

# UFO

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NEWS, Buffalo, NY - Oct. 25, 1998

## OPINION

### An objective look at UFOs

By **ROBERT A. GALGANSKI**  
*Special to The News*

On Aug. 19, 1965, four witnesses allegedly saw a luminous, football-shaped object repeatedly dip close to the ground on a dairy farm near the Chautauqua County village of Cherry Creek.

State Police and U.S. Air Force personnel who investigated the sightings had no conventional explanation. When the Air Force later declassified its Project Blue Book UFO (unidentified flying object) study, the incident was listed as one of only 640 "unknowns" among the 13,134 cases officially investigated by that agency.

Literally tens of thousands of well-documented and detailed UFO reports such as the Cherry Creek incident have been compiled by government and private researchers from virtually every country on Earth.

The subject is plagued by fanciful, evidence-free speculation and outrageous statements by kooks and frauds, giving it a definite wacko connotation. Widespread stories about people being kidnaped by UFO crew members — mostly humanoid beings called "aliens" — and subjected to physical exams and medical procedures have escalated this strangeness to an even higher level.

Are all UFO-related stories bogus — perhaps the complex end product of wishful thinking by uncritical, dewy-eyed believers? Or is there buried somewhere in all the "noise" and craziness a bona fide phenomenon that warrants serious scientific study? This article takes a brief, objective look at the ongoing controversy.

#### UFO maneuvers

Many of the reported UFO sightings are so bizarre they appear to be magic. Witnesses describe lights and apparently solid objects that execute incredible maneuvers such as high-speed, right-angle turns; sudden starts and stops; "falling leaf" descent, and silent hovering followed by rapid acceleration — capabilities far beyond any known aircraft on Earth.

UFO skeptics contend that all UFO reports stem from misidentified man-made and celestial objects or optical phenomena, hoaxes or hallucinations.

Most ufologists — persons who study UFOs — readily acknowledge that 90 to 95 percent of all raw (preliminary, uninvestigated) UFO reports are eventually explained as misidentifications and that an additional 1 percent are

hoaxes or have psychological origins. But they're convinced that the remaining reports describe "true UFOs" — lights and apparent objects unexplainable by science after competent investigation.

But couldn't true UFOs also be explained if more information was available? That argument would be tenable if all true UFO sightings described lights in the night sky or distant objects; they might be any of the many things commonly seen and misidentified in the sky.

However, a high percentage of true UFOs consist of "close encounters," events that occur within 500 feet of the witness. This proximity significantly reduces the chance of mistaking an ordinary object such as an aircraft or planet for something unknown.

#### The evidence

What evidence is there for UFO reality? Though many UFO proponents would disagree, there is no "smoking gun" — incontrovertible solid evidence — to prove that UFOs are something physically real *and* have an exotic origin. But the vast accumulation of often strikingly similar eyewitness testimony is compelling.

And more than 4,400 case reports document the presence of physical traces found at the location of a UFO close encounter. They include fresh imprints in the ground that display geometric regularity, markedly different chemical and physical soil properties within and just outside of the touchdown or near-landing site, and burned, wilted, discolored and damaged vegetation.

UFOs have been photographed, filmed and videotaped and have, on occasion, been simultaneously tracked by ground-based and airborne radar while being observed visually from both locations.

Military personnel have reported low-level UFO incursions over restricted areas such as atomic-weapons storage facilities and missile silos. And interceptor aircraft have pursued, taken gun-camera photos of, and shot at UFOs.

#### Who reports UFOs?

The stereotypical UFO witness portrayed by TV comedians and debunkers is an ignorant bumpkin sitting alone in his pickup truck on a lonely country road swigging a six-pack of beer. The implication is, of course, that *all* UFO witnesses are unreliable, rendering the contents of their reports worthless. That's simply not true.

The overwhelming majority of reports come from seemingly credible people encompassing virtually

all demographics whose testimony would be accepted in a court of law in any other context.

In a 1980 book, "Observing UFOs, an Investigative Handbook," Dr. Richard F. Haines, a NASA research scientist, wrote that documented UFO sightings have been reported by U.S. Air Force personnel, scientists and engineers, law-enforcement officers, clergymen and others.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, late chairman of the Astronomy Department at Northwestern University, served as the scientific consultant to the Air Force's Project Blue Book study of UFOs. In a 1981 article in *Technology Review*, he cited UFO reports from the associate director of the Instrumentation Lab at M.I.T., a four-person crew from the Army Medical Rescue Mission flying over Ohio and a pilot with Alitalia.

#### What are UFOs?

Frankly, nobody — except possibly a few persons in government circles — knows. Many pro-UFO researchers who champion the visitors-from-space explanation *think* they know, but they've extrapolated far beyond what little definitive information can be gleaned from studying case reports.

The scientific community summarily dismisses the subject without even bothering to examine the most compelling case reports. Amazingly, they demand absolute proof of UFO reality — for example, an artifact that could not have been made on Earth — *before* they will study the problem.

Could this reluctance stem from a fear of what they might find? Or is it just the same myopic scientific mind-set that rejected earlier, seemingly heretical observations or ideas. The existence of meteorites and continental drift and the possibility of heavier-than-air flight are examples of initially "crazy" notions that are now accepted facts.

All we can say now about UFOs is that something very unusual is happening on this planet that doesn't seem to reflect a manifestation of our current technology nor fit the parameters of what's commonly known about our world. And that "something" warrants serious scientific study.

*ROBERT A. GALGANSKI, an engineer at a Buffalo company, has studied the UFO phenomenon for more than two decades. His article on the Cherry Creek incident was recently published by the Chicago-based J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies.*

# Just Say UFO Aloud

## ... Then Stand Back

### MORE MacKENZIE REPERCUSSIONS

See a strange object that is not exactly recognizable on land or in the air. Try telling someone about it. Suddenly you're on national radio talk shows, and getting contacts from every imaginable researcher from the serious to the downright weird.

As NEWS readers of the past few weeks know, this is what has been happening to Rockford Police Officer Royal MacKenzie, after his story was exclusively published in the paper.

Books and offers keep coming in to the mystified officer who has been somewhat overwhelmed by all the media attention, since his first casual description of a silvery, metallic substance retrieved by a now-elderly couple from the famed Roswell, New Mexico crash site of a purported unidentified object.

He has heard everything from alien abductions to Bigfoot stories. Following are samplings from some of the publications sent to MacKenzie by widely known (and a few on-the-fringe) researchers.

The Unarius Light Journal claims to examine paranormal

experiences and tackles topics on extraterrestrial civilizations, case studies of past life therapy and cosmic history.

Interestingly enough, the magazine lists Albert Einstein as one of the authors. That's THE Albert Einstein who "mentally transmitted from the spiritual plane of Eros, where he now resides," according to the editor.

The renowned scientist wants to make a correction in one of his equations: "the fourth-dimension equation that space was curved," according to Charles Spiegel. The now-corrected equation is reported in the journal.

Amazingly, many writers in the field of UFO research, now take for granted that not only do aliens exist in several forms coming from numerous galaxies, but that these beings also were instrumental in creating or engineering life on earth as we know it today.

In the book "Glimpses of Other Realities" by Linda Moulton Howe (the first writer to contact Officer MacKenzie after the NEWS reported his story), an alien race called the Ebens is said to have been manipulating

DNA in already-evolving primates and actually to have created Homo Sapiens.

Races are described such as the Greys, the Blond Humanoids, Reptoids, small worker drones and it's even a suggested that Bigfoot is a robot used by these races.

Unusual animal deaths have been associated with Bigfoot type creatures, beams of light, UFO discs and strange beings since at least the 1960's, according to Howe, who has contacted MacKenzie several times and even requested that he accompany her to Roswell in order to verify the couple's story of the mystery metal.

Howe includes an interview with an anonymous former U.S. Army man who was once an attack helicopter pilot in Vietnam working with a special operations group.

The man described an unnerving experience of watching a person rising through a beam of light into a round, glowing object that hovered above the ground not far from a drive-in movie theater where he and his wife

were viewing the film. He also relates hearing about the "notorious" Men in Black (MIBs) who threatened a police officer.

Other interviews in Howe's book describe a man's vision of small grey android "things, pretty featureless, big heads, big eyes—they pretty much look alike—but the real aliens have different features and vary from one to another."

Alleged contactees have been hearing variations of the same message since the 1950s: that the world is contaminated and on a deadly course with disaster. That the government knows this and has broken numerous agreements with the alien beings. That small core groups of enlightened people have been contacted around the world and will be given further information.

What this information is and how it has helped anyone in any part of the world has never been explained.

In the meantime, Officer MacKenzie continues to shake his head at the unbelievable stories coming to him from "out there."

So far, he has yet to be mentally contacted by Albert Einstein or threatened by any Men In Black.

The always congenial officer has taken much good-natured ribbing from co-workers regarding his unintentional "landing" at the center of all this unwanted attention. He remains firm in his resolution not to reveal sources, has never seen a UFO and does not expect to ever see one.

But he did see something as yet unexplained at Roswell.

JOURNAL & CONSTITUTION, Atlanta, GA - Nov. 8, 1998

## Q&A on the News

Do you have a question about the news—local, national or international? Colin Besenette will try to get an answer. Call 404-222-2902 and follow the instructions or e-mail: [q&a@ajc.com](mailto:q&a@ajc.com)

**Q:** My wife says she saw a UFO hovering near Kennesaw Mountain about 12:30 p.m. Oct. 15. She says it was gray, like stainless steel, and at first was shaped like an isosceles triangle. Then it moved very quickly to the north and changed shape to a disc before vanishing. Is there some organization I can report it to?

— Christopher Stevens, Woodstock

**A:** The Federal Aviation Administration refers people who believe they have spotted UFOs to the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, 206-722-3000, said FAA spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen. Recorded information at that number advises callers to leave contact information and a brief description of the sighting so a staff member can return the call. It also lists a Web site —

<http://www.ufocenter.com> — for more information and online reporting of sightings. Or you can write: National UFO Reporting Center, P.O. Box 45623, University Station, Seattle, WA 98145.

The Mutual UFO Network is another possibility. You can call its hotline, 1-800-836-2166, and you can get information at its Web site —

<http://www.mufon.org> — including a sighting questionnaire. Or write: Mutual UFO Network Inc., 103 Oldtowne Road, Seguin, TX 78135-4099.

N.W. FLORIDA DAILY NEWS, Ft. Walton Beach, FL - Jan. 14, 1999 CR: R. Reid

## UFO lectures spout some alien ideas

By TOM MAURSTAD

The Dallas Morning News

For the first video column in this millennial year (how many stories on where to spend New Year's Eve 1999 have you seen/heard/read already?), it seems appropriate to focus on a mysterious, potentially apocalyptic subject.

To most people, the thought of a video series examining UFO phenomena conjures images of tiny blobs of light arcing across the sky and drawings of bug-eyed aliens. Perhaps to counter the "pseudoscience" stigma that cloaks the field of "UFO-ology," Omega Communications' six-volume set, "The UFO Experience," is presented as a series of scholarly lectures.

Of course, the primary audience for these tapes is UFO enthusiasts. It seems like you would need to

have a strong interest (what's known as a pre-existing condition) to sit through almost nine hours of guys speaking on issues such as "What Aliens Want ... And How They Plan to Get It" and "Physics and Flying Saucers."

But this series provides another, broader level of entertainment for viewers who haven't put the UFO question at the center of their lives. For the uninitiated, watching one of these tapes is like visiting a foreign country or, more appropriately, an alien world.

So if the phrases "abduction phenomenon" and "nasal implants" don't ring with resonant, multilayered meanings, then you are obviously not a UFO-ologist (which, we quickly learn, is pronounced "Yoofologist").

Get into the spirit of the millennium and check it out.

"Weather in Council Bluffs the evening of Dec. 17, 1977, was overcast with a 2,500-foot ceiling, visibility 10 miles and temperature at 32 degrees."

That's a portion of my investigation noted of the Big Lake incident that occurred 21 years ago today when a flaming object was seen to fall in the vicinity of a dike in Big Lake Park on the northern fringe of Council Bluffs' city limits.

To this date, there's been no plausible explanation as to what the object was or how it got where it did.

I had almost forgotten about it until I received a new book from a friend and author, Randall Fitzgerald, who is also a contributing editor for Readers Digest.

The book, "Cosmic Test Tube: Extraterrestrial Contact, Theories and Evidence" brings together the major viewpoints, theories and evidence - pro and con - of the controversial subject of alien visitation.

Although there was certainly no alien visitation associated with the Big Lake event, the circumstances were of such interest that The Associated Press picked up the story



## StarGazing

Bob Allen

and a request for additional information came from the National Enquirer tabloid.

As described by witnesses, the object was seen to fall from a height of approximately 600 feet and impacted with such force that it threw flames 8 to 10 feet high.

When they reached the area where they had seen the object fall, a large area of the dike was covered with a mass of molten metal that glowed "red-orange", so hot it ignited the grass.

A Council Bluffs policeman who had been called to the scene, described

it this way:

"...the molten mass was running, boiling down the edges of the levee over an area of about four to six feet. The central portion of the material remained warm to the touch even after two hours in freezing temperature."

I, along with a couple other Council Bluffs residents, still have fragments of the material and although it makes for interesting suppositions, there's still no reason to believe it originated from some extraterrestrial vehicle and certainly no space debris.

Based on numerous metallurgy tests and analysis by Iowa State University and the laboratories at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, the residue was chiefly iron with small amounts of alloying metals such as nickel and chromium. This composition precludes meteoric origin.

Because there were a total of 11 witnesses, some feel it's difficult to label the Big Lake Incident as a hoax.

After 21 years, I doubt anyone will be able to produce substantive evidence to label the occurrence anything more than that.

Dec. 27, 1998 CR: J. Buder

## 'Big Lake Park incident remains a mystery'

The Dec. 17 Star Gazing article by Bob Allen in which he concludes that the Big Lake Park incident was a hoax, is completely illogical.

He apparently assumes that some person or people accumulated and somehow heated that large amount of metal to a temperature near the point of vaporization and kept it there while transporting it to the Big Lake Park location, then dumping it on the ground, all without personal injury or damage to the transporting vehicle or notice by others passing by, would be impossible.

The logistics involved would tax the abilities and resources of an engineering company experienced and engaged in metal working and casting, and would be completely beyond the abilities and resources of mere pranksters. My nephew, Kenny Drake, now deceased, was the first to arrive on the scene and the one

who called the authorities to report the incident. The next morning he took me out there and told me step by step what occurred, and gave me a couple of small pieces of the metal involved. He was on his way out North 16th Street preparing to turn left at the entrance to Hy-Vee when a bright object came streaking straight downward out of the sky, impacting with a bright flash and a large exploding boom.

He immediately drove on out and turned into Big Lake Park where he discovered the mass of molten metal on the dike running through the park. He then went back to the Hy-Vee store and phoned the local authorities. The rest is a matter of official record except for one unusual occurrence. Snow was falling in Big Lake Park, but nowhere else. This will be extremely important in solving this alleged mystery which I believe I am able to do. Listen up you doubters and scoffers.

Anyone involved and experienced in the handling and casting of molten metal will verify the danger and violent explosive effect of it coming in contact with moisture or worse, water. This easily explains the resulting explosion when the falling object first impacted. This impact was in the water and mud and muck somewhere slightly to the north of the secondary impact area on the dike.

The resulting explosion on impact disgorged a minor amount of the molten metal which landed on the dike. The remaining portion of the fallen object remained buried deep below the surface where it heated the surrounding mud and water producing steam, which drifted over the park area and returned to earth in the form of snow. That major portion of the fallen object still remains there as yet undiscovered. It will take someone with underwater experience and equipment to locate it. Good luck.

I am sincerely interested in talking to any or all the other witnesses who were there that night.

M.A. "Bud" Drake,  
Council Bluffs

CHRONICLE, San Francisco, CA - Jan. 18, 1999 CR: J. Laurino

## NET FILES

Jon Swartz

# Support for Net Pioneer's UFO Theory

It's all alien to me.

The phone calls and e-mail poured in last week after The Chronicle's front-page story on Joe Firmage, the Internet pioneer who was forced to resign as chief strategist at USWeb/CKS because of his belief in aliens and UFOs.

Firmage's otherworldly theory, detailed in his 600-page online treatise, "The Truth" ([www.thewordistruth.org](http://www.thewordistruth.org)), is a doozy: He links many of history's major religious and technological events to "visits" from extraterrestrials. He even recounts a close encounter of the third kind in his Los Gatos home in 1997.

The readers' overwhelming verdict? Firmage, 28, is an earnest, brilliant individual who has put the truth, as he sees it, before his career.

"He's on to something big that bears further investigation," said Suleiman Edmondson, a writer-TV producer based in Richmond. "What Joe is saying is very accurate. Elements of the secret government know about this."

Adds Harold Puthoff, a respected physicist at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Austin, Texas: "These are certainly speculative and provocative theories, but on the other hand, he's not a crackpot. As far as whether we'll meet up with E.T., the jury is still out. The proof is yet to be found. The fact that (Firmage) opened up the issue required a lot of courage. He stuck his neck out."

Jim Marrs, a journalist in Dallas who has written extensively about UFOs and the Kennedy assassination, said: "Firmage is a

brilliant guy. He picked the brains of top researchers to come up with his ideas. There have been dozens of works on the Roswell-technology connection."

An authoritative read is the 1997 book "The Day After Roswell" by the late Colonel Phillip J. Corso and Bill Birnes, publisher of UFO Magazine in Los Angeles. Like Firmage, they contend that the origins of high-tech inventions such as lasers and the microchip can be traced to a purported alien spacecraft crash in 1947 in Roswell, N.M.

"President Truman absolutely wanted technology companies like Bell Labs and IBM to take a look at material from the wreckage," Birnes said. "Joe is right on."

Then again, a Daly City woman who supports Firmage, claims that she has been visited by aliens 33 times and has been implanted with alien materials. And another man swore that extraterrestrials are in cold storage at the White House. Uh-huh.

Despite the growing fan club and wall-to-wall media coverage (CNN, "Hard Copy," WCBS-AM), Firmage's unique views are tantamount to career suicide. Be careful what you wish for.

Early this month, he tendered his resignation, and he has spent the past few days fielding a blizzard of media requests. Fearing a market and public relations backlash, executives of USWeb/CKS, an Internet services company worth about \$2 billion, are trying to keep a low profile. Nonetheless, he has his defenders.

"I heard the same skepticism about the JFK assassination when I came out with my book ('Crossfire: The Plot to Kill Kennedy') in 1989," Marrs said. "Now, my conclusions of a government conspiracy are in the mainstream."

So does this whole high-tech episode merit a future segment on "The X-Files"?

A spokesman for the popular TV program declined to comment.



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

SENTINEL, Stoke-on-Trent, England - July 7, 1998



## IRENE BOTT: Sighting defied her logic

**‘W**HEN I started the Staffordshire UFO Group, I expected around 30 people to turn up, but on the first night we had 265, the hall was packed. I didn't know anything about UFOs but decided to get a group together when I couldn't find one to join.

At the end of the evening an old gentleman approached the speaker and told him of a UFO experience he had 40 years previously. He sobbed his heart out. He said he had been carrying it with him for all these years and it was good to tell someone who wasn't going to laugh in his face.

Looking back I had my first UFO experience when I was a child. I was always looking out of the window at night and I used to see really strange things, but went to sleep without worrying about it.

Then two years ago I went to a talk and there were two UFO slides which really knocked me backwards. They were the same arrow formation of lights in the sky that I had watched many times as a child.

In 1990 I was travelling along Cannock Chase towards Penkridge which is a hotbed for UFO sightings. I saw a light orange ball grow very big. The colour stayed a deep orange and then lighter orange before becoming more translucent and shrinking to nothing and then moving further along the sky.

I pulled in by a copse and sat and watched it. When it moved from one place to another it went straight up and then straight down. The road went from being very busy to no traffic whatsoever. I never said anything to anybody at the time but then heard there had been similar sightings all over England.

I always take everyone's experience on board, although I am analytical. It is a very personal thing and who is to say who is lying. The experience is very real to them. The only people who understand are those who have been through it.

There are people who work with the logical side of their brain and those with intuitions. Those with the logical side will not recognise what they are seeing. They go through every denial process until they can't explain it any more. Seeing is not always believing.

I don't care if people don't believe me. I know what I saw and it defied my logic - although that does not mean there isn't a logical answer.

UFOs may not be extraterrestrial. This could be an interdimensional thing, not outside the planet but something on a different plane, working on similar vibrations to ghosts. There are more questions than answers.

Our group offers witness support so people can talk about their experiences. Nine out of ten people are in turmoil because of their experience. People who have been abducted generally don't want to talk publicly because they fear that they will be laughed at or lose their jobs.

There is a case of two uneducated people in the Amazon jungle with no access to television or newspapers who have described UFO abduction experiences which are identical to those all over the world, yet they could never have heard of them.

With the millennium approaching I hope there will be more information in the public domain, to know where we are going to have to know where we are coming from. Many are looking back into the history of the planet, back to the Pyramids. Many are looking into religious books because of the UFO phenomenon than ever before.

I hope in my lifetime we will have a lot more sightings. What is needed if a body of people without ego or empire to monitor the situation and keep records.

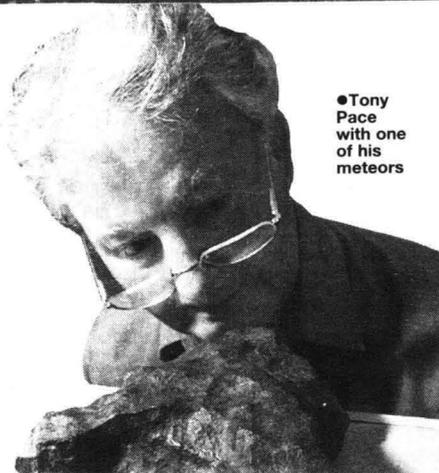
The Staffordshire UFO Group can be contacted on 01889-576771 or 0973-982854.

**CLOSE encounters of the third kind fascinate sceptics and believers alike.**



**A conference investigating UFOs is being held in The Forum Theatre, Potteries Museum, Hanley on Saturday, July 18. It co-incides with an exhibition entitled The Unexplained - Photographs of the Paranormal, at the museum from this Saturday until September 20.**

**Enthusiast Irene Bott of the Staffordshire UFO Group states why she believes we are being visited by beings from outer space, while astronomer Tony Pace of Eccleshall, says there can be many explanations.**



●Tony Pace with one of his meteors

## TONY PACE: Over most people's heads

**‘Y**OU have to be particularly objective when investigating UFOs. I have learnt over the years that people don't always have the experience or knowledge about what goes on over their heads, people accept reports without really investigating them.

“Most people in this game generally lack any scientific training, it is so easy for people like that to accept things they are told by eye witnesses without question.

“Since we were teenagers my brother and I have been interested in astronomy and built the observatory at Newchapel starting work in 1964. Since we have been looking through the telescope we have never seen anything that we couldn't eventually explain.

“Sightings could be the result of a whole host of things, astronomical, meteorological, or aircraft. People mistake Venus, Jupiter and Mars, even a bright star. Comets and fireballs are very bright and are seen over a lot of counties. These travel rapidly and are pieces of material entering the earth's atmosphere and burning up. This leads to a lot of UFO reports. With the recent one over Staffordshire, one UFO enthusiast said in a weekly newspaper it could be something other than a fireball because people saw it at different times. But people are going to report different times. They are coming home when they see something different and they don't know the exact time and they have little experience of what they are seeing.

A lot of UFO examinations don't allow for inconsistencies, they are dealing with anecdotal evidence.

I've carried out investigations and in 97 out of 100 cases there are straightforward explanations but that still leaves around three that cannot be explained. I am convinced that UFOs can affect electrical systems of cars. People often report that their car lights fail, the engine goes, they notice lights hovering and a strange object. When I was in BUFORA, the British UFO Research Association, we compiled a report about motor cars. There were 600 to 700 cases from all over the world. Sometimes the hair stands up on their arms, and if people had their arm out of the window they report suffering mild sunburn even though it is dark. When the object moves away the car starts up again.

I would be more than surprised if we had not been visited by extra-terrestrials in the past, present and future. These things come and go on a different dimension. UFOs are products of advanced technologies, they are tracked on radar but how can the Ministry of Defence admit to the existence of high technology devices. If they can't control them, they can't admit to them.

I think in some ways the study of UFOs has gone backwards, it's gone back to buying plastic green men.

The quote which sums up the UFO phenomenon for me is by Arthur C Clarke who said: “A sufficiently advanced technology would be indistinguishable from magic.”

In August I am putting a small display of meteorites on exhibition at the City Museum, Hanley. These meteorites are the real tangible visitors from other worlds. A 15 mile wide asteroid would devastate the earth and make a hydrogen bomb look like a firework. We are more likely to be hit by a meteorite than taken over by a UFO.”



# Sorcery or flying saucers?



**‘I would be more than surprised if we had not been visited by extra-terrestrials’**

# Survey of Vancouverites: The truth is in there

BY MURRAY WHYTE

Most Vancouverites have faith in alternative medicine, many have smoked marijuana at least once, and quite a few believe in alien visitations.

That's according to research in the December issue of *Vancouver* magazine, which surveyed 700 residents of the Greater Vancouver by phone. The results strengthen the stereotype of Vancouver as a "really liberal place," says Steven Bengtson of Viewpoints research, which conducted the poll for the magazine.

The poll found that 31% believed in alien visitation, while 56% said they had smoked marijuana at least once (14% — or one in every seven people — currently use the drug). Of those polled, 88% said alternative medicines such as homeopathy, massage therapy and acupuncture are valid.

Not surprising, said Mr. Bengtson, given the fact that British Columbia was the first province to have massage therapy included in its public health care package.

"My thesis is this: that this is a pretty spiritual place. We're a lot more open and accepting than the rest of the country."

The poll, however, shows that the region is not uniform in its tendencies. Instead, the study shows the Greater Vancouver region to be a diverse collection of views: the new-money, socially-conservative North Shore, the very-liberal west side, the working class/neo-hippie east side, and the decidedly un-hippie suburbs to the east and south.

The internal breakdown reveals almost as many distinctions within the city as the city has with the rest of the country. To help

make that point, pollsters used musical preference, among other factors, to illustrate.

For example, 37% of liberal west-siders said they owned an album by award-winning, lesbian, anti-beef crooner kd lang, as compared to 25% for the region as a whole, while only 8% of regular churchgoers bought Ms. Lang's records.

Conversely, only 15% on the

west side said they owned a record by straight-up country queen Shania Twain — a favorite in rural suburbs like Surrey and Langley. The results also showed that 54% of Ms. Twain's strongest constituency supported the RCMP's treatment of APEC protesters, and were the most likely in the region to own a gun.

But as different as the regions

tend to be, they're still more like one another than anywhere else on the continent, Mr. Sutherland argues.

"It really paints a picture of Vancouver as a very distinct place, with very liberal values," he said.

Mr. Bengtson agrees: "It's pretty easy to view this place as flake city because every other person you meet is into some kind of vegetarian thing or homeopathy or whatever," he said. "But to me, the picture all adds up. We believe in cosmic things, alternative things. We believe in possibilities here."

National Post



A recent survey shows Vancouverites are more likely than other Canadians to believe this is a real photo.

# Bright lights prove we're not alone

**UFO  
group's  
video  
claim**

Exclusive by  
**Richard Sellors**

**UFO researchers claim to have video footage of a strange bright object hovering in the skies above Ilkeston.**

And in another case a Ripley man said he spotted a similar object flying over a quarry at Marchay which changed its colour and shape.

Members of the Burton Unidentified Flying Object Investigation Group (BUFOIG) are building up an X-Files-type dossier on these local sightings.

Group director Neil Cottee said: "As we approach the Millennium, sightings of UFOs are definitely on the increase nationally — and no

more so than in the East Midlands."

Mr Cottee added: "I am a firm believer that something odd is going on. So many normal people have witnessed things and there must be something in it. I'm getting six or seven calls a week from people who have spotted strange objects in the skies."

"They have mainly been spotted around TV and radio masts, military bases and quarries — although they have also been sighted over residential areas."

BUFOIG says it has acquired video footage, shot over Ilkeston,

of an extremely bright, glowing object jumping all over the sky.

Mr Cottee told the *Trader*: "The witness is a video-recorder enthusiast who had a state-of-the-art 'steady-shot' camera and no matter how much you jiggle the camera the object you are focused on remains stable. The footage is being analysed by experts from the UFO Magazine and appears to be genuine."

"At one point a plane, which we found out was a postage flight on its way to America, passes through the shot, steady as you like, but the other object then dims slightly and continues its waltz around the sky."

Group members have also contacted the police and aeronautical organisations and have ruled out the possibility of a helicopter, or any other aircraft in the area at the time.

Another case was that of a 22-year-old Ripley man, who claimed to have seen a triangular object appeared from the west.

The man, who does not wish to be named, told BUFOIG that it went behind the House of

Aromatherapy on Derby Road, Ripley, and when it came out on the other side it had changed colour and shape.

The red circular object hovered over a quarry in Marchay, said the man.

"He said the object shone a light down to scan the surface, which illuminated some cows in a farmer's field before it withdrew. The cows were very startled and the next morning one of them was found with its neck broken," said Mr Cottee.

If you have any unusual UFO stories contact the *Trader* on 01332 253925 or the Burton Unidentified Flying Object Investigation Group on 01283 531814.

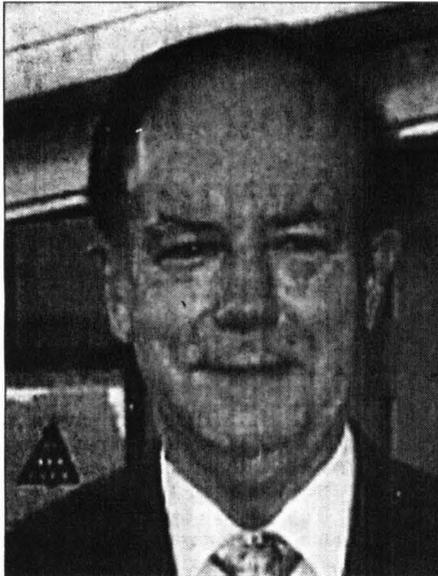
## INSIDE



10 pages of motoring



Cricket title race heats up



# Phenomenon of the UFO sighting

*Keeley Ball talks to a man who wants to hear of your experience*

**AS more research into the phenomena of UFOs takes place Ilkeston folk are being urged to come forward with their encounters of the unexplained.**

Many people throughout the area claim to have witnessed sightings and the *Advertiser* spoke to Omar Fowler, the Investigation Co-ordinator of the Phenomenon Research Association, to find out more...

## Prolific

Mr Fowler who has been studying UFOs since the 1960's and has appeared on Panorama and other TV programmes as well as meeting eminent researchers, reckons sightings are more common than people realise — and particularly prolific around this area.

"Between December 1994 and May 1995 there were around 52 incidents in this area and around Derby of large flying triangles particularly around motorway networks in the city centre.

"The latest sighting we have had in this area took place in West Hallam on March 5 at

about 10.20pm. A local resident videotaped a multi-coloured light in the sky. We are trying to find out more about this and it would be interesting to hear if anyone else in the area saw that light during that time."

He explained that people often don't have a clear description of seeing the UFO as they are still in shock.

"Many people who have never thought about UFOs suddenly see themselves in front of a big craft. Its very common for a witness to say 'I wish I could look at it again to take everything in'. Of course now many people own camcorders and so it is easier for them and us to examine footage."

Mr Fowler, who has seen a UFO himself, said another recent incident took place in nearby Long Eaton on May 19th where two flying triangles (FTs) were spotted in the early hours of the morning.

And back in 1994 three witnesses in Ilkeston watched a FT stationery in the sky, which they describe as "covered in stars with a red light adjacent to the white nose light."

He believes no sinister motives were involved in these extra-terrestrial visits and feels they are benevolent and are meant to serve as warnings to protect our planet and environment.

"The phenomena has probably been in existence for hundreds of years but it is interest-

ing that there was an actual increase in sightings after the letting off of the Atomic bomb in the Nevada Desert in 1947. The incidents of UFO activity began to increase after this time.

"The silent behaviour pattern of the 'Flying Triangles' may indicate that they are on missions of observation, although they often carry an array of bright lights. They appear to have a particular interest in nuclear power stations. They also appear to be keenly interested in both military and civilian establishments, such as public water works and utilities."

The PRA is exchanging information with several countries including Japan, Canada and the United States. The information is then passed on to the 'Project FT' databank in Berlin to help find an answer to the worldwide mystery.

## 'Monitoring'

Omar reckons that the craft are of extra-terrestrial origin as their performance and behaviour characteristics — such as speed and size — indicate their technology is more advanced than ours.

He said: "They appear to be employed in monitoring and surveying our planet and in many cases make no effort to conceal their whereabouts."

"I think they are trying to tell us to live peacefully."

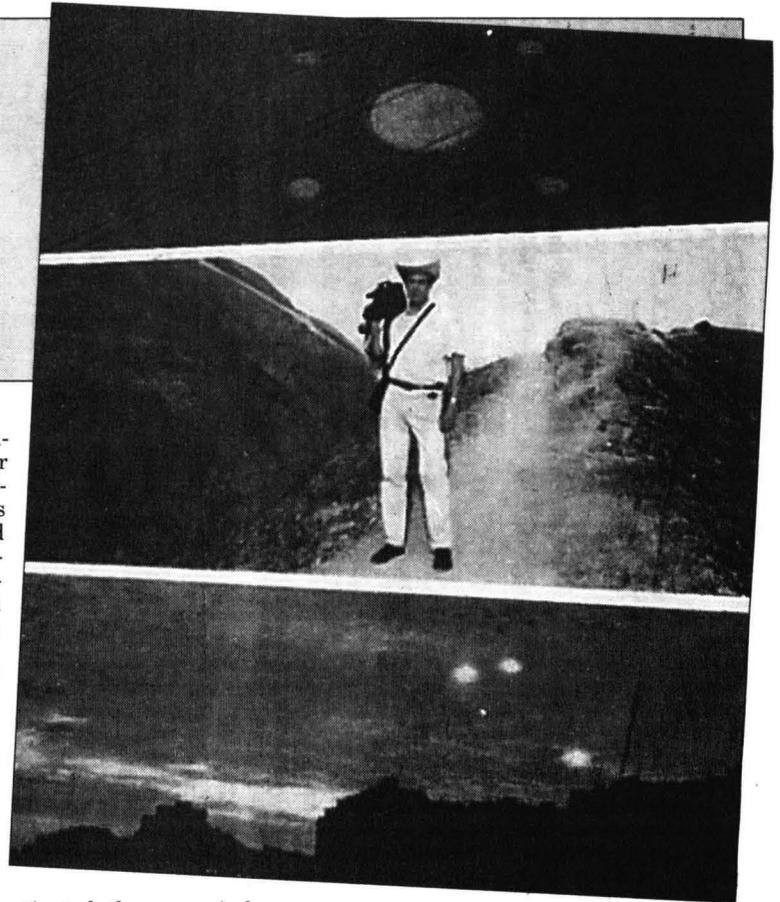
He said he has investigated a number of 'contactee' incidents over the years and has interviewed police officers, aircrew, ex-service personnel, both British and American, in his quest to find an answer to the UFO mystery.

Omar who has published two booklets on the subject: *The Flying Triangle Mystery* (1996) and *Flying Triangle UFO's: 'The Continuing Story*

(1997) has also investigated the crop circle phenomenon discovering natural formations were a result of high frequency radiation and had no connection with UFO activity.

A resident of Derby, he has been all over the world studying the subject and has interviewed pilots who have tried to intercept craft.

Meetings of the PRA, which are open to non-members, are held regularly: the next one being June 30th at 8pm at the Royal British Legion, Allenton, Derby.



Mr Fowler said: "We have conferences throughout the year with videos and guest speakers. If anyone is interested in this subject they can learn a lot."

● If anyone would like to speak to him about sightings or to find out more about the work of the PRA Mr Fowler can be contacted on (01332) 761464.

# UFO investigator opens his X-files



## FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF

NEXT meeting of the British UFO Studies Centre is tomorrow (7.45pm) at the RAFA Wings Club in Station Road, Northwich.

Everyone is welcome and admission is £1.50. The meeting will feature a report on Eric Morris' infiltration of Rudloe Manor.

For more information telephone 01606 330567.

*The X-Files* (15) is now being screened at the Regal Cinema in Northwich.

**N**EIGHBOURS may not realise it but 78 Greenall Road, Northwich, is a hive of paranormal activity. It is home to Eric Morris, founder member of the British UFO Studies Centre (BUFOSC).

His phone rings non-stop from morning until the early hours as he receives calls from all over the world from people reporting unusual flying objects, crop circles, anything that is seemingly unexplainable.

He says: 'I spend at least three hours a day doing society work. This includes writing for the monthly newsletter, working on my book and speaking to people on the phone. I've got to admit that my wife does get a bit upset at times.'

General nurse Eric, aged 44, claims BUFOSC is different to other UFO societies and he has labelled himself the 'most controversial UFOlogist in the UK'.

'The difference between BUFOSC and the other societies in Britain is that we get up off our backsides and do things,' he explains.

'We're not like other groups who sit at their keyboards, spending hours and hours looking at the Internet. We get out there and do things.'

The group has just proved this by setting up a 'paranormal holiday' in Wiltshire, the birthplace of UFOlogy. Society members spent the week looking into crop formations and trying to find the hidden truths behind the myths about the Army bases in the area.

Eric firmly believes in 'going in where it hurts, as long as it's legal' - and he put this into practice when he managed to get inside RAF Rudloe Manor at Corsham in Wiltshire.

FICTIONAL agents Mulder and Scully have now hit the cinema screens in the first film version of *The X-Files* but the truth really is out there and some say it can be found in a terraced house in Mid Cheshire. *The Chronicle's* own ET, EMILY TAYLOR, went to investigate.



**X-FILER:** Mid-Cheshire based UFO expert Eric Morris scanning the skies for extra-terrestrial activity. 078207A

Many UFO hunters believe that Rudloe is Britain's Area 51, the place where alien craft and bodies are kept.

'I'd heard many rumours about the base. Some said that if I entered I would probably be shot at and the guards would be all over me like a rash. I decided to simply walk to the main gate and see what happened,' said Eric.

'As I did I was greeted by a friendly police sergeant. After a quick chat I learned that we had served at many of the same places in the Navy. He then let me inside and made me a cup of tea. I was in there for half an hour.'

'I can now say that the belief that Rudloe Manor is a top secret base investigating UFO's is basically a pile of old drivel.'

More sinister goings on have been happening closer to home. Eric believes that BUFOSC has become the victim of a nasty smear campaign. He said: 'There is no doubt in my

mind that someone is trying to get us shut down. There are people out there who don't appreciate us telling the truth. Some people fill magazines with stories about alien abduction that simply aren't true just to earn a bit of money, and it is these people who want to shut us up.'

BUFOSC has done extensive research into alien abduction and from the 50 cases it has looked at closely, only two could possibly have an alien connection. The society has been banned from numerous UFO conferences, even one organised by a Staffordshire group that Eric helped set up.

More dangerously, someone tampered with Eric's car, which resulted in the vehicle bursting into flames while he was in it.

'Whether this was a simple act of vandalism or something more sinister I don't know, but I could have been killed,' he said.

At the moment he is investigating

a case of possible paranormal activity in Knutsford after he received a phone call which told him about two dead cows found completely segregated from the rest of their herd.

He says: 'I need to find the answer. The weather was bad that night so that could have been the cause but there is always that small chance that it could be a strange happening.'

The upsurge of interested created by *The X-Files* means BUFOSC has come more into the limelight. Channel 4, Channel 5 and Nippon TV in Japan are all preparing programmes which feature the society.

But despite this, Eric feels that the public's fascination with flying saucers is waning. He claims: 'The public are fed the same thing time and time again, and it gets boring. But at BUFOSC we do produce new evidence and new documentation. More and more people are coming to our meetings each month. We are going from strength to strength.'

GUARDIAN, Tryon, B.C. (?), Canada - Sept. 29, 1998 CR: P. Anderson



JASON ROGERSON of Crapaud sizes up winter rye field along the Trans-Canada Highway in Tryon.

Guardian photo by Heather Taweel

## Who, or what, left Tryon's crop circles?

BY DOUG GALLANT  
The Guardian

Tryon has a new tourist attraction, although nobody seems to know how it got there. Or why.

The attraction lies in John Visser's winter rye grain field which runs along the Trans-Canada Highway.

There, visible from the highway, are three large crop circles, all of which are connected by paths. Two of the circles measure just over 40 feet across while the third mea-

sures over 50 feet.

Within those circles, anything that might have been standing has been completely flattened, while nothing outside the circles or the paths that connect them has been touched, save by the feet of the curious, hundreds of whom turned up over the weekend after word of the phenomenon spread through Tryon and neighbouring communities.

Harry Craig, of Craig's Convenience store in Crapaud, says the circles have been the

I'm not going to speculate either. As close as I come to speculation is being in the potato business.'

He would say, though, that the wind has been known to flatten ground like that.

'A little twister could do that, and we do get them from time to time.'

Visser says it doesn't really matter how they got there or who made them because they're not going to be there much longer.

'I'll be running a disc through that field in a couple of days. It won't matter what was there.'

Similar finds elsewhere in the world have been attributed to anything from aliens looking for a place to land, the popular choice of tabloid newspapers; to the more-plausible explanation of pranksters with time on their hands who carefully measure out their "designer-crop circles," then meticulously flatten the growth within those circles with planks or sections of wood which they either swing in circles or lay flat and stand on.

subject of much conversation and no small amount of speculation.

'Little green men?' Craig says with a grin. 'I don't think so. But it's strange. I can't think of any piece of machinery I know of that would make cuts so perfect. The two small circles are exactly the same size, and the paths that connect them are all the same width.'

Potato producer John Visser says the circles look to have been there since about the middle of August. They were first brought to his attention by a man from the Bedeque area who spotted them while flying overhead in his private plane.

Does Visser have any idea how they got there?

'I haven't got the foggiest idea where they came from. And I don't see any tracks that would lead me to believe somebody trucked equipment in there.'

Could it be aliens?

'I don't believe in little green men from outer space,' Visser said. 'And

## Meteors theory in '30 UFOs' sighting

A WREXHAM man and wife are convinced they spotted not one, not two, but "29 to 30" unidentified flying objects.

Andrew Lincoln, of Gibson Street, was outside his house at about 11.30pm last Friday when he saw "29 or 30 round orange balls" moving across the sky.

Mr Lincoln said: "It was not an aeroplane. I even called my wife and she confirmed it was not an aeroplane."

"It was strange - I can't get it out of my mind. They were going slowly towards Chester, quite high, but lower than an aeroplane. They were a dullish orange colour."

"If it was a plane it would have to have been a squadron of them. They formed a shape like a snake in a line going across the sky."

A spokesman for Wrexham

Police said Mr Lincoln had reported the strange sighting to them, but they had not received any other calls about UFOs being seen on Friday night.

But in the early hours of Sunday morning Wrexham Police did receive two calls reporting an object in the sky seen over the Holt/Rossett area.

A spokesman said: "The incident was reported to Air Traffic Control at West Drayton, but was believed to have been caused by a laser light, probably emanating from a club or restaurant in Chester."

Another theory is that the strange lights could have been a meteor shower currently visible in the night sky. These are well documented as giving off a yellowish/orange glow.

# The Bala incidents: A case for Mulder and Scully?

Jill Tunstall talks to a UFO investigator about the strange goings-on in the Berwyn Mountains near Bala



**WEIRD WALES**  
HTV/THURSDAY

**O**NE dark, winter's night back in 1974, as the people of the villages around the Berwyn Mountains near Bala sat down to their evening's television, an earthquake shook their homes.

The huge rumble registered 3.5 on the Richter Scale and they ran from their houses, fearing another tremor, to witness a blaze of light on the mountain side above.

For most, their first instinct was to call the police. Surely there had been an air crash.

A local nurse, who made her way to the scene, was one of the first to realise that this was no ordinary crash. In fact there had been no aeroplane at all.

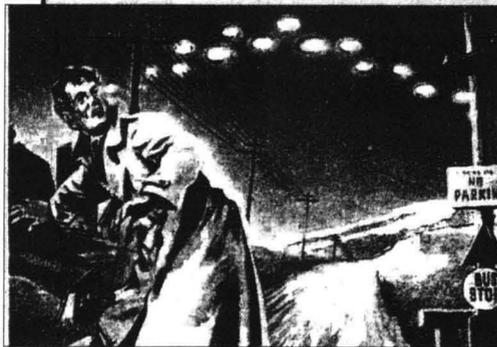
Instead, she and her daughters watched with a rising mixture of fear and disbelief as a huge egg shaped craft lay on the ground, ablaze with a pulsating orange and red glow. Within minutes they turned on their heels and fled.

That's just one of the eye witness accounts given for the Berwyn Mountains Mystery to Wales' leading UFO investigator Margaret Fry, who has been on the case for 20 years.

There are numerous others. All tell the same story of mysterious objects flying low over the mountains on that night. Farmers tending their sheep reported seeing craft landing and taking off.

Each one repeated seeing the strange red and orange glow of an egg shaped object, which Mrs Fry believes was definitely a UFO.

After over 40 years investigating



**THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE:** Unexplained lights in the sky, earthquakes, secretive men in suits. It sounds as if it's another X-file waiting to be opened, but it all happened in Bala

unexplained objects Mrs Fry, from Llangernyw, is Wales' answer to Dana Scully. But it is not a title she'd welcome. The X Files is not her idea of a good night in front of the television. Mrs Fry will be watching this week's edition of *Weird Wales*, however, which re-examines the mystery of the Berwyn Mountains, dubbed the Welsh Roswell.

During the crash the MOD were among the first on the scene and cordoned the area off. One villager reported to Mrs Fry that secretive 'men in suits' checked into the hotel and visited the area daily.

Local people say they have never been given an explanation for what happened

that night but Mrs Fry's theory is that an earthquake did happen and that it is not unusual for UFOs to be sighted in their aftermath.

**'M**AYBE they are curious about earthquakes or perhaps they affect their navigation," she says. "That night there were sightings all over North Wales and as far as Shropshire. I'm convinced there were three UFOs, one of which stayed around for around 25 minutes."

In true X Files style there were reports of soldiers mysteriously arriving within

the area and stopping people on their way home. One woman claimed she had seen 'coffin shaped' boxes being loaded aboard MOD vehicles and Mrs Fry says she has been contacted by soldiers since who say they removed 'bodies' to Porton Down, the top secret MOD germ warfare laboratory.

It is a tale of almost fantastic improbability but, as Mulder and Scully would say, the truth is out there somewhere.

After four decades investigating visitors from outer space Mrs Fry, the daughter of an MI5 officer, is used to the scepticism that surrounds any UFO claims.

She even admits to occasional doubts herself, despite having seen her first extra terrestrial craft back in 1955. It followed her car as she drove home from a night out.

Now getting on in years she is unable to sky watch because of bronchial problems, so doesn't hang around on chilly nights waiting for a visit. It's a one in a million chance anyway because only 10pc of sightings are UFOs, she revealed.

"I always say it's the great I am," she says philosophically. "If you have seen it you can believe it, if you haven't, well, it's so improbable it's not surprising people can't."

"When I've not seen them for some years myself I begin to think 'Oh God, did I just imagine it all?'"

And then comes another sighting and the investigation begins all over again...



SELBY CHRONICLE, Wakefield, England - Oct. 2, 1998

## Strange - but true?

THE last two months have seen a wave of sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects over the Yorkshire region.

A number of local people claim to have seen strange lights in the skies above Goole and Immingham during the period July 6-20.

Amongst the sightings was one that appeared to be a huge ring with lights around the edge, the BBC Ceefax news service recently reported.

On August 2, an elliptical shaped object was seen in the sky near to Airmyn, slowly moving eastward.

A week later on August 9, a family in Gilberdyke observed a spherical object for 20 minutes.

Further sightings were reported to police in Leeds on August 24 when dozens of people saw a glowing object floating silently in the air.

Boothferry's local UFO Research and Monitoring Agency (UFORMA) and the Hull UFO Society (HUFOS) are working closely together, actively taking an investigating these alleged sightings.

Chris Evers, Director of HUFOS and Darren Parr of UFORMA would like to hear from anyone who has recently witnessed any unusual aerial phenomena.

If you have seen something which you wish to report phone Darren on 01405 831059 or Chris on 01482 470136.

NORTH WALES WEEKLY NEWS, Conwy, Wales - Oct. 8, 1998

## Riddle of a UFO over Craigside

DURING a recent visit to my hometown, I happened upon Mrs Margaret Fry's letter about local sightings of UFOs (*Weekly News*, Sept 10).

Some 15 years ago when I was living on Bryniau Road, Craigside, I regularly walked my dog Toshack on Nant y Gamar Mountain. One midsummer's evening on the mountain, Toshack was, as usual, barking at the rabbits and birds in the area when all of a sudden he

stopped and looked skywards.

On seeing him do this, I looked up and saw a huge bright light about 100ft up but coming closer and closer. The light came to within about 50ft of us, hovered, made some unusual computer-type noises and shot off faster than a bullet.

I asked other people if they had seen anything but they hadn't.

**RYAN JONES,**  
Victoria Centre, Watson Road,  
Hong Kong.

# Expert says Ireland is newest hotspot for alien spaceships

By **JIM DEE**  
SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

DUBLIN, Ireland — Last year, 4,230,000 visitors descended on the Emerald Isle — Land of a Thousand Welcomes — from the four corners of the Earth to sample Ireland's legendary hospitality.

Others — possibly from a galaxy far, far away — hovered in the sky above without ever landing, according to self-taught UFO expert Eamon Ansbro.

Ansbro, 48, a former engineer and meteorologist, has spent much of the past decade trying to perfect a system of predicting when and where alien spacecraft will arrive.

Attention agents Mulder and Scully: Hop a flight to Ireland. Ansbro is convinced UFOs will be hovering above Dublin at 5 a.m. Jan. 30. And in February, he promised, they'll return to one of their favorite haunts, the tiny town of Boyle, County Roscommon. It's "a UFO hotspot," he said.

Ansbro can't explain exactly why Ireland is a preferred extraterrestrial destination, but

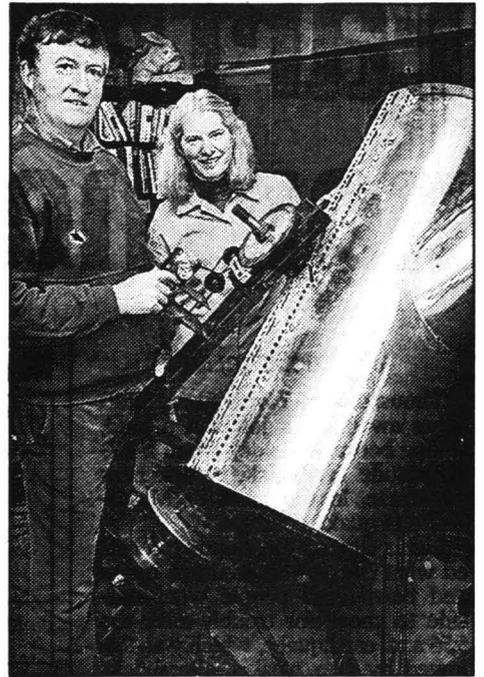
says possible reasons range from the nation's political neutrality to its Druidic past. After all, in a country renowned for its 'Forty Shades of Green' and a multitude of leprechauns, little green men from outer space might fit in nicely.

And then there's Irish hospitality. "The one thing about the Irish is that they're open to the new," Ansbro said. "Ireland isn't going to send up some fleet of F-16s and blast UFOs out — which has been done, apparently, by the Americans" in the 1950s.

Ansbro has frequently been profiled in Irish newspapers and featured on British and Irish TV and Irish radio in the last year.

He claimed he has identified "an automated surveillance" of Earth, regularly conducted by "a large craft, say at 80 to 90 thousand feet, that somehow is camouflaged." The craft periodically ejects UFOs to orbit and scan the Earth below, he believes.

Ansbro thinks alien craft use Ireland's abundant stone-age rock monuments, known as Megalithic tombs, as "vortexial



HERALD PHOTO BY JOHN MCAVINEY

**SERIOUS TRACKING: Self-taught UFO expert Eamon Ansbro, shown with Catherine Ansbro, and a spacecraft tracking camera, says aliens are due to visit Ireland in January.**

energy points" — navigational beacons — to maintain their bearings.

He produces a map he and a fellow member of his group Program for Extraterrestrial Intelligence Project drew up, outlining common alien touring routes around Earth. Eighty percent of them pass over Megalithic tombs.

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY TIMES, Horsham, England - Oct. 2, 1998

## Police report UFO riddle

by Jeremy Stern



**TWO** Horsham police officers have been dubbed Mulder and Scully by colleagues after reporting a UFO sighting while on duty.

Neither PC Julian Deans nor PC Sarah Ames can explain what the lights were or where they came from on Friday morning and a UFO expert has not ruled out extra-terrestrial activity.

The two are pictured above enjoying a joke with a friendly furry alien after reporting their UFO sighting.

PC Deans said: "I've got nine years of experience in the military and have seen some weird and wonderful things but never anything like this. I'm not going to say it was aliens but I have never

seen anything like it before."

PC Ames added: "There was something out there. It was about 500 metres above the ground and I think it was an object with circular bright lights." The sighting happened at 3am on Friday as the Horsham-based pair drove along the A281 from Henfield towards Woodmancote.

PC Ames noticed five lights in the sky about two kilometres away above Blackstone, and alerted her colleague. PC Deans continued: "I think she thought she was going barmy but when I looked out of the driver's window I could see them as well. We got out of the vehicle and

watched for about 30 minutes. One of the lights was about twice the size of a jumbo jet and they were half hidden behind the cloud base.

"They moved in a snake like motion from left to right, looking almost like a whip being cracked. They moved faster than anything I've seen before."

The constables then got back in their vehicle and watched for a further 20 minutes before a bright beam appeared on the road 200 metres away. PC Deans said: "The strange thing was that it was a misty night but the light shone through. It looked like a torch but it was too piercing." However, when they approached the light in their vehicle, having put on their headlamps, it disappeared.

PC Deans said: "When we approached nearer there was nothing there. I've spoken to someone who knows the area like the back of his hand and he says there are no nearby nightclubs or anything like that that could have produced the lights." Gatwick Airport was contacted by police after PC Deans logged the incident, but they could not explain the lights. The Aeronautical Information Section at West Drayton was also informed, along with the Ministry of Defence.

This story follows a report in last week's County Times of a UFO being spotted above an isolated farmhouse at Sakeham Farm, Henfield, the previous Friday.

That night police lines were jammed with people seeing similar strange lights in the same area. On this week's occasion the only report came from the constables.

Larry Dean, director of investigations at UFO research organisation Sky Search, said: "The action and description of the sightings at Sakeham Farm are reminiscent of a laser."

"Indeed lasers can be directed a great distance and can appear quite mysterious if you have not witnessed them before."

"However, the flight characteristics of the latest sighting are certainly odd and seem to point to an unusual or highly advanced aerial craft. Whether this is an extra terrestrial or not is open to debate."

"Sky Search has investigated numerous UFO reports in this area over the past few years. Consequently we would be very interested to hear of any past or current UFO sightings."

After reading last week's County Times, PC Deans said: "I'm quite chuffed that other people have seen things as well as it probably means that I'm not going mad."

However, colleagues at Horsham Police Station may not agree with that statement.

PC Ames said: "There has been a lot of micky taking. People have been playing tricks with the lights at the station and yes, we have been nicknamed Mulder and Scully!"

● If you have seen any UFOs in the sky in the Henfield or surrounding area, then Sky Search would like to hear from you. Contact Larry Dean on (01273) 300805.

# UFO reports shrouded in mystery

## Defence Department documents cast spotlight on Canada's own X-Files

BY JIM BRONSKILL  
FOR THE WINDSOR STAR  
OTTAWA

Several snowmobilers see a round yellowish light assume the shape of a star. It moves slowly westward, like a balloon on a string, then suddenly disappears.

A number of people witness a large triangle-shaped object pass quickly

above a Yukon lake under a full moon. It makes a loud noise, but has no lights and leaves no vapour trail.

A Prairie family finds some of their cattle mutilated. A few years later, they discover a two-metre crop circle in one of their fields.

The mysterious stories are just a few of the reports from people across the country who have encountered things they simply could not explain.

The Defence Department has just released a batch of the documents, known in military circles as CIRVIS reports, short for Communications Instructions for Reporting Vital Intelligence Sightings.

The names of the people who claimed to see the strange phenomena have been deleted, but the memos provide intriguing glimpses of the eerie episodes.

Some, like the "large greenish flare" seen over Northern Ontario in 1997, can be fairly easily explained as meteors. But others are more baffling.

Army Sgt. Clay Rankin remembers the spring day last year in Tuktoyaktuk, N.W.T., when a local woman reported being followed by two cone-shaped unidentified flying objects as she drove home with four companions. "She seemed pretty sincere about it,"

Rankin recalled in an interview. "What it was, I'm not sure."

The official report says bright blue light shone from windows in the twin objects as they moved through the Arctic sky about one kilometre behind the car. "They were followed for approximately 15 minutes when contact was lost."

Rankin, 38, duly filed his report with superiors at Canadian Forces Northern Area Headquarters.

Still, he doubts the existence of extraterrestrial spacecraft. "I've never seen one myself," said Rankin. "I'm not one of those X-Files fans or anything like that."

A bizarre incident near Marmora, Ont., last February might have made believers out of three people who saw white and orange lights flying above the ice on Crowe Lake.

A similar sighting took place in Ottawa on a clear July evening. Witnesses told the National Defence Operations Centre of a display by four or five glowing objects that moved about chaotically, "merging and separating at random" for almost an hour before vanishing.

A woman in Coral Harbour, N.W.T., was starting her snowmobile one morning last January when she gazed over the water and saw a large blue ball and two, smaller red balls followed by sparkles.

"As the large ball got closer to me it picked up speed and the colour changed from blue to red," she told the military. "As it passed overhead it changed colours again from red to orange, then to yellow, then headed up into the sky."

The report lists the incident as a possible "UFO/submarine sighting."

Officials were at a loss, however, to explain the June 1997 Yukon sighting of the black, triangle-shaped object over Lake Laberge.

"A number of aircraft were in the area around the reported time, but none remotely resembled the object's description."

MID DEVON GAZETTE, Tiverton, England - July 21, 1998



● Eye on the sky: Steve Lovering returns to the spot where he saw the UFO. C237/25

# Strange encounter on link road

WHILE most people were tucked up in bed at 4am last Tuesday morning, a Tiverton man was having a close encounter with a UFO.

The startled shift worker was driving along the A361 North Devon Link Road towards the M5 when a mysterious cigar shaped object sped across the early-morning sky, hovered in mid-air and then shot off at high speed.

Steve Lovering, who cleans telephone boxes for a living, said at first he thought he was seeing things: "I could not believe it — it was about the size of a tennis ball, but must have been at least half-a-mile away. It came across from the left very quickly and looked like a bright star.

"I pulled over and watched it move across to the right. Then it just stopped — and suddenly shot off upwards and disappeared. It was really going fast — one second it was there and then it had gone."

The UFO was travelling in a southerly direction towards Tiverton.

"At first of all I thought it was star because it was very bright — but stars do not move and it couldn't have

been a shooting star because they don't stop in mid air, hover, then shoot off again."

He said he knew of another person in Cullompton who had seen something strange at the same time. And he was adamant about what he saw in the pre-dawn sky.

"I was going up the link road towards the M5 and first saw it just after the Bolham roundabout. As I got further up to Gornhay Cross it seemed to be moving across me. It was just very bright and shaped like a cigar.

When I got to the first lay-by I stopped and watched it. The whole thing happened in about two minutes.

"I just didn't know what to do or think — but I decided to stay in my car."

Mr Lovering said he had a passing interest in UFOs and kept an open mind about them — but never dreamt he would see one himself.

"I can't believe I saw a UFO — I am definitely going to take my camera around with me from now on.

"I thought I was seeing things but I was certainly wide awake!"

Officers at Tiverton police station said they had not received any reports of a UFO or bright lights.

By NIGEL SOUTHWORTH

COURIER, Mansfield, Victoria, Australia

Sept. 9, 1998 CR: P. Norman

# Flying object sighted near Gough's Bay

by GILL COOPER

THE recent sighting of an unidentified flying object near Gough's Bay by a local man has triggered a public investigation of the incident.

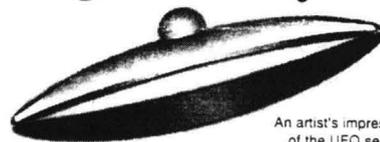
Members of the Victorian UFO Research Society are calling for help from anyone else who may have seen anything unusual in the sky between Gough's Bay and Howes Creek around 12noon on Sunday, August 9.

The society's north east representative, Jim Owen yesterday said efforts to ascertain what the object may or may not be, will include checks with the bureau of meteorology, planetarium, air and military services.

Mr Owen said a local man was working at Gough's Bay road around 5km west of the township on August 9 when he heard a whooshing sound similar to the wind.

"This caused him to look in the east where he observed an object at 30 degrees above the horizon & about the size of a tennis ball but not of that shape. At this point it was some distance from the witness," Mr Owen said.

"The object was travelling directly towards him in a zig-zag motion," he said.



An artist's impression of the UFO seen at Gough's Bay.

"He stated that the movement appeared to be controlled and every time just prior to this movement the object tilted in the direction it was about to take."

Mr Owen said the man described the object as like two inverted dinner plates with a dome on the top. The object was darker on the bottom section and lighter on the top and the dome, he said.

Mr Owen said the witness appeared "very credible", but wanted his identity to kept confidential.

"The witness watched it for approx 20 to 30 seconds. He estimated the speed to be in excess of 200 to 300 kph," Mr Owen said.

"Due to the speed as the object passed over him, he was unable to view the bottom. At this time he lost sight of it but he did notice that the tops of the trees near where he was standing were shimmering like water."

Mr Owen said the object appeared about six feet across when viewed by the witness around half a

kilometre away and heading directly towards him about 200 feet above the ground.

"At no stage did this witness hear any engine noise or see any means of propulsion on the object.

"As it approached and passed over him the whooshing sound of the air increased in volume," Mr Owen said.

The object was last seen travelling west towards Howell's Creek.

Mr Owen said that several other UFO reports near Mansfield and Swanpool had been investigated by the society in recent years.

"They range from lights in the sky behaving strangely, a vehicle being followed by an object along the Mansfield Road to a large object observed near a house in the Samaria area."

Mr Owen said further information regarding any UFO sightings in the north east region could be made to himself on 5722 3533, or the society on 03 9506 7080.

Confidentiality is assured.

# Alien traffic over M62?

Are the mysterious lights seen by hundreds in the Pennine sky due to microlight aircraft, meteors, a laser show or are aliens the only convincing explanation? DENIS KILCOMMONS investigates

**M**YSTERIOUS lights above the Pennines were seen by many people on the night of February 2 this year.

The Yorkshire-based and internationally distributed *UFO Magazine* investigated the sightings, with the assistance of officials from Leeds-Bradford Airport.

Mark Ian Birdsall of the magazine said afterwards, "It has been suggested that the lights were carried by two microlight aircraft.

"While not impossible, if true, their pilots were playing a very dangerous game using major air corridors and above three heavily populated cities."

But in the latest edition of the publication, Russel Callaghan, a film and photograph expert, disagrees that microlight aircraft were responsible.

## 'An unidentified wedge-shaped craft passed . . . so close the first officer instinctively ducked'

He has computer-analysed, frame by frame, video footage of the lights. He also notes that whatever carried them was not seen on the Leeds-Bradford Airport radar.

Mr Callaghan concludes: "I am satisfied these were true UFOs, caught on film and seen by hundreds of independent eye-witnesses."

The lights were said to have followed the M62 motorway from Lancashire into Yorkshire at a speed of about 60 mph, which is below the stalling speed of light aircraft.

They were seen by people in Huddersfield, Bradford and Leeds before disappearing, "much faster than a jet aircraft".

Among the witnesses were Chris Duffield, of Huddersfield, and Mr and Mrs John Wilson, of Gomersal.

Mr Callaghan is a speaker at the 17th Leeds International UFO Conference at Leeds University that opens today and last until Sunday.

He says the footage of the Pennine lights is remarkably similar to film shot in Adelaide, Australia, in June last year.

And he also links the phenomena with unidentified lights caught on camera by a Brazilian television crew that was filming an aerobatic display in June this year, and streak-like UFOs that were filmed by a US Air Force telescope/camera in Hawaii in 1993.

The moors above Marsden have long had a history of UFO reports and sightings of strange lights.

Before anyone had thought of aliens, the lights were put down to will o' the wisps or marsh gases. The Floating Light pub over the tops on the Oldham road may have got its name from such legends.

In recent years, the sky-high sightings have been more frequent. Some can, undoubtedly, be put down to aircraft using Manchester Airport and the busy air corridor up the spine of the country and over Huddersfield.

Many trans-Atlantic flights from London take this route, before turning left at Lockerbie.

There were many sightings of unexplained lights in August and October two years ago and in August last year.

What was described as an upside-down shuttlecock with two rings of lights was reported over Golcar, a spinning disc of light formation was spotted over Dalton, and lights persisted over Cowlersley during a two week period.

Two nights after the February Pennine Lights, motionless parallel lights were seen over Castle Hill.

Explanations put forward have included meteor activity in outer space and the laser show at the Old Corn Mill pub at Cooper

Bridge.

Sceptics will always find an answer, just as those with a desire to believe will always remain hopeful of a close encounter to prove life in space.

And it is not only laymen who report strange sightings.

This month's *UFO Magazine* also carries a report by Dr Colin H Ridyard that has been sent to the British Government asking for greater investigation into Unidentified Aerial Phenomena and UFOs.

Dr Ridyard has collated his evidence from many sources, including the US Department of Defence and the British Ministry of Defence.

"It is clear from this information that on occasion, UK airspace has been penetrated by unidentified craft with design and performance parameters well in excess of cutting edge state of the art technology."

He says: "Despite the uncertainties, the origins of these craft are truly alien, in as much as they have not been manufactured by any known Earth-bound civilisation."

Dr Ridyard quotes well-documented examples of the unexplained from RAF and commercial pilots. There have been 3,500 civilian pilot encounters alone. One occurred over the Pennines at 6 48pm on the night of January 6, 1995, as a B737 descended towards Manchester Airport.

"An unidentified wedge-shaped craft passed down the right side of the plane, so close in fact that the first officer instinctively ducked as it went by," he says.

"It is clear," adds Dr Ridyard, "that the above cases are only the tip of the iceberg."

● Information about the 17th Leeds International UFO Conference can be obtained by calling Freephone 0800 068 7281. *UFO Magazine* is available at newstands price £2 25.

COMMUNITY REVIEW, Esterhazy, Saskatchewan, Canada - Dec. 19, 1998 CR: G. Conway

## UFO spotted near Esterhazy

Willard Sikora isn't sure exactly what he saw but it was real.

The farmer was working in the field northeast of Esterhazy on Aug. 25, when he saw something unusual.

"At first I thought it was a semi-trailer going down the road," he said.

An object with a number of rows of red lights was going across the sky.

"I knew that it was higher than the road and was a lot longer than a semi," said Sikora.

Still, he didn't know exactly what it was.

Although it was too far away to see the entire object, Sikora

said that the rows of lights at either end got closer and closer together, making him suspect that the object was round.

"It was really dark," Sikora said of the encounter that occurred at 10:15 p.m. It was kind of eerie."

The farmer was driving a swather with no cab when he noticed the lights.

"If I had a cab I may not have seen it at all with the way dash lights reflect on the glass," he said.

The object moved across the sky and stopped near the microwave tower on the Bredenbury grid.

"I could see a bright light

going across the sky but I couldn't tell if it was coming from the red lights," he said.

It stayed at the tower for a few moments and then disappeared.

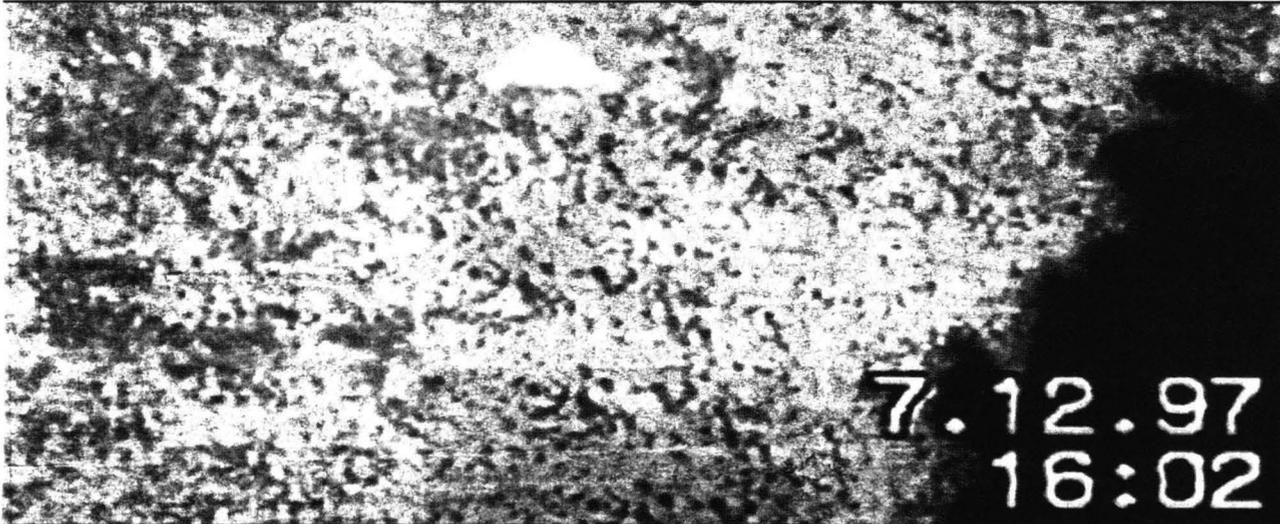
"I don't know what it was but I'm not making it up," he said, adding that he'd have no reason to lie.

Some of the people who heard Sikora's story suspected it was just a falling star. "I've seen enough falling stars to know it wasn't a falling star," he said.

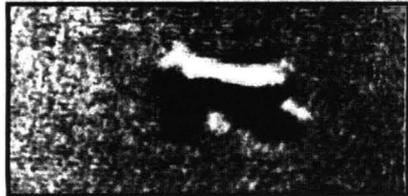
Sikora went home to get his truck and he and his wife looked for the object again but couldn't find it. He later contacted the RCMP but nothing came of his call.

# Expert believes these photos prove there is alien life

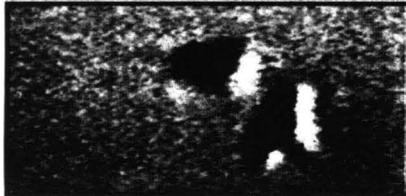
# ARE UFOs HAUNTING SKIES OVER SUFFOLK?



SAUCER WONDER: The third flying saucer is clearly visible in David's video, which experts described yesterday as the most significant British UFO film ever



DOG FIGHT: Triangular craft speed by just feet apart



CLOSE CALL: One crosses the other's flight path



LAST SIGHT: They zoom off over coast at Lowestoft

## THESE are the most astonishing UFO pictures ever taken in Britain.

The stills come from an incredible 35-minute video filmed in Suffolk and passed exclusively to the News of the World, showing:

- THREE flying saucers shooting past in a blaze of lights in three separate incidents.
- A CIGAR-SHAPED craft accelerating at incredible speed, and
- HUGE triangular objects engaged in a mock dogfight.

We showed the full 35-minute video to acknowledged UFO experts—and they were stunned.

Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO Magazine, said after analysing it: "It is absolutely amazing, the most striking UK footage I have seen."

Nicholas Redfern, author of acclaimed UFO study A Covert Agenda, agreed and added: "It's on a par with anything filmed anywhere in the world. I firmly believe this is extra-terrestrial."

### Convinced

The video was compiled over five months last year by UFO spotter David Spoor, 54, who said: "I still can't believe what I filmed."

"Now I am convinced there is another life out there. I'm SURE they are from another planet."

His wife, Labour district councillor Jean, 49, said: "I know of no earthly craft that could have behaved in this manner."

David said he filmed the first UFO last August from his three-bedroom bungalow in the village of Oulton Broad, near Lowestoft, Suffolk. He explained:

"I was just closing my garage door about 7.45pm when I looked up and saw a bright cigar-shaped object flying slowly through the sky."

"I was so excited I grabbed my video camera from the house and started filming it."

"I propped the camera on the fence and filmed it as it went towards the coast."

"After about 30 seconds it suddenly accelerated at incredible speed—far faster than a jet plane ever



WORLD PREMIERE: David and camera

### EXCLUSIVE

By PHIL TAYLOR and TIM LUCKETT

could—and just vanished. I couldn't believe what I had seen.

And when I popped it in my video to analyse it, I saw these little strobe lights flashing on either side.

The most amazing thing was they weren't attached to the craft.

Since then I have had the film analysed by experts from UFO Magazine and they say it is an extraordinary sight. They

cannot explain it. Now I've found other people who also saw the UFO that night and were equally amazed.

"I am just thrilled I caught it on video because I fear people would not have believed me otherwise."

But that was just the opening shot of the extraordinary X-File film.

A month later his camera caught the first flying saucer. Recalls David: "It was just after 9pm when I looked out of the window and saw a very bright object in the sky. I grabbed the camera and rushed into the garden."

"I filmed this amazing saucer-shaped craft slowly moving from the East. It was very bright and had a shimmering appearance. I called Jean and she stood there open-mouthed in wonder alongside me."

### Excited

"There was no sound and as it slowly moved towards me I saw a light on one side."

"We shouted out to our neighbours to witness it but they were too busy watching TV!"

Jean said: "It didn't spook me. It excited me. And it was exactly how I imagined a flying saucer would look."

On October 7 last year, David rushed for his camera again.

He revealed: "This one was almost identical to the last craft."

"I was in the garden and saw these amazing flashing lights towards the sea."

"I was so intrigued I jumped on my bicycle and rode towards the coast."

"There I saw this saucer-shaped object hovering over the sea and I filmed it for several minutes. Then it just vanished as though a light had been switched off."

In December came the third saucer. Said David: "This one arrived just before 4pm."

"When I started filming the saucer—which was emitting loads of light—it looked like it was still."

"Then it slowly moved behind a tree to the west."

"I went towards the front of the house to try and pick it up on camera again and it went behind my house. Then I lost it."

Jean said: "I loved watching it. I could even see what appeared like little portholes. There is no way it was a plane."

In November David also filmed what he described as "large black triangles" flying over a decommissioned MoD site on the coast at

Lowestoft.

He said: "They were doing aerobatic manoeuvres at high speed. I have no idea what they were."

"Everything I have caught on video completely baffles me."

Last month it was reported the RAF tracked a triangular-shaped UFO "as big as a battleship" off the South-east coast.

Two Dutch air force jets scrambled to intercept the object but could not keep up, it was reported.

RAF officials were themselves baffled by the bizarre sighting.

One source said: "It was definitely under control, judging by the manoeuvres it executed." But some UFO watchers believe the military deliberately releases such stories as a smokescreen to explain sightings of top-secret experimental craft.

Yesterday, as UFO experts from throughout Britain congregated in Southend, Essex, to discuss the latest findings, Graham Birdsall said: "The fact that we are having these kind of strange phenomena filmed over our shores is quite amazing."

### Aware

Nicholas Redfern said: "In my opinion, David's video is the most important UFO footage ever filmed in Britain."

"It is important that people get to see it as they should know what is going on over their heads in our airspace."

The 32-year-old West Midlands author added: "I am not aware of anything the military has anything flying which even remotely resembles the objects in David's footage. And I would question the wisdom of any military agency which would risk flying classified experimental aircraft over built-up areas."

"I firmly believe that what has been filmed by David is extra-terrestrial," he added.

To research his disturbing book, Mr Redfern was granted unprecedented access to thousands of previously classified Ministry of Defence files on UFOs.

In A Covert Agenda, he claims: "Rationally-controlled machines from beyond Earth are routinely penetrating UK airspace."

"The military infrastructure has little or no control over the violation."

Despite this, evidence is now being uncovered which shows that there has been an official shift in policy.

"There is now a desire to disseminate to the public hitherto top-secret UFO data collected over the past 50 years."

# LOOKING BACK

DAILY NUGGET, Toronto, Ontario, Canada - Aug. 6, 1952

## Jets Sent on Trail of Sky Ghosts Shown Up on Radar Screens

By JERRY T. BAULCH.

WASHINGTON, July 28.—(AP)—Radar—which normally does not show something that isn't there—has picked up "flying saucers" near here for the second time within a week.

Jet fighter pilots searched the skies Saturday night and early yesterday without directly contacting anything during the six hours that four to 12 unidentified objects intermittently appeared on radar screens at Washington National Airport and nearby Andrews Air Force base.

### Saw Four Lights.

One pilot said he saw four lights approximately 10 miles away and slightly above him but they disappeared before he could overtake them. Later, the same pilot said, he saw "a steady white light" five miles away that vanished in about a minute.

So far as could be determined this was the first time jets have been sent on the trail of such sky ghosts.

Officials carefully avoided mentioning "flying saucers", just as they did when radar picked up seven or eight unidentified objects near Washington last Monday. But the U.S. Air Force was expected to add the report to its long list of saucer sightings, which officials say are coming in faster than at any time since the initial flurry in 1947.

An Air Force spokesman said all necessary steps are being taken to evaluate the newest phenomenon.

### Registers Substance.

Radar normally does not register anything without substance—such as light. But it can pick up such things as a bird in flight or a cloud formation. And one expert said radar is not infallible.

The Air Force reported that between four and 12 unidentified objects appeared at 9:08 p.m., EDT, Saturday night on the radar screen at the air route traffic control centre operated

by the Civil Aeronautics Administration. Their position was estimated at 10 miles east of Mount Vernon, Va., which is near Washington National Airport. The Air Force sent up two jet fighter interceptor planes which appeared on the radarscope at approximately 11:25 p.m. The CAA tried without success to guide the planes into contact with the mystery objects.

The pilot who spotted the lights said they "were really moving"—faster than 600 miles an hour. But radar operators at Andrews Air Force base said they moved at a "slow rate of speed"—38 to 90 miles per hour. This could mean the same patterns as last week's sightings—slow moving objects with bursts of speed.

JOURNAL, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

July 28, 1952

Can't See Them

## "FLYING SAUCER" FLEET FILLS WASHINGTON SKY

WASHINGTON (AP)—The heaviest concentration of unidentified objects yet observed in the skies here—a veritable fleet of "flying saucers"—moved across radar screens early today.

A spokesman at Andrews air force base said the blips were observed late last night, and that early today they were still moving slowly and steadily across the screens.

Planes were directed to intercept the objects, but reported they were unable to see anything.

Radar operators said the objects were moving at about 60 miles an hour from west to east.

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## SAYS SCIENTISTS REPRODUCE "SAUCERS" IN VACUUM BELL

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Evening Star says today that U.S. army engineers, working with a vacuum bell in a laboratory, have produced atmospheric phenomena which may explain the widespread reports of "flying saucers."

In a copyright story by W.H. Shippen, the Star says the experiments created airborne objects which "can speed up, hover indefinitely, or disappear and reappear in a flash."

It adds:

"The man-made saucers" occasionally fly in formation. Moreover, they are believed to have substance enough to show up on the screen of a radar designed to track them."

What the experimenters did, the Star said, was use the vacuum bell as a tiny working-model of the

stratosphere and reproduce "two forces—very low air pressure which is balanced against static electricity in a way to give off light."

"Experimenters in the research and development laboratory at Fort Belvoir (Va.) believe these two are the primary factors responsible for saucer sightings by competent observers."

During a night of rain last night radar screens, scanning the skies over Washington, showed a flurry of mystery objects.

In line with the theory that they are atmospheric phenomena, an air force spokesman noted that the radar sightings—tiny blips on a fluorescent screen—started about the time a thunderstorm hit the area.



COAST GUARD SIGHTS UNKNOWN OBJECTS — This photo released by the Coast Guard was snapped by one of their photographers through a window screen when he sighted four "unknown objects"

(upper right) over the Salem, Mass., Air Station. The round objects, which the Coast Guard would not refer to as "flying saucers," appear in "V" formation, with extending bars of light.

## Ice Cutters See Swooping 'Saucer'

Canadian Press

COBALT, Ont., Feb. 1—Tom Cameron, 24, and Bob Cole, 28, blew in yesterday after a spot of ice-cutting and saucer-watching on Lake Anima Nipissing.

The ice-cutting was a routine business. The saucer—the flying variety, the men said—was unexpected.

Cameron and Cole said they spotted the object in the early-night sky Saturday and gazed at it for two hours through binoculars while it swooped and soared.

They said it appeared first as an aura of light in the east over the treetops. They concluded it was about three feet across and travelled at speeds greater than a jet plane.

The RCAF filter centre at North Bay, south of here, said it had received no reports of unidentified flying objects. A spokesman said he wouldn't attempt to guess what Cameron and Cole saw.

STAR, Montreal, Quebec, Canada - Feb. 1, 1957

Strange Light Hangs in Northern Sky

# Reporter Sees "Saucer" Over Cobalt Mine

By JOHN HUNT  
**COBALT**—Last night a flying saucer visited the Cobalt district.  
 No other explanation seems possible for the series of events witnessed by several persons including this reporter. It wasn't a star, a meteorite, nor an airplane. It didn't behave in any manner recognizable, in the light of human experience. Extra-terrestrial phenomena seems to be the only explanation.  
 It started at about 8.30 p.m. when this reporter was sitting down eating a cold chicken supper. The phone rang and an excited, almost panic-stricken voice gasped "John for God's sake get out here. There's a flying saucer overhead spitting out light all over the place." Who's that I asked. "Willis St. Jean. I'm at the Agaunico mine."

I drove at high speed to the Agaunico, which is some three miles north of Cobalt on the shore of Lake Temiskaming. On arriving at the mine I found Mr. St. Jean excited, almost frightened. "The thing came down low and scared the blazes out of me," he said.  
 He pointed up to the sky. For a minute I could see nothing. Then suddenly a light. It was a cold, clear light moving from the east to the west. It banked and went out. Then it came on again and hovered motionless. There was no sound except for the noise from the mine's compressor. I stood in the snow covered yard of the Agaunico mine and watched the light for more than one hour. At times it seemed to be quite low and at other times it disappeared into the heavens. Mostly I saw it

come in from the east, hover above the mine and then go out. I got cold and went into the mine dry. St. Jean said he had been walking from the dry to the hoist room shortly after 8 p.m. when suddenly the whole area was illuminated by a light brighter than daylight.  
 "I looked up," he said, "and there was this giant cone of light shining straight down."  
 St. Jean was alone at the mine while the miners were on Christmas holidays. The light was emanating from a giant rotating disc of pure light. The light was not just spinning but flying in circles. The cone was suddenly reversed and the disc sent its blinding light straight up into the sky.  
 Then it flew over Lake Temiskaming, lighting up the ice covered lake before it sped up into

the sky. We stood chatting in the dry. Then we looked out of the back door. The light came back again from the east. It was cold and clear and brilliant. If it had any shape at all it was slightly wedge shaped but it was at immense height. It danced around for a while. We walked back into the yard. I took my flashlight and signalled. I flashed the light on and off then waved in a circle. The mysterious light in the sky flew away and disappeared. Watching it, it seemed as if we could only see the light when it was flying towards us or hovering overhead. When it banked the light disappeared.  
 I called my wife in Cobalt on the mines phone and asked her to go out into the garden and look for the light. I also called OPP Constable Pat Shannon in

Cobalt and asked him to look for it. Later they both said that they could not see anything. St. Jean said that he could see some lights out on the lake. We climbed a ladder resting against the dry. St. Jean said that he saw half a dozen red tinged lights on the lake. I only saw one for a minute and then it disappeared. While we were standing there a car drove up containing Mrs. St. Jean and some friends. Can you see that flying saucer? I asked. "Don't be crazy," one of them said. Then they saw the light in the sky and fell silent. The group included William Montgomery, 27, of west Cobalt. His brother, Hugh Montgomery, 29, and wife Annette, 27, both of Kitchener, Ont. They all watched the light come and go, dance in the sky,

hover and dart as no airplane nor star nor meteor has ever behaved.  
 "I would never have believed it if I hadn't seen it," Mrs. Montgomery said. "And I don't suppose anyone will ever believe us anyway," her husband added.  
 I left the mine at about 10.15 p.m. and drove back to Cobalt. The light was still hovering in the sky. About an hour later, accompanied by Lee Moore, Sudbury insurance agent, I drove back but was told that the light had disappeared shortly after I left.  
 What it was that this reporter saw last night I do not know. I was stone cold sober and so were the others who witnessed the phenomena. As far as I am concerned a flying saucer flew over the mine and I saw it.

## 'Thing' Trips Saucer Alarm At Shirley Bay Sighting Post

At 3.01 p.m. yesterday, "something" was detected in the atmosphere over the Transport Department's Flying Saucer Sighting Station, 10 miles west of Ottawa at Shirley Bay.  
 It was a strange and unknown "thing" that registered on the Sighting Station's gravimeter.

"It could have been a flying saucer", today said Wilbert B. Smith, Engineer-in-charge of the Broadcast and Measurement Section of the Telecommunications Division of the Transport Department.  
 Mr. Smith, who built and operates the Sighting Station for the Transport Department, while saying guardedly that the object "might" be a flying saucer, was definite in his statement that it was not a plane.

"It could have been a saucer—and it also could have been a number of other things, including instrument failure—so we're checking", he reported.  
 Yesterday's sharp deflection in the station's instrumentation was the first large variation in the patient daily round-the-clock 10-month vigil.

Since last October, when the station opened, the gravimeter had traced out the even pulsing beat of the tides; the instruments electronically-operated pen drawing a thin and evenly rising and falling line along a four-inch wide, 250-foot long strip of paper.

When aircraft passed near the station, the planes were recorded on the gravimeter by what Mr. Smith described as "very slight deflections".  
 And so, for 10 months, nothing unusual, unexpected or unexplainable happened. Until 3.01 p.m. Sunday, that is, Mr. Smith was on duty when

the alarm bells—tripped by the sharp deflection on the gravimeter—rang.  
 "I dashed over to look at the instrument", he related.  
 "The deflection in the line was vastly greater and much more pronounced than we had seen even when a large aircraft had passed close overhead."  
 "I ran outside to see what might be in the sky.  
 "The overcast was down to 1,000 feet, so whatever was up there, whatever it had been that had caused this sharp variation, was concealed behind those clouds."  
 "We must now ask ourselves what it could have been.  
 "What in the atmosphere could cause such a sudden and sharp unbalance in gravitational forces at Shirley Bay?"  
 It's to answer that question that the station staff for the next couple of weeks will be checking and re-checking all possible explanations.

It will be a process of elimination, a rejection of "normal" explanations, that Mr. Smith may arrive at his conclusion... acceptance of an "abnormal" explanation.  
 Incidentally, this Summer, the Earth and Mars are in the closest proximity in recent years, 40 million miles.

## Many Mystery Objects Seen Wednesday Night

By THE CANADIAN PRESS  
 Mystery objects in the sky—ranging in description from "egg-shaped" to "a pinkish thing"—were reported Wednesday night from various parts of Ontario. Most came after 6:25 p.m. EST when Sputnik I was scheduled to pass over the province.  
 Gustav Bakos, an official at Dunlap Observatory near Toronto, said "red lights" reported could have been Venus which set Wednesday night around 8 p.m. He said the observatory had received several reports of objects.  
 Mrs. Sheila Funnel, of Meadowdale, 11 miles west of Toronto, said she saw a stationary bright light four times as big as the North Star. When she looked a second time it had turned amber. Then it vanished in a red streak.  
 At Richmond Hill, a Toronto suburb, a "brilliant glowing star" and a "glowing red object" and the "pinkish thing" were reported by residents.

At Belleville, there were several reports of "red lights" in the sky.  
 Strange lights were also reported in Northern Ontario. At Port Arthur, on the northwest shore of Lake Superior, residents of the Lakehead and surrounding district saw a "very bright, egg-shaped" object travelling "fairly low on the horizon at a fast speed."  
 Harold Guest, regional operator for the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Commission, said several reports had been phoned to him. He also had seen the object.  
 But air traffic controllers at the Lakehead airport reported nothing unusual.  
 At Shallow Lake, near Owen Sound, Donald Lennert, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Lennert, said he saw a "large, blood red object."  
 Sputnik II is expected to pass over Ontario at 5.11 a.m. EST Friday.

Strange lights were also reported in Northern Ontario. At Port Arthur, on the northwest shore of Lake Superior, residents of the Lakehead and surrounding district saw a "very

THEY'RE HERE - NOW!

# 'Saucer People' Keep Eye On Sudbury District

Sudbury is in for plenty more flying saucer visits.

"Your town is to be the centre of flying saucers activity because of the nickel mines here," an American investigator of supernatural phenomena told The Sudbury Daily Star.

Investigation of the reported landing of a "Martian" space ship on Garson Mine property last Friday was the object of a visit to the Sudbury district by Rev. Charles Beck, a Buffalo radio preacher. He is elder of the Church of God in Christ and an investigator with Borderline Scientists and Research Associates.

Beck, who predicts odd happenings to his radio audience, and then investigates them when they occur, spent three hours interviewing Ennio La Sorsa, 23, of 770 Charlotte St., who passed out at Garson Mine first aid Friday after having reportedly seen and been hypnotized by creatures from outer space, possibly Mars.

## INTERESTED IN MINES

"Saucers are interested in anything progressive," Beck told The Star, as the reason he believed one had landed here, and that numerous reports had been received in the past by others who had sighted them. "They are interested in atomic energy and any kind of mines.

"They are observing you. Your police officers and the commanding officers of the RCAF are in for big surprises from the saucer people. Your town is going to be in the international spotlight."

"In fact the saucers are here now," declared Beck. "There are many saucer people here now. They are walking your streets, mingling with your people here, even in your plants. They know every word between your officials."

Beck explained this by saying the creatures from outer space have the ability to change shape, even appear invisible and to go through solid matter.

Exactly two years ago in the small town of Flatwoods, in West Virginia, he explained, the same type of creatures as seen by the Sudbury mine worker, were observed by several people. Informed of the Garson case by an American service, he took the first train to Sudbury to check on similarities between the two.

In the Flatwoods case, he said, three children were playing football, when they saw a flying saucer land. They told their mother, but she just laughed. But a soldier home on furlough, decided to go along with the youngsters to investigate their story. When the group arrived at the spot, it was obscured by a fog — a fog emitting a sickening metallic odor.

## EYES SHINE DOWN

Two big eyes, seemingly in a tree, then glowered down on the group. Thinking it probably only a coon, the soldier shone a light at it through the haze.

It was out of this world. It had a greenish-blue body, a reddish face, six pincer-tipped arms and six legs and stood 15 feet tall — exactly the same type of creature seen by La Sorsa at Garson — except the one the miner saw had only one eye.

Beck said these West Virginians were hospitalized as a result of this experience. Investigations showed rocks had been grazed and trees smashed, apparently by the saucer which carried this being.



This Is It — More or Less

On the ground a black tarry substance was found, samples of which Beck was later able to collect. He said laboratories at Columbia, Howard and Pittsburgh universities were unable to analyze it.

Small trees were broken and the grass crushed at Garson, said La Sorsa, on the spot where the spacemen's greenish, glowing sphere had landed. La Sorsa denied rumors that the ground had been scorched there or covered with a white substance. Provincial police at Garson have denied there was any physical evidence of any flying saucer landing.

La Sorsa described the latest space ship as having zoomed towards the earth at a speed "20 times faster than a jet" and then hovering like a helicopter 25 feet from the ground before slowly descending. It was covered with portholes, out of which the three creatures descended.

Two stayed by the ship, he said, and as he started to run, the third froze him to the spot and trans-

mitted a message to him by mental telepathy.

"I wouldn't tell even my own mother what that message was," La Sorsa stated during the interview with investigator Beck. "But I'd rather be dead than carry out the message I was given — it was horrible."

A clean-cut young man, who did not want to be photographed, La Sorsa has done some boxing, and as a partisan during the last war was shot in the leg by a German soldier just before successfully blowing up a Nazi supply train.

Prior to the interview, Beck told The Star he had reason to believe that all the planets are inhabited, and that the creatures of the cosmos are being disturbed by atomic developments on earth — hence their numerous visits reportedly recently.

Beck also believes the type of creature La Sorsa saw was an evil being, "because God does not frighten his children." It could even be one of the devils, he said.

# Washington Spots Saucers On Radar

By JACK RUTLEDGE.

WASHINGTON, July 22.—(AP)—The United States Air Force today investigated reports that several "flying saucers" had been spotted by radar virtually in its own back yard on the outskirts of the country's capital.

Not only were unidentified objects seen on radar—indicating actual substance instead of mere light—but two airline pilots and a reporter saw eerie lights fitting the general description of flying saucers the same night.

Officials could not immediately agree on whether this was the first time radar has picked up flying saucers. All agreed it was unusual.

## Slow and Speedy.

The objects also were different from the average reported saucer in that they travelled at a relatively slow speed, as well as later disclosing the customary burst that far outspeeds normal planes.

One thing was certain: A thorough investigation is being made by the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, Wright-Patterson Air Force base, Dayton, Ohio, which has been set up to look into flying saucer reports.

The flying saucers over the capital were reported late yesterday, about 36 hours after the incident actually occurred.

This is the story as pieced together from Air Force reports, persons involved, and other sources:

An operator at Washington National Airport spotted eight unidentified images on one of his radars. The images were going probably 100 to 130 miles an hour. That was around midnight.

Capt. S. C. Pierman, of Detroit, piloting Capital Airlines Flight 807, soon reported seeing seven objects between Washington and Martinsburg, W.Va. He said they changed pace, sometimes moving at tremendous speed, at other times hanging almost motionless.

## Followed Airliner.

Another airliner, Capital-National Airlines Flight 610, also reported seeing a light following it from Herndon, Va., to within four miles of Washington.

Saul Pett, an Associated Press reporter, said he saw a "flying saucer" that same night near River Edge, N.J., outside of New York. It was orange-colored, round, moved swiftly and soundlessly, and he did not think it could have been a plane, balloon, or meteor.

# Irishman Grabs Flying Saucer

MONELMORE Northern Ireland (AP)—An Irishman named Thomas J. Hutchinson swore to police today that he captured a flaming red flying saucer—but it got away.

"He had difficulty in holding it down," he explained.

Hutchinson said he was sitting at home with his wife Maud about noon Friday when an object dropped from low clouds to the only dry piece of ground in the middle of a bog 200 yards from his front door.

He and his wife slogged across the bog and found the object lying motionless. It was egg-shaped, about three feet high and 16 inches in diameter.

"It was bright red," said Hutchinson, "with two dark red marks at the end and three dark red stripes. It had a saucer-shaped base."

## BEGAN TO SPIN

"I kicked it over," said the Irishman, "but it returned to its original position."

When he got down on his hands and knees to examine the battling

object more closely it started to spin.

So he put a hammerlock on the saucer.

"The police station," said Hutchinson, "was the only place for such a wicked looking thing as this and I started to carry it there."

But on the way to the village of Loup, Hutchinson had to get through a thick hedge.

## MAKES ESCAPE

"I put the saucer down for a moment," he said, "and what do you think? It started spinning again."

Before he had time to throw himself on the queer colored invader it rose quickly and disappeared into the rain laden clouds.

Police at Loup called RAF station at nearby Aldergrove.

The commander said the object did not belong to the RAF. When the police sergeant asked the air force officer for his opinion as to what the gadget might have been, he replied:

"I would not even hazard a guess."

## Police Skeptical

# Salesman Reports Meeting Space Men

United Press

KEARNEY, Neb., Nov. 6 — Authorities today held a "heart to heart" talk with a salesman, later discovered to be an ex-convict, who claimed he chatted with four men and two women in a transparent "space ship."

The report by Reinhold O. Schmidt, 48, of Bakersfield, Calif., last night was the most dramatic of a host of unidentified flying objects sightings reported around the country.

Mr. Schmidt's tale, as strange as any science-fiction story, stirred considerable excitement in the Kearney area for a time. Police roped off the spot where the "Whatnik" allegedly landed and examined various impressions and oil stains on the ground.

But curiosity turned to skepticism when Scottsbluff County Sheriff Steve Warrick revealed that Mr. Schmidt, a former potato buyer in Scottsbluff, Neb., was a former convict who served time in the Nebraska Penitentiary for embezzlement.

However, Mr. Schmidt stuck by his story. Police said they held a "heart to heart" talk with Mr. Schmidt last night, and planned further questioning today.

## White-faced, Shaken

Schmidt appeared in Kearney late yesterday, white-faced and shaken, and asked to see a minister. He said he was driving near Kearney on a grain-buying expedition when he spotted an object that looked like a navy oil blimp.

He said the four men and two women in the object spoke English and German, wore conven-

tional clothes and appeared to be in their 40s.

The salesman said his car engine died when he approached the object, which stood on four posts.

"I got out and walked closer — about 25 or 30 feet from it," Schmidt said. "Two men came out and came toward me. One waved what looked like a flashlight which glowed for a second. I couldn't move. I don't know whether I was just afraid or what, but it was like being paralyzed."

Schmidt said the walls of the ship were transparent from the inside and contained a "maze of dials, instruments and wiring inside."

"I was in the ship 20 or 30 minutes," Schmidt said. He quoted the "spacemen" as saying "We'll have to be here a little while—you may as well come inside." They appeared to be working on the wiring, the salesman said, and did not offer to explain any of the equipment.

They spoke among themselves in German, Schmidt said. Finally, he said, they told him to get out, and the ship propellers whirring, took off like a helicopter.

Police hurried to the scene and the FBI was notified. Investigating officers said they found impressions where the four posts allegedly touched down in the sand, along with footprints and a greasy fluid similar to castor oil.

## "Saucers" Seen

Elsewhere, strange "saucer" sightings sent Air Force pilots scrambling to investigate, kept police switchboards busy and brought hundreds of persons out to watch the sky.

Scores of sightings in the mid-west last night apparently stemmed from stars and the planet Venus playing tricks on the viewers. Other reports were not so easily explained.

The Coast Guard reported picking up an unidentified flying object on radar over the Gulf of Mexico south of New Orleans. A Coast Guard commander said the object paused over the cutter Sebago in the Gulf for a time.

## Car Engines Die

Military police and motorists said they saw a bright object hovering near the U.S. proving grounds at White Sands, N.M. They said the object killed the engines on their cars.

A "red ball" was sighted by several persons last night over the Atomic Energy Commission's Savannah River plant near Augusta, Ga. The executive editor of the Augusta Chronicle, Louis Harris, said the object appeared to be a "constant red light."

## Travels at 900 m.p.h.

# RAF Jets Outsped By Mysterious Object

Reuters

LONDON, April 30 — Royal Air Force all-weather jet fighters screamed into the air last night to chase a mystery object spotted on a south-coast radar screen.

The London Evening News, reporting this and an earlier sighting said: "The sighting of the object raised the question: Were they new-type long-distance bombers of the Russian Air Force on a training flight?"

The jets, Javelin fighters from Odiham base near Southampton, failed to intercept the object, reported travelling at 900 miles an hour over the English Channel.

An Air Ministry spokesman in London, disclosing this today,

said the object was first sighted just before nine o'clock last night.

An Air Ministry investigation has been ordered and reports from radar stations dotted along the coast are being studied before any statement is made.

It is understood that the object could have been a manufacturer's test plane.

Private firms testing prototypes do not necessarily have to give prior warning to the Air Ministry of any intended high speed attempt.

The Ministry is waiting to see if any manufacturer does report such a flight.

# Sure Flying Saucers Real

By ROBERT TAYLOR

Star Staff Correspondent

Ottawa, July 6—If mankind put on a crash program such as led to the atomic bomb, they could have space travel in 10 years, in the opinion of Wilbur B. Smith of the department of transport.

But he doesn't think that in 10 years' time we will have our own flying saucers, for governments apparently aren't interested in pouring out the billions of dollars needed for studying how the flying saucers work.

How long will it take, Canada's most ardent student of flying saucers was asked. He figures if governments hadn't decided on a crash program for atomic energy, it might have taken from 100 to 150 years to get it. If research proceeds in the usual way, and no big league program is put on in regard to the technology of flying saucers, it might take from 100 to 150 years for man to get flying saucers for the big move into outer space.

## Distorted View

One barrier to a governmental crash program in this field is that the flood of pub-

licity, "much of it garbage," has made it look ridiculous "and the scientific facts have been ignored so that the public and those who control governmental purse strings have a distorted view of the whole thing."

Though his work in the department of transport is divorced from flying saucers, he has made a serious effort to discover all he can about these UFO's — unidentified flying objects.

He has, as a hobby, checked with many people who have claimed to have seen them. He has concluded there is a 91 per cent. probability that what they saw was genuine and a 60 per cent. probability that they were "alien vehicles."

To even a veteran science fiction reader like this reporter it comes as something of a shock to talk with a man who, after lengthy study, is so convinced that aliens from outer space have been among us that he chats about them almost casually.

## Massive Probe

He was asked if he thought mankind might be shocked into a massive investigation of flying saucers by having one appear in public.

"UFO's have been with us for the last period of civilization," he said. "Since they have not manifested themselves to us in that way, I do not see any probability of them doing so in the future. They probably see us as a low form of life, interesting to keep an eye on, but they do not care much what we do."

He said he is personally convinced they are "extra-terrestrial," out of this world. One idea is that they are "inter-dimensional," able to move from one dimension to another.

He believes a study of how they operate would reveal the technique of space travel. The U.S. plan for an earth-girdling satellite, he feels, "is going at it the hard way." About 180 tons of fuel is used in the U.S. plan to put a 20-pound weight into space.

He is convinced the secret of space travel can be uncovered by human beings "if they devote time and effort to it."

But it would be a big job. Just how big he didn't know. "Something of the scope of IGY—the International Geophysical Year?" he was asked. "IGY is peanuts," he said.



# MONSTERS of the Deep

Is what looms beneath Okanagan Lake an unidentified amphibian or the projection of our deepest fears? ~ By Alexander Varty

Unless disturbed by westerly winds blowing in from the Strait of Georgia, the waters of Tunstall Bay, on the west side of Bowen Island, are typically clear and calm, populated by ocean perch and juvenile salmon and thousands of scuttling crabs. It's ideal territory for snorkelling, and so it is that on this sunny August day I've donned mask and flippers and am cooling myself in the sea. Something on the ocean floor—a glittering shell, perhaps, or a chameleonlike, camouflaged flounder—catches my eye, so I dive. Time slows down underwater, and although I can only hold my breath for a scant few seconds, it seems longer. I follow the sole—for that is what it is—across the shingled bottom, then, with a start, I realize that something large is almost directly above me. A sideways glance reveals a long, pale, ridged belly, with the suggestion of a horselike, horned head above the silvery, shifting waves. Whatever it is, the thing seems about 10 feet long, and from it dangle six wiggling appendages: four small limbs from its chest; two more sizable ones from where its waist would be were it human.

Gasping, I surface—and wave hello to my neighbour Julie and two of her sons as they glide across the placid bay on their plastic, inflatable Ogo-pogo.

This is as close as I am ever likely to get to seeing a sea serpent or lake monster, although a similar creature winks from the sidewalk in front of a Kitsilano chandlery, and hundreds of the beasts can be seen in the vicinity of Penticton and Kelowna—on T-shirts, ball caps, and souvenir mugs. But for John Kirk, a former journalist turned president of the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club, Ogo-pogo is real. He's got it on videotape.

"The genesis for the entire cryptozoological thing stemmed from a sighting in May of 1987, at Mission Creek Vineyards up in Kelowna," he explains, interviewed over sushi at a downtown restaurant. "I happened to have been up there with the wife and the kid and a family friend, and they were looking at something on the surface of Okanagan Lake, which the lady, who didn't have her glasses, took to be a motorboat. But my son, who's a little more sharp-eyed, said, 'That's not a motorboat. I don't know what it is, but it's not a motorboat.'"

"So I was fiddling with my video camera, and I happened to look out and see what it was they were looking at, and immediately I saw it was a head. A very large head. From the distance I was standing, it had to be about three feet long to be visible at all. And it was pattering along the lake making a small wake behind it. It definitely wasn't a boat; it wasn't a beaver; it wasn't the back of a sturgeon, so I started shooting this with the video camera, because I had heard that there was something in the lake from tourism material that I had received. So I watched it swim, and I knew that it wasn't a wave when it veered and turned towards the other shore.

"I was absolutely staggered by this," he continues. "I'd thought it was all mythology or a tourism gimmick and was pleasantly surprised that I'd seen something rather odd. And then about 15 minutes later, the thing came back, and it was on our side of the lake, as it were—it's about a mile and a half wide at that juncture—and this massive object, which had to be at least 60 feet long from tip to tail, surfaced. I saw a head, a very long neck, and then a series of perhaps five or six humps, and

what looked like a tail structure at the back. And that stayed up for about two or three minutes and then just sunk very slowly, vertically.

"The whole experience was breathtaking. I don't know how to describe it. It was like seeing... well, I don't know if it was like seeing God, but it was certainly an amazing experience, to say the least. So, my curiosity having been piqued at having seen one of these things got me going, as far as cryptozoology was concerned."

Cryptozoology, it should be explained, is a fairly recently coined word for the study of living animals unknown to science. B.C. is one of the world's cryptozoological hotbeds, along with the jungles of Vietnam and the Amazon River watershed. Cryptozoology buffs were recently cheered by the discovery of three previously uncatalogued species of large ungulates—*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*, *Megamuntiacus vuquanensis*, and *Muntiacus truongsonensis*—



in Southeast Asia; biologist David Oren is hot on the trail of the giant ground sloth, thought extinct for 10,000 years, in the dense forests of western Brazil. Closer to home, we have the well-known Sasquatch, a shy, shaggy hominid rumoured to inhabit the Coast and Cascade mountain ranges, and the somewhat less well publicized Cadborosaurus, a mysterious oceanic animal that occasionally surfaces in the waters off Vancouver Island. There are also unconfirmed reports of enormous black salamanders living in Harrison and Chilliwack lakes—and, of course, there's the Ogo-pogo, a denizen of the B.C. Interior that has been a fixture of regional mythology for as

long as anyone can remember.

The aboriginal inhabitants of the Okanagan shores had a name for it, Naitaka, and reportedly threw it a dog or other small animal whenever they crossed the lake in their dugout canoes. But most historical reports of the beast date to the 1920s, when an influx of war-weary European settlers, lured by the promise of sun and fertile soil, began to transform the valley into the paradise of orchards and vineyards that it is today. At that point, Ogo-pogo was appearing on a regular basis, and the settlers were so alarmed by its size—and by the bloodthirsty qualities attributed to it in Native myth—that they petitioned Victoria to arm their local ferries, or so Kirk claims.

Unfortunately, no specimens of the animal have ever been found. Nor, for the purposes of this article, did we have access to Kirk's videotapes—they were out on loan to the Learning Channel, which is preparing a program on the Okanagan phenomenon to be broadcast next February. Kirk

has, however, compiled his research into Ogo-pogo and other aquatic mysteries into the book *In the Domain of the Lake Monsters: The Search for the Denizens of the Deep* (Key Porter Books, \$21.95), and in it he describes his own several sightings as well as a number of other eyewitness reports.

At the very least, it makes for interesting reading. "Swimming down the middle of the lake, in a roughly north to south direction, was the large head of what I thought to be the biggest snake on the planet," he writes of his first encounter. "The creature appeared to resemble the general aspect of a reptile, but I had never seen one that quite looked like this. It's [sic] head was a light gray color and stood out from the water, which was a pale blue color at this time of the evening.... The Ogo-pogo was swimming in a supremely serene manner with no spray thrown up. Its movements were fluid and powerful. Unlike dogs, deer, horses, beavers, or otters, this animal did not swim in an awkward fashion, it appeared to be simply gliding along."

On another occasion, this is what he saw: "I swung further around and looked through the eyepiece of the telescope at a huge animal which could be clearly seen because of the powerful magnification. There were five huge humps at least six feet long with intervals of water between them of approximately the same length. The humps were about three feet above the water and I could see that the animal had jet black skin, very much akin to that of a killer whale.

"Under its skin there were what appeared to be dozens of little bumps like warts or calluses, similar to tubercles in the skin of some whales.... The overall length of our animal appeared to exceed 35 feet."

And in conversation he told me of seeing "the granddaddy and grandmother of the population" together, one 60 and the other 70 feet long.

Implausible? Sure. But Kirk's reports tally with other descriptions of whatever it is that inhabits Okanagan Lake, and not only those he reports in *In the Domain of the Lake Monsters*.

Kelowna resident Arlene Gaal—like Kirk, a former journalist—is the doyenne of B.C. lake-monster researchers, having published two books on the subject: 1976's *Beneath the Depths and Ogo-pogo, the Million-Dollar Lake Monster* a decade later. When she wrote her first book, she retained a degree of skepticism about the phenomenon, but since then she's seen things she simply can't fully explain.

"I've actually had three personal experiences," she reports, on the phone from her Kelowna home. "As a researcher on Ogo-pogo, I had written my first book and had been checking out various reports on sightings, gathering data, et cetera, and I'd gone out in 1979 to check out Bill Stesiuk's sighting near Lake Okanagan Bridge. It was a beautiful October day, and the lake was mirror calm. I remember parking my car near the chamber of commerce office. First of all, I was enjoying the lake because it was mirror calm; I remember taking a few scenic shots of the reeds, et cetera. And then I began checking Bill Stesiuk's sighting out, as to where he spotted it, how it travelled, the direction, et cetera. And when I was fairly satisfied that I'd covered all the details, I was about to leave, and very suddenly I saw something break water, very large, and with waves rolling off its back. I remember immediately saying, 'Oh, my God, no,' and



John Kirk's been fascinated with aquatic mysteries since glimpsing Ogo-pogo. Alex Waterhouse-Hayward photo.

(continued on page 18)

then I remembered that I had my Nikon camera on the seat of my car, so I ran to the shoreline and proceeded to take about five sequential shots—and then I sat down and I desperately tried to convince myself that what I had seen was not there."

Gaal went directly to the Kelowna Daily Courier, where her son was staff photographer, and had the film developed.

"It showed an image of something on the surface of a mirror-calm lake, very dark in colour, and at least 40 to 50 feet long. And what was also interesting was that in the sequential shots, where I had a mirror-calm shoreline, we had ripples moving towards the shore, obviously showing that there was something moving through the water.

"The second experience, I was driving along Lakeshore Road with my daughter, taking our dog to the pound because I was heading to Vancouver for an interview with Jack Webster. I had spotted something out in the lake, again in mirror-calm water, and we took Benji in and drove back, and as we came to Camosun Beach again, my daughter said, 'Mom, it's still there. Maybe we should stop and have a look.' Being a researcher, you're a little bit skeptical, so I thought, 'Well, it's really probably nothing out there, maybe a buoy or a boat or something.' But we looked at this thing, which was extremely dark, and I guess what caught my attention was that there were little waves coming off it. That made me believe, again, that it had to be alive, that it wasn't just stationary, so I took a couple of shots and went home. After they were developed, it obviously looks like part of the body or the top part of the head, and the animal itself—it was a beautiful day—was most likely sunning itself or feeding in that area.

"The third time was off Bear Creek Road, heading towards Okanagan Lake Resort. My husband was with me this time, and once again I was not going to stop to take a photo. But I saw this unusual thing moving through the water at high speed. Really high speed. And what caught my eye was that if it was a boat, the wake would have been at the front and no wake at the back, but there was wake at the front and the back. So, again, I

stopped the car, took a couple of snaps, and added it to my files."

The problem with Gaal's photographs—and with Kirk's videotapes, as he readily admits—is that although they definitely show something in the water, they're not detailed enough to show what that something might be. "I wish that we had that great picture of, say, head, neck, limbs, et cetera," Gaal says with a sigh. "Although there has been film footage taken where you see something large coming up out of the water that, at times, resembles the flipper of a whale."

Gaal adds that in the book she's currently working on, *In Search of a Mystery*, she'll report on recent Ogo-pogo sightings and present her theories on the creature's nature. "It's obviously prehistoric in nature, a throwback of some sort," she specu-

very cold lake beneath a certain depth, and for it to remain submerged as it does, it would have to have an amazing breathing capacity, i.e., gills of some sort or a massive swim bladder and a lung capacity that was phenomenal. So I lean towards the amphibian side.

"Mammals, again, are air-breathers, and they would have to come up more frequently than these animals do, so you would see them on the shore, because every single aquatic mammal does come onshore at some stage or the other, other than the whales and the dolphins. Ogo-pogo is seen onshore, but rarely. It's sort of like one appearance in a hundred, and if it was a giant axolotl or salamander, or something of that nature, that would be quite acceptable. The only trouble is, it looks like a combination of a whole bunch of different things. It's immensely curious as to what this animal might be."

**"I don't think there is an unconscious need to see lake monsters; that's a lot of palaver, to put it bluntly."**

~ John Kirk

lates, adding that her hunch is that Ogo-pogo could be related to the plesiosaurs, gigantic marine reptiles that died off during the Jurassic Period, between 135 and 190 million years ago. "But I have mixed feelings about this, because I have one photo that was taken in Okanagan Centre that shows a mass of spray some 40 feet high shooting straight up off of something that was creating a commotion—and I'm watching these whale documentaries and seeing the same thing happen. I wish that we could pinpoint it and say that it is definitely A, B, or C, but until somebody comes up with a body washed up on shore or gets close enough to get a real good full-body shot, it's all speculation."

Kirk, for his part, is inclined toward the theory that the Okanagan monster is, by a magnitude of 10, the world's largest amphibian. "The dilemma is that you can't taxonomically classify the wretched thing," he admits. "I still don't know whether it's amphibian, reptile, mammal, or something entirely unknown—a phylum that doesn't presently exist in the world of zoology. But my leanings are towards amphibian, simply because for a reptile to exist in that lake would be extremely difficult. It's a

WHETHER WHALE, amphibian, or reptile, there's another big question mark regarding the existence of the Ogo-pogo, and that is that there must be several of these animals in order for them to successfully mate and reproduce. "You've got to be realistic," Kirk says. "If you don't want to dilute the gene pool, there's got to be between 15 and 20 of them of varying sizes. Now, this has been corroborated to an extent by what we call multiple sightings, where you have more than one animal. The record's five; on two occasions, people have seen five."

But marine biologist Kelly Sindall, collections manager for invertebrates, fish, amphibians, and reptiles at the Royal British Columbia Museum, points out that, according to his scientific understanding of genetics, five, 10, or even 20 Ogo-pogis would not be able to sustain a healthy population. "For the species to be viable, there has to be something in the order of a couple of hundred mating pairs that can communicate with each other somehow or another, and there certainly doesn't appear to be that," he says.

Even in a body of water the size of Okanagan Lake—140 kilometres long and up to 360 metres deep—it would be difficult to conceal 200 animals larger than the average luxury yacht. But not impossible, says Chris Roper, a specialist in remote-con-

trolled submersible cameras (and a former Victoria resident) who works for the Southern California branch of Stolt Comex Seaways, a major marine construction firm based in Norway. "There's always a place to hide," he says. "Our inability to get detailed portraits of lake bottoms and underwater valleys means it's not impossible that creatures that large could go undetected in a fairly good-sized body of water."

And although Roper's brief 1989 survey of Okanagan Lake using an RSI "Seamor" submersible camera—detailed in *In the Domain of Lake Monsters*—turned up no hard evidence for Ogo-pogo's existence, he's not prepared to rule out that possibility. "I'm a firm believer that there are large, unidentified aquatic animals that have yet to be photographed or filmed," he told me. "And I feel that there is a creature of some size that lives in that particular lake."

But an expedition that might prove—or disprove—Kirk and Gaal's theories would cost "in the hundreds of thousands of dollars" and take between 30 and 60 days to do properly, he says.

There have already been attempts to do just that. In the spring of 1991, a Nippon Television crew brought a small submersible to Okanagan Lake. Hindered by what Kirk describes as "blizzardlike" conditions and choppy water, they, too, found nothing, but that doesn't dampen the author's enthusiasm for the chase. "To do it right, it's got to be 30° Celsius, plus," he says. "If it's between 25 and 30, you'll get tons of boats out on the lake. Any hotter than that, most of the boats haven't any sort of cover, so they stay in, and anything below that, it's too cool to be out on the lake. And the surface of the lake has to be like a millpond, so you're not distracted by anomalous phenomena."

And those are the conditions Kirk hopes to encounter in the year 2000, when he plans to mount a millennial search for that obscure object of his desire—if the requisite money can be found. "We are constantly beset by...well, I wouldn't say they were insurmountable hurdles, but they certainly are high hurdles," he explains. "Every time you go to the supermarket, for instance, some moron with one of the tabloids has come up with a new story such as 'Loch Ness Monster Eats Diver,' 'Loch Ness Monster Found Dead,' you know. And that does nothing for credibility, so when you bring this to a corporate sponsor and you're talking about a scientific expedition to look for an unknown monster, it's 'Oh, is it the Loch Ness Monster?' You get the standard ridicule, the nudge-nudge, wink-wink, say-no-more sort of attitude from a lot of people, and that, of course, inhibits us from raising the necessary funds to do this."

"But every big lake I've ever heard of, every really big lake, the local people have a legend of some monstrous creature, and I suspect that this is a kind of yearning, a need, an ancient, atavistic need to reestablish a connection with the monsters of the ancient past. We seem to have a great yearning for it. It's an ingrained, unconscious recognition that we are not the masters of the world."

Unscientific though this may be, it seems plausible to biologist Sindall. "Do we unconsciously need something to respect and be awed by? Yeah, that's a pretty good analogy," he says.

For Kirk, though, it's not enough. "Are you suggesting we have a need to see monsters? That's a Freudian concept and a wonderful theory, but it's another story as far as fact is concerned," he says. "I've never put much credence in psychology, plain and simply because we live in the real world and they [psychologists] don't. In the case of lake monsters, I don't think there is an unconscious need to see lake monsters; that's a lot of palaver, to put it bluntly."

"When you have somebody who's researched it or read about it or is desirous to see a lake monster and then they actually see one, perhaps the theory works. There is a lunatic fringe, as far as lake monsters and Sasquatch and all that is concerned, who don't apply scientific methodology and principles or even common sense. And they like to move out into the X-Files realms, as it were. But in the case of many people who weren't expecting it, who weren't looking for it, who weren't aware that such things were supposed to dwell in a particular place...then the theory doesn't hold."

And he says the ultimate proof is something that no one has yet found: a body. "Science demands empirical evidence, and there's nothing more empirical than an actual type specimen."

Still, he's prepared for the possibility that there is an explanation for what he's seen—and what others have seen—that is more mundane than monstrous. "I think the greatest fun, for me, is not finding out what it is, but in the looking, as it were," he says, suddenly turning reflective. "I wrote to this Swedish explorer one day that that was my mentality, and the guy couldn't understand it. He said, 'You don't want this to come to a conclusion?' And I said, 'Not particularly.' I don't care what it is, in reality: the great fun is in getting glimpses of it, positing what it is, debating, discussing...It's like the old adage about going on a trip: the best part is the getting there, not the destination." ■

NEWS, Taos, NM - Nov. 12, 1998

## Recent cattle death prompts mutilation investigation

By Phaedra Greenwood  
The Taos News

Former state Sen. C.B. Trujillo, who runs a few cattle on 160 acres near Black Lake in the Angel Fire area, reported what he thought was a cattle mutilation to *The Taos News* this week.

The 2-and-a-half-year-old white-faced cow belonged to Trujillo's friend, Leroy Graham. The cow was found Saturday (Nov. 7) by rancher Norbert Vigil, who grazes a herd nearby.

According to Trujillo, the cow's uterus was cut out in a smooth circle, the upside eye was missing and the anus was cored out in what is known as a "classic" pattern. He said there were no tracks, no blood and the carcass had not been touched by predators, which surprised him. Graham thought part of the tongue was missing, but didn't pry the animal's mouth open. Trujillo said the two men were puzzled by a hole in the road next to the fence, about three

feet in diameter, very symmetrical, with chunks of grass removed.

Because of the precise incisions, Graham said he thought it was a mutilation. The cow was healthy, with a 5-month-old calf, and had been vaccinated for blackleg and redwater, he said. He recalled a similar mutilation on one of his cows in the late 1970s in Ranchitos that followed "almost the same pattern." The cow was worth about \$500, he said.

Gabe Valdez, who has been investigating strange animal deaths for more than 20 years, headed for Black Lake Monday (Nov. 9) to conduct a forensic investigation and take tissue samples, but was impeded by an early winter storm. Valdez works part-time for the National Institute of Discovery Science (NIDS) in Las Vegas, Nev. He returned to the site the following day. Test results are still pending.

Dr. Colm Kelleher, who does the histology work for NIDS, said, "Recently many cases in

New Mexico have been severely complicated in respect to clostridia, which has shown up in so many cases that it's like an epidemic." Clostridium is a bacteria that causes blackleg, but different strains of it are also found in post mortem tissue, he said.

Kelleher said NIDS has investigated about a dozen cattle deaths this year, including three in the Red River area last spring. "Right now we're going for the cuts," he said, "collecting tissue samples to see if they are cut with a sharp instrument or by chewing." Although these mysterious deaths have been going on for more than 20 years all over the country, there has been very little scientific data or laboratory research done, he said.

To request an investigation of a mysteriously dead animal, Valdez urged ranchers to notify him as soon as possible at home in Albuquerque: 275-5943; pager: 857-1717; and to please keep clear of the area and not blot out possible clues.

There's another possibility regarding the Ogo-pogo, one that we haven't yet raised but that must be raised in the interests of fairness: what if it's all a fiction? Not necessarily a hoax, or even a tall tale, but something we have collectively come up with to help explain away our fear of the unknown, of deep water, of the wild? That's what author Farley Mowat thinks of Ogo-pogo and other aquatic enigmas such as the one reputed to live in Lake Ainslie, near his Cape Breton home, or the legendary creatures rumoured to inhabit Dubawnt Lake in the Keewatin Barrens of the Northwest Territories.

"My Inuit friends there have regaled me at great length with stories of large creatures in what is now called Dubawnt Lake," says Mowat, who has spent much of his life researching the human mysteries of the Arctic. "They were not particularly antagonistic towards people, but they were something to leave strictly alone. If you saw one, you went for shore as fast as your kayak would take you."

# Enthusiast: Bigfoot pic was faked

Dispute over method  
splits sasquatch fans

By **JOHN M. HUBBELL**  
Associated Press writer

**BOTHELL, Wash.** — In the hearts and minds of true believers, Bigfoot's existence has long been enshrined in a single minute of jerky, grainy footage of a startled sasquatch retreating into the upper California woods.

But two enthusiasts of the legendary being are alleging four magnified frames of the 16 mm footage show tracings of a bell-shaped fastener at Bigfoot's waist. They say the creature in the so-called Patterson-Gimlin Film can finally be dismissed as a man in a monkey suit.

"It was a hoax," said Cliff Crook, a longtime Bigfoot tracker who devotes rooms to sasquatch memorabilia in this suburb north of Seattle. "How can an artificial, manmade object end up on a Bigfoot?"

The film, purportedly showing a female Bigfoot fleeing a streambed, was taken by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin on Oct. 20, 1967. It has largely withstood independent scrutiny and, for many steeped in the lore of the man-beast, has become bedrock evidence of its very existence.

"There's no way of really detracting from it," said Ray Crowe, president of the Western Bigfoot Society in Portland, Ore. The image captured in the footage "has a fluid motion. It's a wild creature of nature."

The film is important because many Bigfoot believers compare all plaster casts of telltale footprints against those made by Patterson the day he purportedly filmed the creature slinking across a sandbar in the Six Rivers National Forest.

Discredit the footage, experts agree, and the gold standard for Bigfoot tracks will be washed away.

Crook bases his assertion on computer enhancements performed by Chris Murphy, a Bigfoot buff from Vancouver, British Columbia, who maintains he discovered an aberration in the footage in 1995 while helping his son Daniel prepare a class project.

Murphy declined to be interviewed, instead supplying a written narrative detailing his discovery.

According to that account, the Murphys used a color photocopier to duplicate a frame of the Patterson film. Zooming in again and again, Chris Murphy became suspicious.

To him, something geometric — vaguely the shape of a bottle opener — seemed to take shape at Bigfoot's waist. Murphy maintains that four sequential computer-scanned frames of the film show



Associated Press photo

This still frame from a 16 mm motion picture made by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin, supposedly showing a female Bigfoot on Oct. 20, 1967, has been called a fake.

the object in different positions, as if it were swinging. He theorizes something is cinching the sasquatch costume in place.

Murphy made a clay model of the object and in October gave that and the enlargements to Crook, a charter-bus driver transfixed by sasquatch stories since 1957. That's the year he made a camping trip with teen-age friends on Washington's Olympic Peninsula that ended with telltale signs of a sasquatch encounter: a rustling of brush, a throaty growl and an ever-worsening hallmark musk.

Decades later, at 58, spare rooms in his home are dubbed "Bigfoot Central," stuffed with photos, plaster casts and maps dotted with push-pins that chart sasquatch sightings.

Now his hoax assertion is giving rise to a howl that would make a Bigfoot proud. Longtime enthusiasts smell a deserter.

One recent e-mail was typical of the incredulity Crook's allegation of a costume fastener is up against.

"Cliff, Cliff, Cliff," it scolded. "That's matted feces."

"There are two witnesses (and there are footprints," said Rene Dahinden, a Richmond, British Columbia, researcher who shares the film's copyright. "We've never had anything like it previously, and anything like it since."

Dahinden, 68, discounts Murphy as an amateur. "He wasn't involved in this until 1993," Dahinden said. "He couldn't spell the name 'sasquatch' before that."

Grover Krantz, a Washington State University anthropology professor and Bigfoot expert, also believes firmly in the old footage.

"I fully accept the Patterson film," Krantz said. "If there was a fastener, it could not be seen in an enlargement. The film grain is

such that it cannot hold an image of something that small."

The truth of the Patterson-Gimlin film remains as elusive as Bigfoot itself. Enthusiasts such as Krantz and Crowe see the film as a building block for their faith. And the faiths of Crook and Murphy endure in spite of it.

Crook knows, in dissent, he and Murphy are "far outnumbered."

"There's a few broken friendships because of this," Crook said. "I just figured, 'This is a search for the truth. When it becomes something different, that's when it should stop.'"

Maybe a Bigfoot will one day view the film, Crook figures, and offer its own disapproving grunt.

"There's just too much evidence that these creatures do inhabit certain areas out there," Crook said, ever sanguine. "Even though the Patterson film is a hoax, it doesn't mean Bigfoot doesn't exist."

# Waiting for ET to call

**T**HE conspiracy theorists and fans of television's *X-Files* are convinced that beings from outer space have visited Earth many times but that governments, for reasons of their own, are keeping the facts secret. Many of us know someone who has seen a UFO and 80,000 American citizens claim to have been abducted by aliens.

All of which tells us more about earthlings than extraterrestrials, for there is no credible evidence that our world has ever been visited by life from another planet. This is not to say that aliens do not exist - plenty of scientists believe they do. It is just that the best way to make contact with them is not to wander around Bonnybridge or sail the Bermuda Triangle, staring up at the sky. The distances between stars are so immense that we are much more likely to hear ET than see him, especially if we use the best ears on the planet - the giant metal dishes of the radio telescopes.

At Jodrell Bank, near Manchester, the site of one of the most effective radio telescopes ever built - it could pick up a mobile phone call at a distance of 200 million miles - scientists are about to take delivery of electronic equipment that will help them carry out the most comprehensive and sensitive search ever for extraterrestrials.

The equipment, built by the SETI Institute of California (SETI - Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence), will enable the Jodrell Bank scientists over the next five years to examine 1,000 different stars for signs of intelligent life. The search is based on a simple principle: aliens might look so strange that we would not recognise them as life; they could behave in bizarre and unpredictable ways; their thoughts and dreams might be incomprehensible to us; but all forms of intelligent life seem to have one feature in common - they hardly ever shut up.

And when a certain level of tech-

nology is achieved, the noise begins to leak into space because radio and television broadcasts do not stop at the limits of the atmosphere but spread outwards at the speed of light. So the news that Edward Heath has taken us into the Common Market has just reached the star Vega, while anyone with a large enough receiver near Arcturus will now be hearing the very first melodic strains of the Beatles' *Love Me Do*.

If our television programmes can reach alien planets, theirs can reach ours. But to catch an alien *Top of the Pops* a radio telescope must be tuned, just like an ordinary radio, to the correct frequency. Nobody knows what frequencies aliens use so the SETI equipment is designed to scan 50 million different frequencies very rapidly, the equivalent of listening to all the radio and television transmissions on Earth at the same time. The computer then flags up promising signals to be examined by scientists.

The big problem is interference. Galaxies, stars, interstellar clouds and space-dust, not to mention radio and television transmitters, cars, planes, ships, the Earth's atmosphere, electrical equipment, Jupiter and the sun, all emit radio waves. Which means that false alarms are very common. "The last search done in Australia found two things," says Richard Davis, a radio astronomer at Jodrell Bank. "The first was the microwave oven down below where they were cooking their tea. And the second was in space and caused some excitement before they realised it was one of the Pioneer spacecraft. Yes, we had found signs of intelligent life ... but it was us."

Which is why the search about to begin, known as Project Phoenix, will aim two telescopes at each star simultaneously - the Lovell 250ft dish at Jodrell Bank, and the largest aerial in the world, the 1,000ft dish at Arecibo in Puerto Rico. Using two telescopes will eliminate local inter-

## Modern skeptics unable to disprove miracle image said to be Virgin Mary

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**MEXICO CITY** — An ornate golden frame surrounds the rustic fabric made of cactus fiber.

The cloth holds the revered image of the Virgin Mary said to have been created miraculously on the cloak of an Aztec peasant in 1531.

As with the face said to be that of Christ on the Shroud of Turin, testing has been unable to explain the origin of the full-color image on the "tilma."

Scientific testing has not found any trace of brush strokes to indicate the figure is a painting, as skeptics claim. An infrared examination done by U.S. researchers in 1979 showed no underlying preliminary drawings or layers of protective varnish.

Dr. Juan Homero Hernandez, co-author of studies on the image, says the stars on the cloak correspond to northern and southern constellations as they appeared on Dec. 12, 1531, the date of the apparition. The golden outline of flowers on Mary's robe correspond to Aztec sym-

bols pointing out key geographic features in central Mexico.

A figure appearing at the foot of the Virgin Mary may symbolize Juan Diego, Hernandez says. The figure's wings are similar to eagle feathers, and Juan Diego's name before his conversion to Catholicism was Cuauhtlatoa, meaning "eagle that speaks."

Believers say the present state of the tilma cannot be explained since the cactus fiber should have rotted after 20 years. Pollution, soot from candles and handling by devotees' hands early in the cloak's history have not darkened the image or caused its colors to fade, they say.

In 1791, a worker cleaning the frame spilled nitric acid across the cloth, leaving behind only a watermark.

In 1921, an anti-religious group hid a bomb in a flower vase at the foot of the image. It exploded during a Mass, damaging the altar but leaving the frame and cloth unharmed.

Today, the cloth is protected by bulletproof glass.

terence and increase confidence that promising signals do come from space.

Alien television broadcasts will be very faint by the time they get here, but there might be much stronger signals flying around. It is possible that ET is trying to communicate, either with us or his extraterrestrial colleagues.

Critics of SETI claim this is unlikely. Surrounded by unknown and perhaps hostile life forms, they insist, nobody would jump up and down yelling: "Here we are." Yet Earth scientists did exactly that in 1974, when the Arecibo Observatory sent a message into space telling anyone who was listening about our chemical make-up, the population of Earth, the solar system and the radio telescope transmitting the message.

"I find all arguments that try to second-guess the motives of ET suspect," says Seth Shostak, a SETI astronomer. "Some societies might fear betraying their presence but it's unlikely that all advanced civilisations are maintaining radio silence. After all, radio is good for locating errant asteroids or sending information back from distant astronomical probes, just to name a few easily foreseen uses. I might go to a party feeling unsociable and not talk to anyone all night, but it's highly unlikely that all the guests will feel the same way."

Until recently, most scientists believed the only guests at the cosmic party were us because they knew of nowhere other than Earth likely to

support life. But astronomers have begun to detect such planets almost everywhere they look, and the conviction is growing that most stars have at least a few in orbit around them. There could be 100 million Earth-like planets in our galaxy alone. And there are 100 billion galaxies.

Nobody knows if living things will appear on all these planets. It is as if the scientists were in a strange kitchen where they have managed to find the ingredients for life and the recipe. But they do not know what kind of spark is needed to light the gas. They do know that life's building blocks are everywhere and that life put in an appearance on Earth soon after the planet formed, suggesting that it quickly gets a toehold if conditions are suitable. When it does appear it is incredibly versatile - life has been found thriving in boiling springs, sub-zero temperatures, strong acids, and radioactive wastes. And there are good reasons for supposing that evolution might always produce intelligence, given a long enough period of time.

First contact with ET could take place any time after Project Phoenix gets under way in August. "I find it inconceivable that we are the only intelligence in the galaxy," says Shostak. "I don't think they're here. We haven't made contact yet. So at the moment in one sense we are alone but I don't think we will be for very long. If we do get the 'big one' the world will never be the same again."

## Mystery creatures worm their way into Juneau

The Associated Press

**JUNEAU** — Legislators weren't the only visitors to blow into the state capital this week.

Residents of a Juneau subdivision woke up to find what appeared to be small, brown worms in their front yards Wednesday.

"They're everywhere. They're in the streets and the driveways," said Shawna

Dunlap, the mother of four young children. "It's kind of creepy. I don't want my kids to go outside until they take samples and find out what they are."

The dark-brown worms are about an inch long and thin as spruce needles. They could be seen several to a square yard on the icy street Thursday afternoon. Some of them were writhing in knotted clumps of a dozen or more in little puddles.

Jim Douglas, a resource development agent for the Alaska Cooperative Extension in Juneau, said the worms were likely harmless.

"They're certainly not man-eaters, so we don't have to worry about them carrying off any of our children," he said.

Douglas is sending samples to scientists at Oregon State University and the U.S. Forest Service in Anchorage.