



• Are we alone or is there life out there? It's a question which has puzzled mankind for centuries.

• RORY O'CONNOR talks to a local UFO-hunter who is convinced that aliens have visited Earth, and examines some of the bizarre sightings claimed all around Australia.

UFO hunter Martin Gottschall realizes many people think his views are off the planet.

After all, he believes there are aliens living in Australia that are just like humans.

But Mr. Gottschall, chairman of UFO Research Queensland, and a consultant mechanical engineer, said he was a skeptic like many others until he had an encounter that changed his life.

"I was very arrogant. As a scientist I did not accept what I could not explain," he said.

Then one afternoon in 1959 his wife ran into their suburban Adelaide house shaking with excitement.

"She had seen a large craft moving slowly over the neighborhood.

By the time the couple jumped in the car to give chase it had gone — but the event changed their lives forever.

The craft was seen by other witnesses as well.

"This was a case I could not dismiss because I know my wife was telling the truth," he said.

After that Mr. Gottschall began to devote his spare time to investigat-

Close UFO visits increasing

ing the growing number of UFO reportings from around the world.

In the early 1950s he moved to Queensland and joined UFO Research Queensland (UPORQ).

He was particularly amazed by the propulsion methods the craft were attributed with.

"People usually describe these things as 'doing pretty amazing manoeuvres,'" he said.

"They travel at supersonic speeds with no sonic bang and hover without noise.

"They have the ability to appear and disappear and blink on and off on radar.

"I was also amazed to discover how little active research was being done to try and explain this movement."

In conversation, Mr.

Gottschall comes across as a thoughtful man.

He is quietly spoken, considers each question carefully and his answers are slow and deliberate though often steeped in technical jargon.

He works from the basement of his house which is cluttered with pieces from a thousand electrical machines — all projects or experiments.

The walls are hidden behind shelves bulging with thousands of engineering texts and journals.

His library of UFO books is also extensive and contains nearly every significant piece published on the topic — several hundred in all.

As chairman of the UPORQ, Mr. Gottschall has dealt with more than 1000 sighting reports from around Australia.

witness reports were surprisingly consistent, he said.

One of Queensland's most recent and detailed descriptions of UFO activity came from a report in the Queensland outback town of Jovoh last June.

During the early hours of the morning they saw a UFO about twice the size of the moon being orbited by six smaller craft.

The display lasted for about 10 minutes and Mr. Gottschall said he had been impressed by the men's frankness and honesty since the sighting.

Four months later about 20 people reported strange lights moving through the sky off the coast of Cairns.

It was a clear night and all reported sightings were between 11.30pm and 12.30am.

An airline pilot was among a group at a harbour who saw the lights and he phoned the airport to see if there was any air traffic in the area.

There was none. The witnesses included fishermen, three elderly women driving home from dinner, a 28-year-old motor mechanic and his girlfriend, a jeweller, a few couples, a 43-year-old motel manager and a 21-year-old glazier.

Most sightings were about one to two miles from the coast.

A 51-year-old woman was driving with two friends along Port Douglas Rd when they saw an object about 11 tones above the moon out to sea.

They stopped the car and watched the object which they described as a bright, white and round.

The motel manager was the only passenger in a limousine when he noticed a horizontal band of incandescent white light. Both he and the driver filed drawings of what they saw.

The jeweller was driving alone along The Esplanade in Cairns when he saw two orange lights rise off the ground and level off horizontally.

As they moved more lights appeared and an orange glow spread between them.

The man became alarmed as he thought he was witnessing an aircraft on fire.

He stopped his car and ran on to a 50m grass strip between the road and the beach for a better view.

He tracked the craft as it passed over Elliot Point and disappeared behind Mount Murray Peak, descending slightly.

The incident lasted about two minutes.

Meet a real extra-terrestrial

Alien life comes in different shapes and forms, says Martin Gottschall. Some are biologically the same as humans and have the capacity to live on Earth undetected.

Others have the classic alien features. They are about 1.2 to 1.5m high, have two feet and two arms, with three fingers on each hand.

Their eyes are slanted and the skin is often said to be yellow or grey in color. The most feared of the alien are the greys. They are generally described by

victims of UFO abduction cases. Mr. Gottschall said he believed there were aliens living in Australia but they were nothing to worry about.

"There are some reports of aliens living in Australia," he said.

"But there might be thousands of human civilisations scattered throughout the galaxy. We find it strange because we think everything began here.

"Any civilisation that can travel throughout the universe is bound to populate other areas of the universe."



Martin Gottschall shows an eyewitness sketch of an alien spacecraft sighted in the outback town of Jovoh.