chopper came flying by and with that, Dr. Cornet took off running as fast as he could with his Nikon camera in an attempt to capture this craft on film. When he returned to us (somewhat out of breath) he maintained that he'd gotten a good shot of it and would have it developed and blown up to further aid the identification process. After a final flurry of note taking, tape recording and photos, we agreed to retire to my office to warm our bones and discuss the world of UFO's according to Dr. Cornet.

TM: I see that you have a

Ph.D., what exactly is your educational background?

DC: I received a BA in Biology in 1970, a MS in Paleobotany in 1973 and my Ph.D. is in Geology and Palynology. You're looking at me in a funny way, so I think I better explain what Palynology is all about. It's the study of spores and pollen.

TM: Thanks for clearing that up, but let's talk about how you became a UFO investigator because, quite frankly, I have never met anyone in this type of profession.

DC: Well, I owned my own oil drilling company for 14 years in Virginia, I had an experience with UFO's in 1981, which I was unaware of until I visited a hypnotherapist in 1992, who was able to help me remember details of the event which seemed to be lurking in my subconscious for almost a decade. Since then I've written two books and co-authored over 21 scientific papers on this and related subjects.

TM: What happened in 1981 that caused you to seek this type of medical help?

DC: I can tell you the entire story, but I would rather you not print it, due to the "ridicule factor" that we spoke about earlier. You seem to be trying to write a factual report regarding Allen's sighting and I don't want to influence the validity of his claims with your readers.

TM: (Over the next 45 minutes Dr. Cornet shared a harrowing story regarding his own UFO experience with Allen and myself and quite frankly some things are better left unsaid, so I will not put in writing what he told us that day. The actual story can be found in Dr. Cornet's website.) What's the biggest problem that you encounter with the field of UFO investigation?

DC: Again I return to my earlier comment regarding the ridicule factor. This is exacerbated by people who try to make a name for themselves by perpetrating fraud on the public by trying to doctor photos, recreate sounds artificially, etc. All of my graphic charts and photos have had the name Dr. Bruce Cornet physically embedded to prevent plagiarism and piracy.

TM: Do you think the government is aware of your work, and how do you think they feel about it?

DC: Let's just put it this way....my website has been logged on by people from at least 35 different countries and every conceivable government agency! Society is just not ready to openly accept UFO's, but the fact that the subject has become more mainstream is a positive thing.

TM: Do you watch the X-Files, and if so, what do you think of it?

DC: I do occasionally and it seems like an entertaining combination of fact and fiction. I like it because it opens people's minds. We must get past that darned ridicule factor. I figure that 10% of the people are frauds, 80% are neutral and the last 10% have had real paranormal experiences.

TM: One last question, some of my readers have a strange obsession with Cindy Crawford. What's your opinion of her?

DC: I'm sorry, but I'm not sure I know who she is.

TM: Thank-you Dr. Cornet. Just when it seemed like things were calming down, another sighting in Neptune was registered with MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) on Thursday, 3/27/98. Apparently, an unidentified flying object was seen by a number of people looking west from the gates on Main Street leaving Ocean Grove. People actually stopped their vehicles and got out to witness this aerial show. Again, if anyone would like to report any sightings in this area, please call 775-3950. Looks like we're in for an interesting spring and summer.



FOREIGN NEWS

[All British clippings courtesy of Timothy Good, unless otherwise credited.]

RIDDLE OF UFO SIGHTED OVER

HOWARD'S HOUSE



Above: How a UFO landing at the Howard home might have looked. Right: Mr Howard and wife Sandra

Take us to your leader

AS the minister in charge of immigration, he was used to dealing with illegal aliens.

But it seems that some visitors to Michael Howard's country retreat were far more alien than those queuing hopefully at the Home Office.

At least eight witnesses claim that a UFO hovered near the then Home Secretary's Kent home a few weeks before the General Election.

The close encounter was taken so seriously that spin doctors at Conservative Central Party Office were alerted, it emerged yesterday.

It is still unclear why aliens would want a face-to-tentacle chat with a minister once described as having 'something of the night about him'. Maybe they

By DAVID DERBYSHIRE

were after some advice about inter-planetary border controls. Or perhaps they simply got Mr Howard mixed up with John Redwood, the one-time Tory leadership contender known as The Vulcan for his Mr Spock-like analytical style.

The UFO was spotted on March 8 last year, a week before John Major announced the election date.

One witness, local newspaper reporter Sarah Hall, was driving through Lympne, near Hythe at 3am when she noticed an unusual humming. She stopped and watched a craft floating over a nearby field, close to Michael Howard's home. It was shiny, with a dome at one end and bright

lights around its side. 'I had no idea what it was,' she said. 'I felt the hairs stand up on the back on my neck.'

Local UFO expert Chris Rolfe said other witnesses, including two firemen, saw the craft that night in a 15-mile radius of Mr Howard's home.

The Tory chiefs were alerted after Miss Hall wrote a first-hand account for the Folkestone Herald, where she had worked for 18 months. Yesterday advisers who worked closely with Mr Howard during the election campaign confirmed that the UFO story was well known in Westminster but denied there had been a 'Men in Black'-style cover up.

They did admit, however, that the party had been keen to play down the sighting because of the risk of embarrassing headlines.

'Mr Howard had more important matters to deal with than UFOs,' one source said yesterday. 'He knew about the reports, but I doubt whether he was very concerned about them.'

John Major's press secretary Sheila Gunn also confirmed that Party Central Office knew about the UFO in the run-up to the election. 'There were calls about it because the local paper had done something,' she said. 'But while we take calls seriously, there are some that we'd rather ignore.'

Although the sighting is well documented, the police and Ministry of Defence say they have no records. Sceptics say the craft was probably a helicopter or jet. But some locals say the true story has not come out and believe the local paper came under pressure to play

down the incident. Kent UFO expert Derek Sheffield said the Government was obsessed with hushing up UFO reports. 'There's one hell of a cover-up going on here,' he said.

But Melody Foreman, who took over as acting editor shortly after the sighting, denied that the paper had come under pressure to suppress the story.

Mark Watts, the Labour MEP for Kent East and a self-confessed sceptic, is campaigning for an end to the secrecy surrounding UFOs.

'If someone like the Home Secretary — one of the most protected people in Britain — is subjected to a close encounter, you would expect there to be a comment from someone,' he said. 'The whole thing is very mysterious.'

EVENING NEWS, Cambridge, England - Nov. 24, 1997

Couple scared by 'hovering object'

■ **SAWSTON:** A couple are mystified by a "strange object" which they say hovered above their car.

Judy and Peter Chapman were travelling along the A1307 towards Four Wentways, Abington, when they saw it at about 9.30pm on Friday night.

And another *News* reader, who asked not to be named, said she saw bright lights in the sky at around the same time and believed it was an electrical storm in the distance.

But Mrs Chapman, from Sunderland Avenue, claims her encounter was much closer and she was "frightened to death".

Mr Chapman, 55, a gardener, said: "It was triangular and there was a green light

on one corner and a red one on another and there were whitish lights underneath. "But it was not like any plane I have ever seen and there was no noise."

He added the object appeared to be moving at about 20mph.

"I cannot for the life of me work out what it was."

Cambridgeshire police said they had not been notified of any night flying exercises this weekend by the region's military air bases.

And Shelley Robinson, the duty forecaster at Norwich Weather Centre, said: "There were electrical storms along the east coast last night and lightning can be seen at quite a distance at night."

Strange plane in the sky

AN East London UFO research group wants to hear from residents who might have seen a large black triangle shaped object over central Walthamstow recently.

They have had reports about an object appearing 10/15,000ft high over Hoe Street and Walthamstow town

centre on December 8 at 11.37am.

Roy Hale, of the Essex and London UFO Network, said: "A group member said he saw what looked like a commercial plane approaching it and then changing direction," said Mr Hale.

"I then rung up Heathrow and was given the number of the department which logs such information and they did not have any other calls so they couldn't help me."

"I have also had a letter back from the Ministry of Defence who

said they had no knowledge of military aircraft flying around the area.

"And when I told him the reported size of the UFO he said that it could not have been a military plane because they have nothing that big. So the whole matter is a big mystery."

Mr Hale said that the Chingford area in particular was a hotbed of UFO sightings, particularly over the reservoirs.

Mr Hale can be contacted on 0181 262 7681.

YELLOW ADVERTISER,

Colchester, England

Jan. 9, 1998

(or was this young boy carried away by the UFO lobby, a distinguished writer and publishing hype?)

JASON ANDREWS looks you in the eye when he speaks. He is eager to do well, and although he mumbles and shrugs a lot, he tries hard to stick to the basic facts of his story.

On the surface, there seem to be but two possibilities. At just 14 years old he is either a born liar capable of playing the leading role in an elaborate hoax. Or is he speaking the truth when he tells his extraordinary story of being taken from his bed in the night by creatures from beyond the Earth?

Experts have been throwing questions at Jason for several years. Doctors, social workers, psychiatrists, investigative journalists — they have all had a crack at him.

His medical and education records could fill a filing cabinet. His family have been examined down to the smallest detail — and exonerated.

The boy is not psychotic. He has not been the victim of abuse. Nor has he been coerced into a conspiracy. His family may be impoverished, but every expert has concluded that it is a close and loving one.

So how can we explain his complex and eerie tale? His skinny body shows no evidence that it has been sliced open by long, gleaming fingers using strange instruments. Yet his parents say they have seen large scars on his side and his stomach. Scars that disappeared within hours.

And his school record makes it unlikely he could reel off complex mathematical equations, with numbers running into the billions, or speak fluently in strange, crooning languages.

Yet his family say they have seen and heard him doing precisely that, in a trance-like state, in a voice sometimes deep and harsh, sometimes soft and melodious.

These events and many others, we are being asked to believe, have all happened to this ordinary boy from Hawknest Farm in rural Kent.

In a new book, Jason and his family reveal the story of a long series of visitations by aliens who have targeted him (and sometimes his mother) for their experiments into the minds, hearts and bodies of earthlings.

Since Jason was four, the Andrews claim, they have been subjected to every type of extra-terrestrial invasion. Small creatures, tall creatures, kind ones, sinister ones, some with huge round eyes, some in hoods and with dark features, others fairskinned and ethereal, have all appeared in the various homes they have lived in.

SOMETIMES they appear flooded in brilliant light and merely move about the rooms, sometimes they transport Jason to another place and lay him on a smooth, cold slab and conduct experiments on him.

In the morning Jason often has long scars on his body, but by tea time they have disappeared. His father, Paul, says he has seen one such scar vanishing before his eyes.

The boy says the aliens can communicate to him through thought. He believes they have implanted devices inside him. They can blank out tape recorders and make cameras inoperable.

They can induce coma-like sleep on the rest of the family, instantly silence barking dogs and 'freeze' farmyard birds and animals into immobile statues.

They can produce visions of the Earth blowing up on vast TV screens and present these images to Jason and his mother simultaneously.

Mostly, such visitations are benign. But once, claims his mother, Ann, they came to her in the night and painlessly induced a miscarriage, implanting a voice in her mind that told her: 'It's all for the best.'

There is much more in the same vein. Their story, told in a compelling book by a respected and talented British journalist, author of 13 books and an expert in the field of the paranormal, could well be a best-seller.

Such accounts have already made fortunes in America, where alien abductions have become a media sensation and have involved mainstream scientists. Already, TV and film companies are said to be interested.

All of this has been highly profitable. The Andrews family have been mostly broke for years, sometimes living on less than £15 a week. The only asset they have ever owned is the scrubby little ten-acre smallholding, near the village of Borough Green, which they bought nine years ago for £25,000.

They live in a nearby council house. But every day the family



Out of this world: Jason Andrews says he saw 'aliens' like this one



by James Dalrymple

move up to their much-loved scrap of land and tend to their livestock — a few ponies and a flock of geese.

Now all that has changed. The money will soon be rolling in. They are already guaranteed some £60,000 from the book, including money from The Sun, who serialised it this week. They have their own agent and the celebrity chat show circuit beckons.

'I'd be a hypocrite if I said the money wasn't nice,' said Ann. 'But we never wanted to go public, and I never saw it as an opportunity to make money.'

WE THOUGHT long and hard about doing the book, and it was only after big family discussions that we were persuaded it would help others.

The book's author, Jean Ritchie, is also quick to point out that if she had never stumbled on the story in a copy of a magazine about UFOs, the Andrews family would have remained in obscurity.

'I thought it would make a good magazine piece,' she said. 'But when I met Ann and read her diary I saw that it was far more important than that. I began as a total sceptic, but now I have an open mind.'

'I feel they are telling the truth. I checked everything they told me, including the medical records. I have the names of all the doctors who were involved and there is no doubt they were mystified by what the boy was telling them.'

'There is no doubt Jason was suffering from strange injuries and illnesses at the times when he claims he was abducted. There is clear evidence of scarring and strange marks on his body. And throughout it all Jason was consistent.'

'One thing I am sure of: Ann and Paul Andrews are not liars out to make money.'

There are two things to remember with alien abduction stories. One is that they are almost comically derivative. If you have read one you have read them all.

All aliens look the same. They all have saucer eyes, pointed heads and are inherently benign. If they were monsters no one would ever get back to their beds. Nothing new in the literature has appeared in half a century, since the first B-movies of the Forties and Fifties.

Second, the victims of abductions cannot lose. It is impossible to disprove a paranormal invention. All they have to do is get their story right and stick to it. If witnesses say you never left the house that night, you simply devise a scenario when every one else in the house was zapped into frozen immobility for several hours.

Why didn't the video camera and the tape recorder set up to capture the aliens see the bright lights and hear the noises? Because they knock out all electronic equipment. And so on. For each reasonable question there is an unreasonable but complete answer. The aliens have all power.

So are the Andrews just liars and fantasists trying to earn a little media money? The answers to these questions are fascinating and complex.

AND the answers, in turn, pose intriguing questions about so much of the burgeoning UFO industry. There is no doubt Jason was a disturbed little boy. He suffered from bad dreams and he sleep-walked. Both he and his older brother, Daniel, told their mother they had seen things in the night.

Jason's schooling was a disaster. He began to be disruptive and was threatened with expulsion. He was forced to undergo psychiatric counselling.

Up until that point neither of his parents made any claims of alien intervention. Then Paul got some books from the library. And they began to immerse themselves in the cult of alien visitation and abduction.

The possibilities of this childlike rubbish are endless. Every dream, every small family crisis, every strange sound, every odd piece of behaviour by their pets, even a lightbulb blowing, becomes a sign of alien intervention. The Andrews

family became instant converts.

'Suddenly, it all made sense,' said Ann. 'We knew we had found the answer.'

What she had found was an elaborate pot-pourri of pseudo-scientific mumbo-jumbo, invented by largely harmless obsessives, that has become a flourishing industry in the Western world.

They contacted one of the leading British 'authorities' on this phenomenon, an agency called Quest, and were eagerly welcomed to the fold by Tony Dodd, a retired Yorkshire policeman who styles himself Director of Investigations.

For Dodd the Andrews family were the find of a lifetime. He became their guru and protector. Using the gaudy terminology of the genre, he explained each of Jason's symptoms and instructed them what to look out for.

Above all, he told them they were special, chosen people. Nobody had ever done that before with the Andrews. It was like the opening of floodgates. Ann, who had never felt any connection to all this, suddenly began to remember childish visions, which eventually led to a whole slew of 'recovered memories', including the miscarriage induced by aliens.

The family attended UFO conferences and soaked up the lore of it all. Ann began to see the faces of the aliens herself, drew pictures of them, and began a diary of invasion. By the time Ritchie stumbled upon the story the entire family were already well-read in every facet of alienism.

They became convinced that Government scientists were removing their dead animals, that the council was conspiring against them and that strange military activity was taking place in a nearby Territorial Army base.

They began to produce endless anecdotal evidence that their isolated farm was surrounded by strange forces which had the power to immobilise their animals and geese into living statues. After this came a series of mutilations to their horses.

ONE horse was discovered to have a large flap of skin hanging loose. But there was no blood or damage to the tissue and the animal was in no discomfort.

'The vet said he had never seen anything like it,' said Paul Andrews. 'And he was able to stitch the flap back without sedating the animal.'

At another time they noticed that all their horses had become lame in the same back leg. 'There were little round holes that seemed to have been punched into the flesh,' said Ann. 'Again the horses didn't seem to be suffering.'

The Quest investigators loved all this. Animal mutilation is a major issue for them. It proves, for them, that aliens are testing for toxins in living creatures.

One day the family found four dead mice laid out in a neat row near the gate to the farm, each one with a tiny hole in its skull. This, ironically, is the only hard piece of evidence the family have ever produced. And they are very proud of the snapshot of the dead mice.

Ritchie could find no chink in it — because there was none. An entire family was by now immersed in what the psychologists call passive group hysteria, and the fact that they could produce not a single tape recording, photograph of the 'visitors', or physical injury was explained away by the common response: the aliens were so far advanced in technology that they could do anything.

Ritchie did try to contact the medical and school authorities, but got nowhere. She talks of Jason's medical records, but she didn't actually see them; she only saw the notes which his mother had made from them.

After months practically living with the family, Ritchie produced her 80,000-word blockbuster. She, too, is now part of their world; her next book will be into other aspects of alien intervention.

It may be impossible to expose an illusion — but it is easy enough to see the essential silliness that lies at the heart of it. All you have to do is spend some time with the boy himself. Sitting in the tiny wooden shed at the farm where some of these strange events happened, I put him through his paces and the whole charade began to collapse.

In two hours of questioning he rarely gave a full answer. Within moments of our interview beginning both his mother and Jean Ritchie were jumping in.

(continued on page 13)

When I quoted specific incidents in the book, in which he is talks in great detail, he faltered repeatedly, and each time the two women moved in with answers: 'Don't you remember, Jason, that was the time you saw the one you called the Monk,' says his mum. 'The one with the hood.'

'You saw the instruments in his hands, didn't you Jason?' suggests Ritchie. Again and again, under prompting, he tried his best. 'Yeah, uh, like I remember seeing the Monk, with a sorts hood thing. I sensed he was wise, you now... oh yeah, I could see something in his hand.'

Again and again he missed his cue. Did you feel any pain when you woke with the scars in your body? He looked blank for a moment, then finally decided to ignore the question. We looked at each other in silence. I felt sorry for him.

Eventually he began to run out of answers of any detail at all. From then on, his only reply to any of my questions was: 'I, uh, don't remember things too clearly. That's why I always run into my Mum's room and tell her to write it all down. She knows it all.' And he looked at her pleadingly.

Did you hear them speaking? 'You think you hear things. Sometimes I hear some funny voices... coming from somewhere... like, uh, I'm thinking things in my head...'

Jean Ritchie breaks in, reminding him that they use telepathy. 'This was allegedly the same boy who, in the book, can give this kind of descriptive detail: "There is a pattern to the bad nights, the nights when things happen to me..."

'I've got a very good alarm clock, a state-of-the-art digital one, and it always stops at 3am. That's the time it happens... I always try to go back to sleep, in the hope that nothing will happen, but then I see something almost out of the corner of my eye.'

'It rises up through the floor. It's a big one. There's only ever one a big one. It's about 5ft 4in tall, just a bit shorter than me.'

THE head is large, with big black eyes on a slant which go round the side of the head, and a very small nose and mouth.

'It's thin, and it has the long, dark fingers that I remember from my baby days... I'm aware of the little ones. I never see where they come from, they're just there... They scuttle around, busy, busy, busy, they never stay still.'

'Sometimes they bring some other creatures with them. I call them koalas because they are small and furry like bears...'

When he began to look at the floor in silence, I had had enough. Leaving the dilapidated little farm, I was rather glad that the family were coming into their small fortune. They are nice people and they almost certainly believe by now that they are telling the truth.

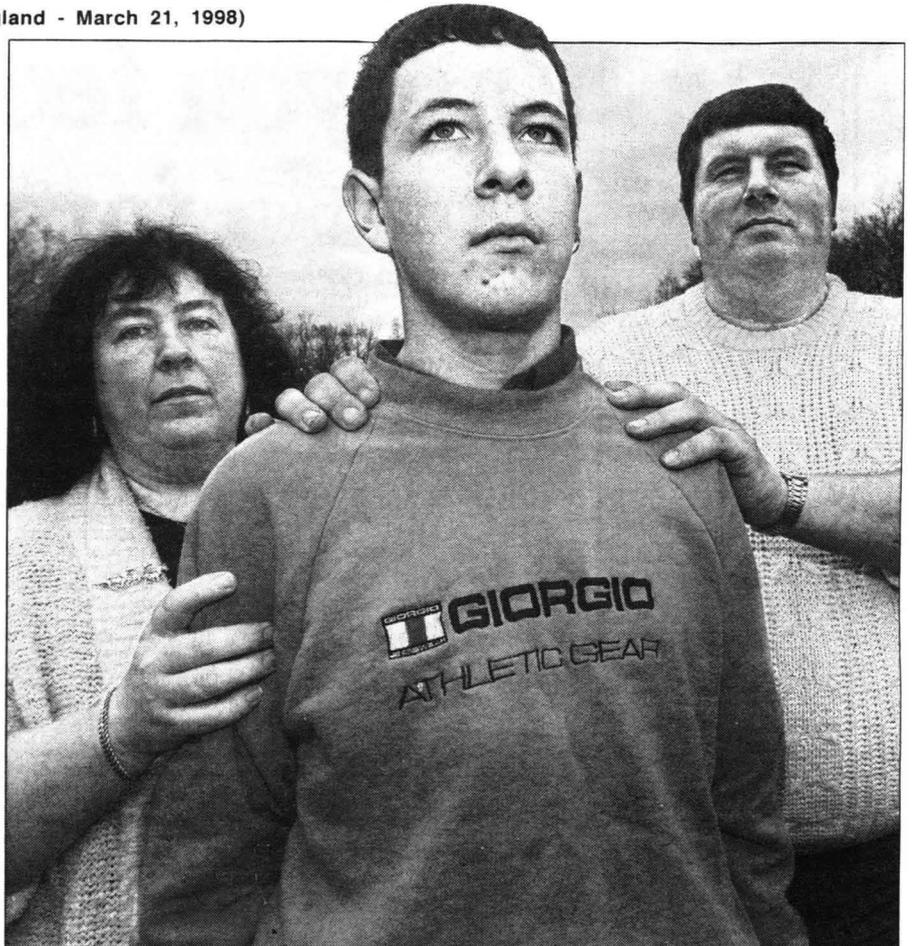
But I had a bad feeling about Jason. He is now locked forever into his role as Britain's most famous alien abductee. Each day he will have to face derision and hostility at a school where he once suffered pain and rejection. And already, inside his extended family, there is a growing anger at the publicity.

Jean Ritchie is central to all of this. She is a talented writer with the ability to give the stamp of authenticity to any story. Whether she really believes this spider's web of nonsense or not is something that only she knows.

But it is entirely due to her that two things will happen. A hard-up and likeable family will become moderately rich and be feted briefly on the celebrity circuit before being spat out and forgotten.

And a rather lonely young boy, who has shown evidence of emotional and behavioural problems, will become a kind of freak show.

■ **ABDUCTED**, by Ann Andrews and Jean Ritchie, is published by Headline Book Publishing Ltd at £16.99.



Going public: Jason and his parents, Ann and Paul. They say they've seen the scars on him left by aliens

UFOs, fact or fiction?

IN the fourth of our series on unsolved mysteries **BRIDGET GALTON** reaches out beyond the known universe to open the file on spiningling sightings of unidentified flying objects in the Peterborough area.

THE truth may well be out there, but the cause of many of the reported incidents of mystery objects seen hovering above the city has yet to be explained.

Hundreds of homeowners, drivers and workers over the past years have filled the pages of *The Evening Telegraph* describing their close encounters with what many believe to be alien spaceships.

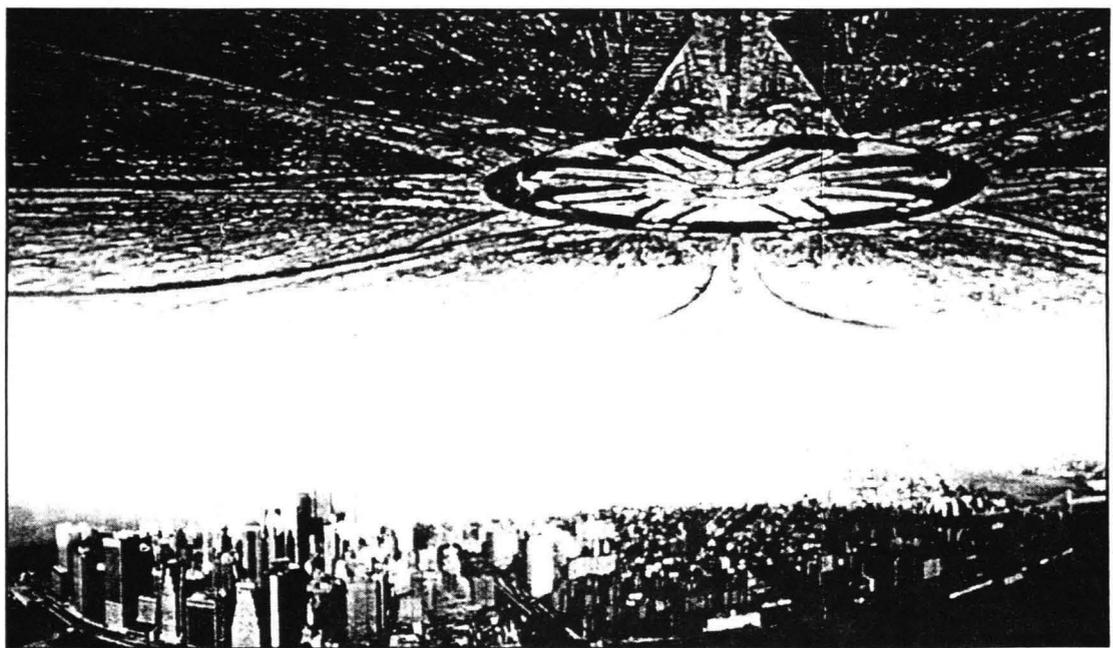
Time and again, phone calls to the police, RAF Wittering and Alconbury have failed to clear up the mystery of these flying objects. With an upsurge in the popularity of science fiction dramas, the desire to believe in life on other planets is stronger than ever.

In July, a report was opened by the British-based International UFO Research Network (IUFORN) after a frightened Wisbech family of four came forward to report an extraterrestrial experience on the A47.

The driver, a 26-year-old student who did not wish to be named said: "Until that night, I didn't believe in UFOs but I'm not so sure now."

The triangular object, hovering around 150 feet above the road near Thorney gave off a pink light and followed the family's car for several hundred yards before disappearing.

A 21-year-old woman returning along the same road at the same time from a deer-stalking expedition later



IS ANYONE THERE? A scene from the blockbuster sci-fi movie *Independence Day* when aliens invaded the Earth. But is there any truth behind the science fiction?

backed up the report. She told *The Evening Telegraph* at the time: "It was the strangest experience of my life and when I read about the other sighting it gave me the shivers."

A glance through the files reveals that the year 1980 saw an explosion in the number of brushes with unexplained phenomena in Peterborough.

UFO research association investigator, John Barton chillingly predicted the surge of sightings when he told *The Evening Telegraph* in 1980 that UFO's tend to single out areas at particular times. He warned: "I have a feeling there will be an increase in UFO activity around the city."

This was confirmed in February 1980 when a dozen petrified railway-

men working in the loco yard in Hundred Road, March, watched a hovering ball of orange flames in the sky.

The claim was backed up by several March policemen who had similar experiences in the early hours of the morning.

The same year Terry and Sue Myers from Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, called the police when they saw a slowly revolving object in the sky with a sequence of flashing lights in green, blue, red, yellow and white.

A police officer witnessed the object but neither he nor the Myers could explain what they had seen with their own eyes.

Perhaps Alan Maudlin (25), from

Yaxley, who has started a city branch of IUFORN this year, will re-open these old files.

He is hoping his group will investigate local sightings and encourage other witnesses to come forward. He said: "We will listen to people talk about their experiences and look at all the research material available to find some answers."

Over the years, some of the so-called UFOs have been satisfactorily explained and often a comet or a meteor is found to be responsible for the strange phenomena.

In April 1980, an unusual flashing light in Yaxley was discovered to be a very down-to-earth tractor with its hazard lights on.

But perhaps the most thrilling item found in the file was a picture taken by Ivor Rhoose of Thorpe Road, Peterborough, who managed to snatch a picture of three unexplained objects over the city's Orton Water-ville area in 1981.

As I rushed to find the negative, I noticed the date of the sighting was April 1. Perhaps I had started to take the whole thing a little too seriously.

Comment by Herald Acting Editor Melody Foreman



'S Jam on a cold March morning and you're driving along a road near Lympne

There's no cars, no people, just the stillness of a sleeping village.

And then you hear it, a humming sound, a gentle drumming at first and then the tumbling into an unbearable crescendo of vibration that rattles the eardrums.

You stop your car. You look overhead and there it is - a huge triangular shaped craft. Large dome at one end, and bright, bright lights illuminating its might.

The humming continues and the spectacle darts off to take up another position 500 metres away as if casing the view below.

You're worried. The humming continues. And then seconds later the craft shoots off and disappears...

This is Sarah Hall's amazing account of what is believed to be a UFO sighting.

But what brought the national media beams beaming down onto the Herald this week is the location of Miss Hall's sighting.

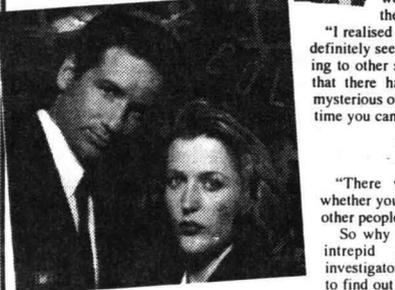
Miss Hall reported in March 1997 how the flying triangle hovered over MP Michael Howard's house. Floated indeed over the roof of the man who was Home Secretary at the time and in charge of investigations into all sightings mysterious.

Then last Sunday a national broadsheet mysteriously decided to run a story alleging the Tory party tried to suppress Miss Hall's story at the time as it would endanger the party's election '97 campaign, and cause no end of ridicule.

But I can assure readers this was not the case. As I informed one tabloid newspaper on Monday, Miss Hall's story was NOT tampered with by any Tory heavies, and encompassing this country's ethics which dictate a policy of a free press, the Herald would NEVER entertain such a spineless attitude.

Indeed where the broadsheet got its information remains, just like the Extra-Terrestrials lurking around us, a complete and utter mystery....

Can you feel the force....?



EXCLUSIVE REPORT by Sarah Hall

ONCE AGAIN Shepway's finest, your news-hot Herald, is in the media spotlight as the national press, radio stations and television programmes clamour to find out more about the mysterious UFO sightings we first reported in March last year.

The Sunday Times, The Daily Mail, The Daily Star, Radio One, Breakfast Television, Radio 5, GQ Magazine and The News Of The World are just a few of the media chasing the Shepway mystery currently on everybody's lips.

I can still clearly remember the cold March night when driving home from a friend's house in Romney Marsh I was amazed to see a huge light in front of me.

As I drove close I could hear a mechanical humming which even recalling it now, some ten months later, still manages to raise the hairs on the back of my neck.

Who knows what it was I saw but the large pointed triangular shape looming in the sky over a field near Donkey Street was not anything I had seen before, nor have I seen anything like it again.

'Alien'

Shrouded in darkness the outline and length of the craft could be made out due to the bright white lights positioned on each of its three corners, while a disc shaped object based at one end blinked with much smaller red lights.

Driving alone early in the morning you do not expect to be faced with such a sight but no sooner had I managed to draw breath and slow my car down to get a better look the craft shot off, stopping abruptly before shooting off again - almost like a stone skimming on water.

Yes it was odd, and I am sure to many totally unbelievable, but I certainly do not proclaim it as anything 'alien' as suggested in some newspaper reports!

But it WAS, a UFO, an unidentified flying object, which until someone can come forward with a cast iron explanation, will remain a total mystery.

At the time, Chris Rolfe and the UFO Monitoring East Kent (UFOMEK) group informed me I was not the only one to have spotted curious shapes in the sky.

Looking at the list of other sightings around Kent it is fair to say that my sighting was more than just a one off. Shepway, it would seem, is at the centre of very curious goings-on.

When he recalled the day I informed him of my sighting, Mr Rolfe, said: "I can remember when you first came to talk to me and you were still very nervous about the whole thing.

"I realised straight away that you had definitely seen something and after talking to other sightees we became aware that there had most certainly been a mysterious object in the area around the time you came forward.

'Strange'

"There was no question as to whether you were genuine as so many other people backed up the sighting."

So why hasn't Mr Rolfe and his intrepid group of investigators been able to find out more about the strange floating triangle and what it had been doing in the area?

"This is the strange part," Mr Rolfe said. "We have talked to a lot of people and have written letters to the Ministry of Defence asking if anything had come up on their screens, but came up with nothing.

"However we know people are aware of it and we are determined to get to the bottom of it."

And now a letter from PC Roy O'Connell at the Operations Planning Department at the Kent police headquarters in Maidstone has fuelled UFOMEK's curiosity further.

Mr Rolfe explained: "We know they know something happened as PC O'Connell said in a letter to a colleague: "...Under normal circumstances this department would at once be made aware of any such security incident within the

Kent area. The only incident we are aware of and to which I am sure you refer was satisfactorily dealt with and could have no bearing into your investigations of UFO activity."

"Why they are not being more open is beyond me."

But does Mr Rolfe have a theory about the sightings and does he think, as many of the nationals have claimed, that there is a Michael Howard connection as the former Home Secretary's house is situated so close to many of the sightings?

Military

"We think many of the objects which have been spotted in the area are connected with the military and I don't think Mr Howard living in the area really has any bearing.

"He lives near the army ranges and if the objects are to do with the military it is the ranges that could be the connection."

Speaking exclusively to the Herald this week, Mr Howard also denied any connection, slamming recent speculation as "quite ridiculous".

He said: "I am just astonished by all this really."

"While I probably was at my home that night as I often am I certainly didn't see anything. It is all ridiculous and getting out of hand."

However the sightings are being taken very seriously, so much so that Shepway MEP Mark Watts has launched an inquiry.

Speaking from his office in Brussels, he said: "There is an inquiry underway. Started some two years ago after a constituent called Derek Sheffield petitioned us with reports and photographs of mysterious sightings.

"Like any subject brought to us by a constituent we have followed it up."

But Mr Watt's acknowledges the scepticism many people hold about the subject.

He added: "Unfortunately it is hard to get the sightings treated seriously, but there have been too many sightings and we just want some straight answers to some basic questions.

"The one thing that does seem certain is that certain authorities are not being as forthcoming as they could be."

So no-one appears to really know what I saw, but there is no doubt that something mysterious was indeed floating over the skies of Shepway on that cold March night. The truth is most certainly out there but remember if there's anything to be found, the Herald will be first to find it!

OTHER SIGHTINGS IN 1997:

- Place: Ivychurch, Romney Marsh.
- Time: Early March 1997, approximately 6 pm.

Martin Barton was out walking his two dogs in the area when the two pets stopped abruptly looking directly up to the sky. Following their gaze Martin noticed a large round object, shaped like a prism shooting across the sky.

He also heard a 'whooshing' sound as it sped overhead. After it had gone Martin remembers having trouble getting the dogs to move as they stood transfixed, looking up at the sky.

- Place: Deal
- Time: Friday, March 7 1997, 5.30 pm.

Deal resident Barbara Kingcombe was walking along Kelveston Road, Deal, when she spotted a large arrow shaped object, surrounded by lights, shooting across the sky towards Margate. She had never seen anything like it before and has no idea as to what it could have been.

- Place: Aldington
- Time: Thursday, May 22 1997, some time between 2 and 3 am.

Unable to sleep, Teresa Bridley had got out of bed to complete some household chores. While washing up she saw an object pass just under the full moon.

Ms Bridley described the shape as being large, bright and white leaving a trail behind it in the sky. She does not know what it was and the incident left her too scared to even venture down her garden that night.

- Place: The Leas, Folkestone.
- Time: Thursday, August 28 1997, 9 pm.

Looking out of his bedroom window John Jenkins was shocked to see a luminous missile shaped object make several low circular movements before shooting off over the Channel.

- Place: Bishopsbourne, near Canterbury.
- Time: Monday, September 1 1997, late afternoon.

A woman driving home with her two, young children saw a long, orange coloured, cigar shaped object glide above her car. She described it as being as bright as car headlights and lost sight of it behind some trees.

- Place: Rochester.
- Time: Friday, October 10 1997, 9.15 pm.

A man reported seeing three objects dart across the night sky. He described one as having two bright, white/yellow lights, another as having five white/yellow lights and the third as having four of the lights.

He watched them fly in an unusual formation before seeing one disappear behind a cloud. The other two hovered in the sky before disappearing as well. He described the objects as being approximately 20 ft across and unlike anything he had ever seen before.



Chris Rolfe of UFO Monitoring East Ken (UFOMEK)

THANET TIMES, Kent, England - Nov. 18, 1997

Screaming in the heavens

UFO WATCHER TELLS HOW HE HEARD WEIRD SPACECRAFT

A TERRIFYING flying triangle has been seen over Thanet, according to the head of a local group of UFO watchers.

Chairman of Astrasearch David Quickenden says one of his members saw the bizarre craft over Manston.

"It had three bright, white lights - one in each corner," he said. "It travelled very fast, far faster than any jet, and made a high-pitched screaming sound. It went out to sea over Broadstairs."

David says there is an increasing number of UFO sightings over Thanet. "There is something going on; we're getting reports on a regular basis.

"Usually, sightings are up north, but there are more and more in Thanet."

David's claims follow other recent UFO sightings over the Isle.

A Broadstairs housewife saw UFOs fly twice over her home and she thinks they could have been taking pictures.

A Margate couple saw six UFOs over the

railway station and Arlington House.

David added: "The triangle was either E.T. orientated or some kind of secret technology. Sightings near military bases are common and we have the Manston connection in Thanet.

"One theory is that it came to us from Belgium, where there have been many sightings of triangular objects.

"Perhaps it was heading to a military base in the north or Scotland.

"Astrasearch is thriving with all this interest in the subject. Anyone interested in joining us can contact me on 221015."

• Have you spotted a UFO? Phone our Spaceline on 220768.

SOUTH WALES EVENING POST, Swansea, Wales - Jan. 29, 1998

Triangular UFO spotted

A SWANSEA woman claims to have seen a UFO as she drove along the M4 in daylight last Saturday afternoon.

The woman, who wishes to remain anonymous, says she saw a black triangular shaped object looming above her as she made her way westbound towards the Severn Bridge at around 3.15pm.

Neil Spring, Swansea branch officer at the Swansea Office for Global UFO Investigation Systems, said he had contacted RAF bases to see if they were testing aircraft but they revealed they had nothing recorded

on radar. He said: "I am very excited about this sighting. Reports of this type of unidentified flying triangular shaped craft have increased throughout the world.

The woman, who works in the legal profession, told Mr Spring the UFO was only about 300 yards from her car.

He is anxious to speak to anyone who may also have seen the UFO on Saturday.

Contact him on Swansea 01792 234766.

'Suddenly, the whole thing wasn't funny'

IT WAS early evening when the first UFOs gathered in the skies above Harston. Bemused villagers left the Old English Gentleman pub to watch a bizarre light show, a display of white and coloured points which danced madly, some pulsing, others in formations, all in complete silence.

But curiosity turned to consternation when a huge "ship" glided into view and appeared to hover over the rooftops.

Soon afterwards, pub landlord Michael Bradford told *News* reporter Paul Markillie: "Then something with the shape of an airship, dead silent, with a white light at each end and a yellow glow from what appeared to be a row of windows, came across from the back of the pub towards Cambridge.

"Suddenly, the whole thing wasn't funny any more."

Faced with this eerie apparition, some hid inside their homes, motorists fled roads which looked to be on the craft's flight-path, and a fearful call was made to the police.

Eventually the lights, which rocked a

small rural community, went without incident.

It was a week before news of that night leaked out and a handful of villagers agreed to risk ridicule and tell the world about their terrifying experience.

Mr Markillie, now with *The Economist*, recalled: "It seemed to be very genuine - so many level-headed people had seen it."

No-one could explain exactly what "it" was, but the suggestion that Harston had for some reason been targeted by extra-terrestrials was whispered.

Jeremy Hooper, a 54-year-old solicitors' managing clerk from Hawthorn Way, Hauxton, said: "I can still remember that particular evening - the way those objects were darting about in the sky."

David Flood, a laboratory technician who now lives in Great Barley, encountered the large "ship" as he drove towards Harston, and then watched it from outside the Old English Gentleman.

He described it as a huge fuselage with illuminated windows down each side, like a square-ended airship or a railway carriage.



Mystery . . . Michael Bradford with sketches of two UFOs he saw flying over Harston.

More sightings in Solway UFO mystery

by Bryan Armstrong

THE MYSTERY of the so-called 'Solway UFO triangle' deepened this week when two Kirtlebridge women described an encounter with a silvery coloured 'craft'.

Effie Gow and Betty Williamson broke their silence over the incident after reading reports of similar sightings in the Dumfriesshire Newspapers Group.

The women were on the final leg of a car journey from Dumfries to Annan when their attention was drawn to a bright "tangerine-coloured ball" in the sky which vanished within seconds.

More significantly, they described that over the next two minutes an arrow-shaped silver coloured object plunged out of the same area of sky towards the Solway Firth.

Mrs Gow, a former Ministry of Defence worker of Tilekilns Cottage, and Mrs Williamson, who farms with her son at Jockstown, admitted that the widely held scepticism of UFOs initially made them reluctant to go public with their experience.

Craft

"We were both stunned by what we saw and literally gasped", recalled Mrs Gow, who said the incident was around 4.05 pm on Sunday 23rd November.

"I do not know what the tangerine ball was

but it seemed to disappear into thin air.

"The silvery object came from the Langholm direction and slowly descended westwards until it disappeared behind the rooftops of Annan. I think it must have come down in the Solway, off Dornock or Eastriggs.

"I'm fairly certain it was not a conventional aircraft although it looked solid and could have been some kind of craft.

"I am not one of these people who goes chasing flying saucers but I do not think we have the technology to develop something like this.

Secret

"The only explanation I could come up with is that there is something top secret being tested by the MOD at RAF Spadeadam. If that's the case I think people should know if these things are landing in the Solway!"

Mrs Williamson, who was driving, revealed she was equally mystified by what they witnessed.

She commented: "I've never seen anything like this before. The orange object was dazzling and very distinctive but soon vanished.

"The silver shaped one was also clear and was visible for fully two minutes. It was hard to estimate its size but it travelled for a while at the height of a low flying jet".

She added that it was a fairly bright afternoon with good visibility.

The women said they did not contact the

emergency services at the time because there was no obvious indication of a crash and they felt sure the spectacle would have also been witnessed by other people.

Both are certain, however, that what they saw was unconnected with electrical storms in the west of Dumfries and Galloway over the same weekend.

Reports

A spokesman at the H.M. Coastguard control centre at Liverpool said that no specific incident had been logged in the Annan area of the Solway at that time.

He said: "We did receive reports of unusual lights in the sky over Dumfries and Galloway from the Cumbrian coast and through police on the Isle of Man but that was eventually put down to the lightning".

But he added: "There seems to be a lot going on in the sky over the Southern Scotland coast as we get more reports of unusual sightings there than anywhere else".

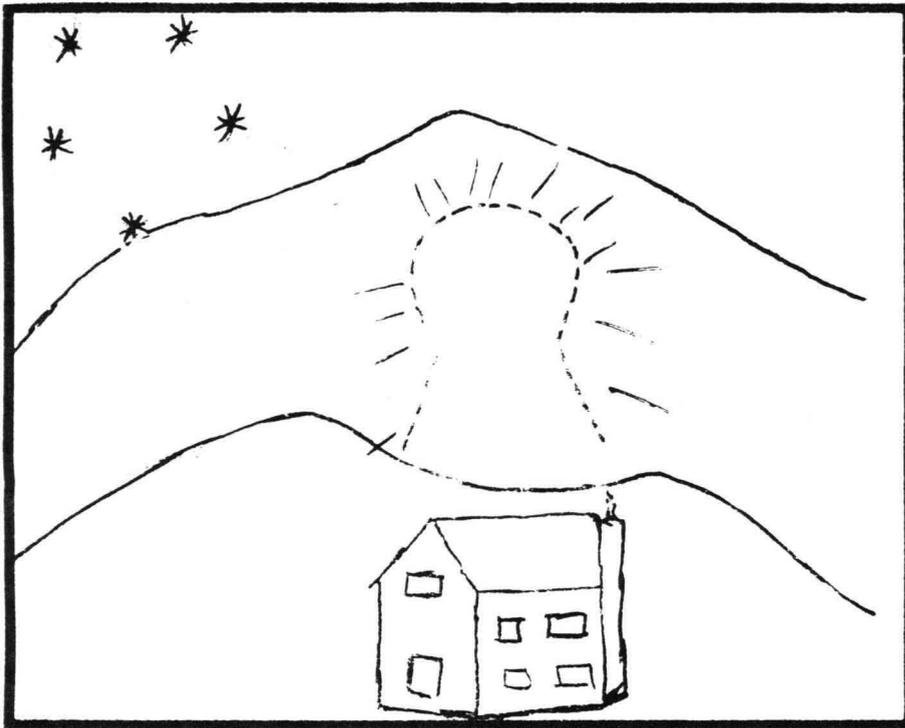
An RAF spokesman in London said last night that the role of the former rocket-testing base at Spadeadam was now primarily ground level weapons testing and as a target in air attack exercises.

He added: "Nothing is launched into the air from the station".

Is the truth really out there?

Aliens

A couple of years ago a natural rock formation in the Mourne mountains was pointed out to Avril Mc Kee: "A relative used to say to me 'Do you see poverty written in that mountain?' and I'd joke 'I don't want to see poverty. I want to see riches!'" What she saw recently defies explanation. Kilkeel has become a bit of a UFO 'hot-spot' of late and Avril was the first of eight people in the area to report seeing strange goings on in the sky.



ABOVE: Avril's drawing of what she saw, and right, a picture of the area

The 35-year-old housewife was preparing packed lunches for her two children just before 7am when she saw what she initially thought was "a fantastic spotlight" in the mountains. The "pure bright white light" appeared 500ft up in a clear sky. It was "shaped like a key-hole and was the size of a house."

"It stayed the same shape but the sides squeezed in until there was nothing left. Then 5 wee sparkling lights appeared. They fluttered about dipping up and down like a kite and then eventually headed off towards the town. They looked like Christmas tree lights and each one left a trail of light."

"I went out in the frost in a short nightie and I never felt the cold. I wish I'd had a camcorder but I just couldn't take my eyes off it." She called her 12-year-old daughter who also witnessed the silent phenomena which lasted for half-an-hour. When the lights took off towards town Avril rushed inside and rang a friend: "There were clouds coming so I said to her don't ask questions just run out and look at the sky." Unfortunately her friend saw nothing. She then rang her husband but "he just thought I was totally away with it".

News of her experience soon spread. Avril has needed a good sense of humour to deal with local reaction: "People drive by making alien faces and I've had phone calls from ones letting on to be the FBI investigating it or saying their Zanussi washing machines were flying round the garden." She has also had stickers and posters of aliens stuck on her windows.

By LARA BRADLEY

Northern Ireland UFO Project Investigator Gerry Gorman said: "People here are very afraid of ridicule. Usually I get about four sightings reported to me per year, if I'm lucky - but my colleagues on the mainland get hundreds. There also seems to be a lot more people in the South willing to admit seeing Unidentified Flying Objects."

Gerry said: "I have heard of these sightings in the Mournes. It sounds like some kind of natural phenomena. Could there be crystal in the mountain which emanates light when it moves?"

Only 400 of the 3,026 sightings reported in the UK last year remain unidentified. Most sightings turn out to be caused either by advanced technology, psychic, psychological or natural phenomena.

The day before Avril's sighting a 50-year-old lorry driver and his work-mate saw a round ball of light in the same place at around the same time. He said: "I can only describe it as being like a glowing torch inside a pipe being pulled away until it disappeared after about five minutes. I've never seen anything like it before." Another woman who "saw a bright light" reported "horses going frantic" that same morning.

Avril said: "I don't mind people joking about it but I won't be told I didn't see anything when I know I did. I have never said it was a UFO. I didn't see wee green men but I did see very strange lights."

A one time sceptic, she now keeps her camera primed and checks the sky every morning although she admits: "It's unlikely I'll see anything again. But I'd like to."

The truth is out there.

Fife 'aliens' witness on TV

A WOMAN who claimed to have had a close encounter with dozens of aliens as she drove down a North East Fife road during September 1996 will tell her amazing story on a BBC2 programme tomorrow.

Mary Morrison, Newton of Falkland, will appear on the Right to Differ show, leaving viewers to make up their own minds on whether or not they believe in the existence of alien life.

According to Mary's story, she was driving down a quiet country road towards Freuchie with her son and a friend when she allegedly saw a group of little grey aliens roaming about a field in the shadow of the Lomond Hills.

She claims the alien beings, supervised by a larger creature with almond-shaped eyes, appeared after a brilliant white light left behind a black object with a shining dome. They appeared to be conducting scientific studies in the field.

Mesmerised by what they saw, the witnesses fled when the friend shouted, "They're coming!"—the field being lit up by a blue flash as they sped off in the car. They did not see what became of the aliens.

This story is only one of a number of alleged UFO sightings in North East Fife reported by The Courier, but is probably the most graphically described.

Other sightings have included a nocturnal "ball of fire" seen at RAF Leuchars last year; hovering lights over the Lomond Hills and radar station at Kinross; and silvery objects over St Andrews and elsewhere.

No official explanation for these sightings has ever been given. RAF Leuchars has said no aircraft were in the areas concerned whenever The Courier inquired about sightings.

Sceptics suggest that what people have seen are weather balloons or atmospheric phenomena, or a figment of the imagination fuelled by a diet of science fiction and so-called "pre-millennium superstition."

Mystery sighting

BAFFLED residents will be watching the skies above Sheffield on Saturday night to see if a mystery light appears for the second time.

Air traffic controllers said they could not explain the sightings - and revealed a pilot also reported a mystery sighting from his plane.

The UFO was spotted hovering over Woodseats Road in at 9.30pm last Saturday and appeared to drop a ball of light towards the ground.

COURIER & ADVERTISER, Dundee, Scotland - Jan. 7, 1998

STAR, Sheffield, England - Dec. 18, 1997



CLIMBER TELLS OF FOUR ENCOUNTERS WITH SHY GIANT OF THE HIMALAYAS

DAILY MAIL, London, England - Aug. 16, 1997 CR: J. O'Brien/COUD-

Is this the proof that Yetis really do exist?



By JULIAN CHAMPKIN

THE Yeti was asleep. Silently, the climbers drew near. They crept to within 20 yards of the creature so they could film and photograph it.

For three long minutes they stood gazing at it. "Then he woke and saw us. He looked at us like a small child who has just met someone for the first time. We stood eye to eye - I could have touched him. Then he stood up and slowly walked away."

Imagine the first certain, recorded meeting between man and a new species, the Yeti, the so-called Abominable Snowman. Would it have been like that?

A gentle, shy peaceable meeting of mutual incomprehension? Italian climber Reinhold Messner claims it was exactly like that. He says he has encountered the Yeti; and not just once, but four times, once close enough to touch it.

More importantly, he claims to have photographs of the creature, including a mother Yeti tending her child, and a Yeti skeleton.

It is shy, says Messner, it is 6ft 6in tall, it comes out at night to feed on yaks and sheep, and it communicates with its fellow creatures by whistling.

The Yeti, the supposed gentle giant of the Himalayas, lies at that tantalising edge where science meets wishful thinking. Most scientists dismiss it as a mythical creature, born of imagination, thin mountain air, and Tibetan myth.

But it would be wonderful if it were true. It is one of the creatures we most wish would exist. If Messner can produce his videos and photographs, it would be the first solid evidence of a creature that has been reported every decade or so for 150 years but which is still generally ascribed to legend.

It is an extraordinary claim. Yet Messner is an extraordinary man - in mountaineering circles, practically a legend. He is the foremost Himalayan climber of this or any other generation.

He was the first man to climb Everest without oxygen - a feat previously thought impossible - and the first to do it alone. He is the only man to have climbed all 14 of the world's highest mountains.

NOW 52, he has been to places few others have reached, in some of the most isolated valleys of the Himalayas.

He had his first glimpse of a Yeti, he says, in 1986 in Eastern Tibet, after tracking its 16in wide footprints. Ten years later, in June last year, he bought a skeleton from nomads on a 6,000ft plain in Ladakh, between India and Pakistan, and began searching the area in earnest.

"I searched for a week, 12 hours a day, in an area with no trees," he says. "I didn't expect to find one so soon. First we saw a mother with her child. I could only take a photograph from the back. The child had bright red fur, the older animal's fur was black. She was over two metres tall, with dark hair, just like the legend. When they saw us they disappeared."

And just two days after that mother-and-child sighting, Messner and his companions came across and filmed the sleeping innocent Yeti. Can this be possible? Certainly Tibetans, and

Size
Height 6ft 6in, weight around 450lbs - calculated from sightings and depth of possible footprints

Footprints
Those found have been around 14in wide, 20in long

Home
1,400-mile area of Himalayas centred on Everest. Most sightings are in regions around 8,000-12,000ft, often-forested

Speed
Local rumour suggests 40mph in bursts - nearly twice as fast as a sprinter

Lifestyle
Lives to about 30; feeds on yaks and sheep. Communicates with whistling sound. Nocturnal

Origins
Possible survivor of Neanderthal man who may have retreated to Central Asia 38,000 years ago

Character
Not aggressive as first thought, more likely a gentle, shy creature



Messner: 'Evidence'

Sherpas of the region around Mount Everest firmly believe in the existence of the Yeti, but despite reports of tracks, and occasional sightings, hard evidence for its existence is tantalisingly hard to come by.

"The Yeti has been rumoured in the West since 1832, when the first Englishman to live in Nepal heard of a creature which moved erect and was covered in long, dark hair."

It has other local names: Metohkangmi, mirka, sogpa, mi-go. The first means 'filthy snowman' but a mis-translation by a journalist covering the 1921 expedition to Everest gave it the name that has

stuck to the unfortunate creature ever since - though it is generally supposed to be gentle and shy rather than abominable.

In that year 32 witnesses - six British climbers and 26 Sherpas - saw tracks ascribed to the Yeti, although bears, goats or snow leopards were other explanations.

And while leading the expedition that conquered Everest in 1953, Sir John Hunt was told, by the chief lama of the monastery where he was camping, of a Yeti that had played in the snow in that very meadow the year before, and had been scared away by the noise from conch-shell horns.

Tracks have been seen, and photographed, in the valleys closest to Everest, most famously by Eric Shipton, leader of the British Reconnaissance expedition to Everest in 1951. Many of Shipton's friends thought, however, that his reputation as a practical joker threw some doubt on those shots.

In 1960, Sir Edmund Hillary borrowed a 'Yeti scalp' from Sherpa villagers - on analysis it turned out to be made from a Himalayan goat.

Yet Dr Karl Schuker, a British zoologist and expert on the Yeti, said there could be some truth in Messner's claims.

"There have been Yeti sightings over a 1,400-mile range of the

Himalayas from Pakistan through India to Tibet and even Burma," he says.

"They divide into three types: The 'original' Yeti is red, there is a taller giant black species, and there have been a few sightings of a smaller, red sub-species."

"Messner's sightings have thrown new light on those classifications. The red species may be simply a younger Yeti, which acquires black hair as it grows."

A MAJOR problem in believing the existence of the Yeti is that no creature can exist on its own: to avoid extinction there must be a breeding colony of at least 50, if not hundreds.

Messner believes the Yeti is far from being endangered: "I estimate that there are a thousand Yetis in the Himalayas."

There are, of course, still major problems to accepting the creature exists. It would need a food source; Messner claims it is carnivorous, yet there are few reports of sheep or yaks going missing.

Chris Bonington, the British mountaineer who knows Messner and the region well, does not find that a problem. "The valleys north-east of Everest are incredibly

remote, almost impossible to travel in, and thickly forested," he says. "The forests would provide food, and shelter as well, and would account for the relatively few sightings of the creature."

"On that interpretation, the Yeti would venture above the snowline only to travel from valley to valley."

Messner's mountaineering exploits have gained him a castle in the Italian Alps, where he hopes to establish a Yeti Museum to display his finds.

But, as ever, there is a snag: he is not showing his evidence yet. We will have to wait two years or more, until his book is published, before we can see the evidence that Messner claims to possess.

It might be very bad luck for the Yeti if its existence is confirmed at last. There will undoubtedly be someone unable to resist the temptation to capture one.

If it exists, it will certainly be adapted, like the yak, to the thin air and great altitude of the mountains.

Yaks die if brought down to sea-level: their lungs cannot cope with the cloying air.

The Yeti too might just pull a last trick on us to preserve its lonely secrets.



Illustration: Philip Argenti

VALLEY COURIER, Alamosa, CO March 10, 1998 CR: D. Perkins

Horse mutilated near Pike Stockade

By MARK H. HUNTER
Rio Grande County Editor

MONTE VISTA — A white gelding was found mysteriously mutilated on a ranch near the Pike Stockade last Thursday morning.

It is the third horse that has been found strangely mutilated in the San Luis Valley in recent months.

Crestone paranormal researcher Christopher O'Brien broke the story on his monthly KRZA radio show, The Mysterious Valley, on Friday. He said he visited the ranch south of Alamosa on Thursday with the horse's

owner, Tim Miller.

The gelding was the only white horse in a herd of 16, he said. When he and Miller approached the scene, the other horses had gathered at the other end of the pasture and they all galloped to them, as if they were trying tell them something.

There was a "softball sized hole" in the horse's chest, O'Brien said, and part of its lower jaw was shaved of winter hair and the hide removed to expose the jaw. There were no tracks around it, he said, including the animal's own tracks.

There were "clean cuts" around the horse's

face and its genitalia, what remained, was removed, he said. "The horse had really long hair from its winter coat but its jaw had been shaved," he said.

Another thing that was even weirder than other mutilated animal cases, he said, was that there were more than 30 bald eagles feasting on the carcass when they arrived. "I've never seen anything like it," O'Brien said.

The horse had foam around its mouth like it had been running hard before it was killed, he said. "It looks to me like they spotlighted it, ran it down, darted it and lifted it." There were no tracks near the body.

O'Brien said he divides mutilated animal cases into 'human caused' incidents or 'high strange' incidents which have no elements of human activity. He believes this case was human induced because the eagles were not afraid to scavenge on it.

On Dec. 17, a mutilated gelding was found lying in a dry canal near Rio Grande County Rd. 12 S, and another horse was found strangely mutilated near Hooper on Nov. 30, 1997. On all three nights the visibility was low and temperatures were around zero, O'Brien said.

He thinks there may be other cases of mutilated animals that have gone unreported in recent months and he wants to document them. Anyone with information on similar cases can call him at 719-256-4128.

VANCE ORCHARD: Touchet Valley Ramblings

Bigfoot updating time

To those readers who follow the Bigfoot matter around here ... and those who do not ... let it be known:

The critter is alive and well in the Blue Mountains!

Like so many others who have over the years made the Wes Sumerlin home on Dell Avenue their first port of call when they see something unusual up there, we too call on this Blue Mountain patriarch.

That's what a lot of people call him as they refer to the guy who has had close contacts with the curio of the crags, our Bigfoot of the Blues. Sumerlin and his family have lived for many years with this creature's presence and have treated it pretty much like everyone else treats chipmunks.

"They are part of the woods and we've always treated them just like that," Wes has told me (and others) on many occasions.

So, when we wended our way out Dell Avenue the other day, hoping to get an updating of sorts on what has been going on in the mountains concerning our hairy friends, we were not disappointed with the reports Wes had for us.

The first incident Wes related spawned the second, you might say.

"It started when Bill (Laughery), PeeWee (Natalie Sumerlin) and I took a drive up into the foothills (Feb. 11) to see if there was any action," Wes began. His use of the word "action" means simply: Bigfoot signs, tracks or itself.

The party picked up some Bigfoot tracks all right ... up near Five Points, first spotted by Laughery, sharp-eyed ex-game warden and Dayton native. They checked out the tracks around the old raspberry berry patches of the abandoned Coyote School, then on down the road, then off the road, down to Mill Creek, Sumerlin told me. There, the trackers found indications the creature had been into the dried blackberries of a huge patch on the creek side.

This was the same routing of Bigfoot tracks found in 1991, Sumerlin reminded. He also added the observation that not only were they following a Bigfoot's tracks all this distance, they were following the same Bigfoot that had made the tracks in January, 1991!

Sumerlin figures the tracks they were following had been made a week or so earlier. Rains had done damage to the tracks, but they were plainly huge foot prints and toe marks were still distinguishable.

Then, the second incident.

"A day or two later," Wes said, "I was telling Lane Savage (a fellow Bigfoot seeker) what we had seen and he told me a very interesting story that had happened ... about the time of our Bigfoot's track making ... at the home of his daughter, Sandy, who lives on Mill Creek near the berry patch."

"Lane told me 'That's about the same time as when my daughter called me and said her dog was having a fit and trying to jam his way into the front door to get into the house. I told her to let the dog in... she did and it made a beeline for the nearest bed and got under it and stayed right there the rest of the night.'

"Now this isn't your ordinary dog," Wes went on. "This is an out-

side dog, bred for the outdoors and afraid of nothing you'll find outdoors. He has taken on cougars and bears up there more than once. It's a big sheep dog with a cross of German shepherd, a good-sized dog."

Of course, we don't know what caused the fright for this dog, or if it had anything to do with its having encountered the Bigfoot that made the tracks found by Wes, Bill and PeeWee. But, those who have followed the Bigfoot matter will recount many stories of how the bravest of dogs will quaver and run when one is encountered.

Some have been heard to opine that the Bigfoot thing around here has died out. That isn't the story I got when I visited Wes Sumerlin the other day. He had some "goodies" for me, all reports of Bigfoot activity in the past year or so and most of it some 10-15 miles above Dixie, or around 20-25 miles from Walla Walla. He reeled off several stories of sightings, including two incidents of Bigfoots and big game.

The most recent came last fall during the elk-hunting season and was a sighting which has apparently made a believer out of a guy who formerly was a skeptic of it all, Wes said. But, since the guy wouldn't give permission for his name to be used in this printed report, we'll go with something else and call him "Jackson."

Jackson was one of a party of three men who were staked out at sunrise on a point just below the 3,000-foot elevation about 15 miles above Dixie, Wes said. Jackson was watching some cow elk come out of some trees and into a clearing across the draw and went to feeding in the open area. None were qualifiers for the license Jackson carried, though, so he used his binoculars to scan the area.

"Suddenly a spike bull (a qualifier!) strolled out into the clearing and Jackson put it down with a single shot, watching the bull as it tumbled down the hillside into brush, where it hung up. Something caused Jackson to raise his eyes a bit and as he did he saw 'a big gorilla ... absolutely the biggest darned gorilla I've seen' ... come out of the timber toward the downed elk.

"Jackson said when he saw the 'gorilla' standing there, he put his binoculars to his eyes to get a better look. About that time, he told me, as if the 'gorilla' had spotted Jackson or else seen the light reflected off the binoculars, but it just sort of took a deep breath, spun around and slowly sauntered off back into the timber ... it didn't run, just ambled off sort of fading away and out of sight ... just like that one Bill and I saw in '95."

"Jackson also said the animal he'd seen that day was bigger than a gorilla and stood upright, not hunched over," Wes recalled.

The guy who was a skeptic about Bigfoots all these years might still harbor doubts, but he also has no response when you ask him what in the world a gorilla is doing in this part of the world and up where there's snow.

"And, he was sure wild-eyed as heck when he came out to tell us about what he'd seen," Wes remembered vividly. "Where he put the Bigfoot stuff down to the 'work of spirits' before the incident, he sure

as heck is taking it seriously now."

Of the other Bigfoot incidents in recent months, suffice to note them briefly:

1. Two men hunting bear a year ago, downed one, then went back to their truck to get skinning gear. When they returned to where they'd left their kill, the bear was gone. One man, going to the top of a knoll, shouted that he saw a Bigfoot packing off their bear!

2. Last year a neighbor of Jackson's who has a hunting cabin a few miles above him, opened the back door to throw out a pan of dishwater and threw it into the face of a Bigfoot standing there! He isn't selling his cabin but also will not return "until he gets over being scared."

3. Forced to park their truck and ford a creek to get into their cabin, another cabin owner in that area took a load of groceries to the cabin and came back to the truck to find it ransacked. Fourteen-inch tracks were found around the truck.

Just by way of reporting on the man who found Bigfoot tracks in June, 1982 and told about them, only to find his life get turned around, Paul Freeman moved to Portland last fall. His wife, Nancy was transferred there from the Walla Walla Bi-mart store. Nancy is manager of a new Bi-mart which recently opened there. Paul had no sooner hit Portland, than Ray Crowe, director of the Western Bigfoot Society there, billed him as the speaker for the next meeting of the society.

But, as the reader can judge from the stories above, the Bigfoot matter has not died out with the departure of Paul Freeman.

Or, as Wes Sumerlin points out: "We've seen and heard about Bigfoot here in the Blue Mountains for a lot of years before Paul ever came here."

That's something a lot of so-called Bigfoot experts have completely ignored, overlooked or chosen not to acknowledge.

But, that's another story.

And, one we'll be telling one of these days.

EXPRESS & STAR,
Birmingham, England

Jan. 8, 1998

CR: T. Good

Bad line for ET

ET could be trying to call Earth but having problems with a bad line, according to astronomers.

Deep space gas between the stars may be disrupting the signal so that we are failing to recognise it.

Hundreds of intriguing radio signals have been picked up by scientists engaged in SETI, the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence.

But the signals have been only fleeting, and crucially not repeated - the best sign that they are from an intelligent source.

For this reason they have been dismissed as candidates for alien messages - until now.

Titan facts

Europe's infrared space observatory has discovered water on Titan, Saturn's largest moon and the only satellite with a thick atmosphere.

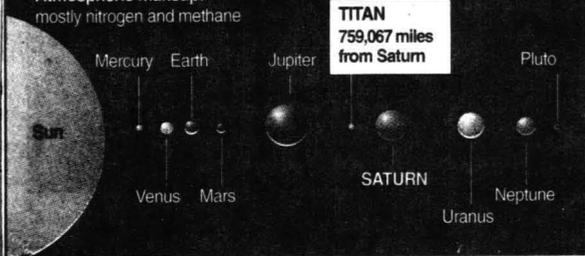
Diameter: 3,200 miles (5,150 km)

Atmospheric pressure:

1.5 times that of Earth

Atmospheric makeup:

mostly nitrogen and methane



Source: NASA

The Associated Press

Infrared sees life-enabling water in stars

By EDITH M. LEDERER

The Associated Press

LONDON — Orbiting high above Earth, Europe's infrared space observatory has discovered water around stars and planets and in many other surprising places, raising expectations of life elsewhere in the universe, the European Space Agency said Tuesday.

The discovery of water vapor in the atmosphere of Saturn's largest moon, Titan, has generated the most excitement, because that moon may duplicate the conditions that led to the creation of life on Earth, said Roger Bonnet, the agency's director of science.

"Now that water has been discovered ... this lends more support to the possibility that

we have all the conditions which prevailed on Earth 4½ billion years ago to give birth to life," he said. "These conditions may also exist on Titan, and the only thing you need is a little heat to heat up Titan, and maybe (the) birth of life may be seen."

For 2½ years, the European Space Agency's Infrared Space Observatory, known as ISO, has been exploring the universe at wavelengths that can't be seen with the human eye, giving astronomers a new view of the solar system.

They have been able to see water throughout the universe, to see where stars are forming, to shed light on distant galaxies — and to solve riddles that have puzzled astronomers for centuries, said Reinhard Genzel, chairman of the agency's Astronomy Working Group.

"With ISO, for the first time, you could see water," Genzel said at a news conference Tuesday. "In fact, it has been a spectacular vista to see water everywhere."

The observatory found water around dying stars, newborn stars, in interstellar space, in other galaxies, and in the atmospheres around Mars and all the outer planets, in particular the Titan moon, Genzel said.

"Now you may say, 'So what?' Well, that's actually quite surprising because it's so cold out there. So water should normally freeze out. So the fact that there is water in these atmospheres is really rather remarkable," he said.

Genzel said the explanation probably has to do with the fact that something in space is bringing water to the icy outer planets all the time — "and this something could be comets."

"And that is important, because maybe that's the way water came on Earth in the early part of the solar system — when there were many more comets around, and the Earth was bombarded by these icy objects bringing in water," he said.

The U.S. space agency's planetary explorer Cassini, which was launched in October, promises the best look yet at Saturn and its enticing rings and icy moons.

When the plutonium-powered spacecraft arrives at Saturn in 2004 after a 2.2 billion-mile journey, it will release the Huygens probe, built by the European Space Agency, which will land on Titan.

Last month, U.S. scientists reported that closer-than-ever pictures of Jupiter's moon Europa showed a 16-mile-wide crater that may have been filled with water, and large frozen plates surrounded by what appeared to be slushy material.

The photos, taken in December by the spacecraft Galileo, bolstered the theory that an ocean possibly containing life exists beneath Europa's icy crust, scientists said.

DAILY NEWS, Anchorage, AK - April 8, 1998 CR: J. & L. Nicholson

Cahokia Mounds finding stuns archaeologists

A large stone under the site's biggest mound may be a man-made structure

BY WILLIAM ALLEN
Post-Dispatch Science Writer
©1998, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Archaeologists have made an astonishing discovery at the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site: what appears to be a large stone structure buried beneath the site's biggest earthen mound.

The stone was discovered accidentally Jan. 24 during drilling to construct a water-drainage system within Monks Mound, the largest Indian mound north of Mexico and the largest prehistoric earthen construction in the New World.

The finding, if confirmed, would overturn a central belief about the prehistoric Mississippian people a millennium ago: that they built without stone.

"This is astounding," said

William Woods, an archaeologist with Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville who is leading the investigation of the mystery structure. "It's so unexpected that it would never have entered your mind before."

The stone is at least 32 feet long in one of its dimensions. It is buried about 40 feet below the surface of a terrace on the western side of Monks Mound and well above the mound's bottom. Researchers believe it may be made of cobbles or slabs of limestone or sandstone.

Even if the apparent structure turns out to be no larger than this, it would be a dramatic find. Stone does not occur naturally at Cahokia, so any stone would have had to be brought by humans. Stone is uncommon at excavations there. Even when unearthed, it is usually in the

be, or whether it might be only one of several large stone structures buried beneath the giant mound.

A small number of vertical bore holes drilled in 1965 into Monks Mound revealed no rocks. Even so, the mound is conceivably large enough to contain several such structures.

Could the mystery structure be a sign that a Mid-American Stonehenge once existed? Could it be a sculpture of some kind, possibly in the image of a bird of prey common in Mississippian mythology? Could it be a burial vault of an Indian king? Or a beacon for some kind of harmonic convergence?

"Until we know more about its dimensions and composition, we really can't say too much about it," said William Iseminger, an archaeologist and spokesman at Cahokia Mounds, near Collinsville.

"The most logical possibilities are that it's some kind of ritual platform or early erosion control," Iseminger said. The platform may have been covered by erosion or ancient construction decades after it was built.

Monks Mound is about 100 feet high, more than three football fields long and a little less than three football fields wide. It was built in several stages, mostly between 900 and 1200 A.D. Its engineers used elaborate construction techniques and special mixes of soils.

Archaeologists believe that a massive building occupied by the principal ruler once stood on the top terrace. The mound was named for French Trappist monks who lived nearby in the 1800s.

Cahokia Mounds is the largest archaeological site in the United States and has the biggest mounds and the greatest number of mounds any-

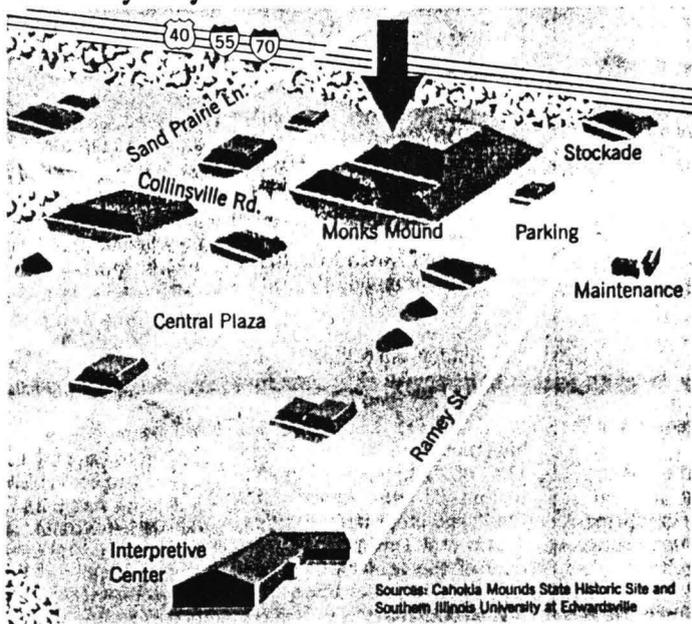
where. The site is named for a sub-tribe of Illini Indians who lived there when the French arrived in the 1600s. At its peak around 1100 A.D., the area was covered with a community of 20,000 people.

The Monks Mound drainage system is needed to remove water that has caused slumping of huge slabs of soil off the side. The mound has been closed to the public since last summer for construction. It is scheduled to reopen in late spring.

The mystery was discovered about 10 o'clock on a cold, windy Saturday morning amid snow flurries as workers drilled into the western side of the mound.

Andy Martignoni Jr. and Steve Fulton, both SIUE archaeologists, were on duty at the site when the drill operator reported hitting a rock about 140 feet into the side of the hill.

Stone mystery structure at Cahokia Mounds



Mark Williams/Post-Dispatch

form of small tools, Woods said in an interview at the site Friday.

"There's no question this is a unique discovery," said Melvin Fowler, an archaeologist at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. "It's totally unexpected."

Fowler, reached by telephone Friday in his office, is widely considered the godfather of Cahokia archaeology.

Researchers were reluctant to speculate on what the stone could

He drilled on, but the drill bit broke after cutting through about 32 feet of rock.

Martignoni and Fulton talked the situation over for a few minutes.

"We talked about a possible drain, a tomb, all kinds of wild stuff," Martignoni said. Comparing the "feel" of the drill with countless other operations, the drill operator told them the structure seemed to be made of large stones apparently placed together. That gave the archaeologists more reason to think it might be something other than just a large rock.

Martignoni called Woods, who had just gone to bed after staying up all night writing a report.

"You won't believe this," Martignoni told him. "We hit some stone at Monks Mound."

Standing on the terrace directly above the structure Friday, Woods said, "At first it didn't register."

But as Martignoni described the details, the possibilities sunk in. Woods could not get back to sleep.

Scientists do not plan to dig up the find, partly for ethical reasons. But mainly, to dig that deep would be dangerous and could lead to structural problems in the mound.

Woods and his colleagues plan to investigate the finding this summer without harming the mound. Among the techniques they hope to use:

- Seismic waves. This technique works like sonar, sending small shock waves through the soil. The speed at which the waves return helps trace an outline of the buried structure.

- Electromagnetic impulses. This technique also traces shape using a different form of energy.

- Drilling. Small holes will be drilled down to the rock to take rock and soil samples.

The researchers plan to report details of the discovery later this month at the meeting in Boston of the Association of American Geographers and the meeting in Seattle of the Society for American Archaeology.

Even though it may overturn a fundamental belief about Mississippian culture, the discovery reinforces a common theme about the Cahokia Mounds site, said Iseminger.

"When someone works at Cahokia, something new always comes out," he said. "And it never comes out the way you thought it would."

POST-DISPATCH, St. Louis, MO - March 14, 1998 CR: R. Nelke

A Mutable Mystery at Cahokia

The past never disappears. It intrudes into the present, sometimes gently, sometimes forcefully. Sometimes it changes before our eyes, offering up a new mystery to solve or a new insight at which to marvel.

That has happened at Cahokia Mounds. A stone structure at least 32 feet long has been detected under Monk's Mound, the site's biggest earthen mound. It is an

it really an anomaly, or are more stone structures* at other sites yet to be discovered?

Archeologists hope that the structure will provide clues about the mysterious fate of the culture that produced Cahokia, the largest prehistoric site north of Mexico, and then seemed to wither away by 1400 A.D.

At its peak in 1100 A.D., Cahokia was part of a vast trading network, a continental economy, that brought shell from the Gulf of Mexico, copper from Lake Superior and mica from the Appalachians, according to archeologist William Iseminger at Cahokia. Could this stone structure be a link to the great Mexican stone pyramids and platforms? Nobody can say for sure.

This burst of uncertainty surrounding the meaning of the stones beneath Monk's Mound is just the latest discovery shaking what was settled fact. Archeological finds are even challenging the conventional wisdom about when and how the Americas were settled.

It is a humbling and thrilling reminder that in all fields of human inquiry, what we take for certain knowledge at one point in history is highly mutable, subject to continuous revision, revolution or even rejection.



POST-DISPATCH file photo

astounding discovery, particularly at a site that is so well-known and so well-studied.

No other stone structure has ever been found at Cahokia, or at similar sites from the Mississippian culture. Could it have been a platform for rituals? A sculpture? Is

Cattle mutilations puzzling ranchers

Lack of tracks, blood sometimes blamed on cults or space aliens

By REBECCA ROLWING
Associated Press

ARROYO HONDO, N.M. — Rancher Jessie Gonzales was tending his cattle under a pre-dawn sky when he stumbled on a frightening sight.

There in the pasture, one of his prime bulls lay mutilated. A large, neat hole had been cut in the flank and the animal's anus had been cored out. The scene was odd, though, for no blood poured from the massive wounds and there were no tracks from predators.

Another rancher, Tony Trujillo, found an eerily similar scene last spring. "The funny thing is, that you don't see the dogs or the birds. They don't get near it," Trujillo said.

For years, seemingly healthy cattle have turned up dead in northern New Mexico, bearing mysterious holes, severed ears and missing tongues and sex organs. There is never a sign of struggle.

Some blame the mutilations on space aliens, others credit the government, Satan worshippers or drunken teen-agers. Skeptical investigators argue the animals simply died naturally and were attacked by hungry predators.

But townspeople in this small

northern New Mexico ranching community where pickup trucks outnumber cars refuse to accept the mutilations as a natural phenomenon. Unlike another mythical, alienlike creature dubbed *chupacabra* — or "goatsucker" in Spanish — the cattle deaths are serious business.

"People who raise animals don't cry wolf," Gonzales said. "When you have mysterious deaths like these, you have questions."

A prosecutor for Taos, Colfax and Union counties says he wants answers, too. The investigation stems from concerns, frustration and lost money among constituents, District Attorney John Paternoster said.

His office has teamed with the Las Vegas, Nev.-based National Institute for Discovery Science in a tissue-testing investigation. The private lab is funded by Robert Bigelow, a wealthy real estate mogul who once donated \$3.7 million to the University of Nevada to create a department for students to study parapsychology.

NIDS describes itself as a nascent research organization that studies a variety of unconventional scientific theories.

Six strange animal attacks were reported last year, though there may have been many more that went unreported, Paternoster said.

"The farmers and ranchers have

been reluctant to report cattle mutilations, they don't want to be painted ... as being crackpots and UFOlogists," Paternoster said.

Paul Velasquez, a rancher in Blanco, says two of his bulls were mutilated more than a year ago, costing him \$2,000. The animals' intestines were cut, the right ears sliced off, the tongues removed and precise holes were punched on the animals' rectums.

Velasquez suspects UFOs are responsible. He scoffs at a suggestion that birds picked at the cattle after they died of natural causes.

"What kind of birds do we have that would cut a hole with a sharp object? We don't have those kind of birds," he said.

Once a mutilated cow is discovered, an investigator from the district attorney's office collects evidence from the scene, Paternoster said.

The lab also sends a veterinarian to collect tissue samples from the animal and a series of laboratory tests are conducted, including toxicology and bacterial exams to determine the cause of death, research scientist Colm Kelleher said.

The lab has tested 10 animals since it began studying the animals just over a year ago and wants to investigate at least a dozen mutilations before it speculates on a cause of the

attacks, Kelleher said.

It already has determined that some of the animals died of natural causes, he said.

Both Paternoster and Kelleher say they are open-minded about the cause. "I really want to have to a scientific, intellectual line of inquiry and not taint our discovery by any preconceived notions," Paternoster said.

In the late 1970s, New Mexico spent \$50,000 investigating cattle mutilation reports. A chief investigator, retired FBI agent Kenneth Rommel, said then that the mutilations were the result of predators and bloating.

Paternoster scoffs at those findings. "I was not satisfied that there was sufficiently comprehensive proof that animals were being attacked," he said.

A New Mexico Livestock Board investigation into the mutilations conducted several years ago concluded that there was "possible involvement of clandestine Satanic groups."

With a combination of scientific research and cooperation from the district attorney's office, Kelleher said he is optimistic that an answer will be found.

And how long will the search continue?

"Until we find an answer," he said.

ADVOCATE, Baton Rouge, LA - April 9, 1998 CR: W. Theriot

Deputy says cow's strange mutilation may be cult-related

By The Associated Press

BOYCE — Someone stabbed a 1,100-pound cow to death and removed its genitals and udder, but there were only a few drops of blood where a pool might have been expected.

Whoever killed the cow Sunday may have drained its blood from the knife wound in its neck, or may have mutilated it after it died, investigators said Tuesday.

"I would tend to believe that it could be some kind of religious cult. I can't say that for sure. But I would think it has something to do with it," Rapides Parish sheriff's detective Buddy Willis said Tuesday.

Gary Dunn, an investigator for the Louisiana Livestock Brand Commission, said he thinks the cow was tranquilized and killed, then the blood was drained and taken away.

"That's strictly a presumption," he said.

The cow was 3 to 4 years old, and reportedly healthy.

Whoever killed the cow Sunday may have drained its blood from the knife wound in its neck, or may have mutilated it after it died, investigators said Tuesday.

The pasture gate was locked, so whoever killed the cow had to jump the gate, Dunn said.

Most of the time, Willis said, people who kill cows cut off parts they can eat.

Another odd feature: There were no signs of a struggle, and tiny yellow flowers around the body stood straight, indicating that the cow had not been dragged anywhere.

Although Willis said he thinks the killing is probably cult-related, he said he cannot recall any other sign of cult activity in the Boyce area, ever.

SUN, Vancouver, B.C., Canada

March 16, 1998 CR: G. Conway

SCOTLAND

AMERICANS WARN SCOTS THEY HAVE 'NESSIE' RIGHTS

LONDON — Americans have claimed the copyright of Nessie — the Loch Ness Monster — and have warned Scots they could be sued if they misuse the name.

RLP Entertainment in Las Vegas says it owns the name Nessie and the character, after buying the rights to the book *Nessie and the Little Blind Boy* from Ken Anderson, an animator for Walt Disney, in the late Eighties.

But Scottish fans of the monster insist that Nessie belongs to everybody and have launched a counter-offensive.

There have been representations to Prime Minister Tony Blair from Gary Campbell, the founder of the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club in Drumnadrochit, near Inverness, and threats of million-dollar lawsuits from RLP Entertainment.

The U.S. company is producing an animated film of the story and plans to make Nessie dolls and souvenir items which it will sell in Scotland this summer.