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NEWS



**UNLIKELY VISITORS** An alien among walkers in Broad Haven? Maybe just a serviceman in a special outfit  
Picture: Tony Paradise

**Aliens in West Wales**

- UFO mania began in Pembrokeshire after reports of 14 pupils from Broad Haven primary school seeing a UFO landing. The headteacher at the time backed up their claims, saying they had all drawn similar pictures of the craft.
- Numerous sightings took place afterwards, although many are now believed to have been the work of pranksters dressed in industrial or military suits.
- MoD Minister Dr John Gilbert MP ordered an investigation in 1977 after being inundated with inquiries. Findings were dull, but another was later done in Pembrokeshire without his knowledge, and has still not been published.
- Pembrokeshire flying saucer stories reached their height in 1979, when a full-scale model of the *Star Wars* Millennium Falcon ship was being secretly built in a warehouse in Pembroke Dock. Workers were ordered by *Star Wars* series producer George Lucas to refer to the ship, which could hover on compressed air, as The Magic Roundabout project.

# Emerging through the mists of time, a UFO explanation

A SPATE of mysterious UFO and alien sightings which gripped a Welsh community 30 years ago may have finally been explained.

A former US Navy sailor claims the furore gripping the Broad Haven area of Pembrokeshire in the late 1970s was caused by an officer in a special fireproof uniform, and new RAF jets.

The sailor, who served in the area shortly after most of the sightings, says a fellow officer admitted he had been responsible.

The clamour around the possibility of little green men visiting Pembrokeshire in the late 1970s led to numerous tabloid reports, including one of an entire class of schoolchildren claiming to have seen a UFO landing.

Many others reported being petrified by a strange silver alien.

It all happened in what became known as the Broad Haven Triangle, and canny tourist operators even started running UFO sighting weekends.

However behind the hype, Government officials took some of the tales seriously, and it was revealed last year by UFO expert Dr David Clarke that a secret MoD investigation had been carried out.

Now, following publicity about the investigation, James Carlson from Albuquerque, New Mexico, has written to the *Fortean Times* – a magazine about the supernatural

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– with what he believes are answers to West Wales' paranormal riddle.

He was stationed at the US Naval Facility in Brawdy in the 1980s.

In his letter Carlson tells how one of his supervisors, who is identified only by the name Steve, saw him reading a book about paranormal incidents around Brawdy, which was also an RAF base.

The book quotes an RAF officer, who states the descriptions of "alien" suits were in no way similar to military uniforms at the time.

However Carlson was told by Steve that the description was identical to firefighting gear used by American personnel.

He said, "Steve told me that while serving on the fire team of his division, he would often don the asbestos suit and oxygen breathing apparatus provided.

"Fire preparation drills, even those conducted at night, would require members of the fire team to search the areas around the base, and Steve claimed that during these drills he became responsible for two of the alien sightings."

He added that a contemporary report of a UFO sighting in Pem-

brokeshire, which suggested the craft could not be man-made because of its gentle swaying and hovering motion, exactly fitted a description of the Harrier Vertical Take-off and Landing jet, which had been used in the UK since 1969.

Dr David Clarke, who teaches folklore at Sheffield Hallam University, is the man who last year uncovered the MoD's secret 1970s investigation into Welsh UFOs, and this year discovered a more recent Government investigation, which concluded UFOs are probably caused by atmospheric phenomenon.

He said of the letter in this month's edition, "It adds to certain testimonies and makes sense.

"A few people have already admitted a hoax, and one has even said he had to jump into a hedge when a lady aimed a gun at him in his suit."

Dr Clarke, who is a correspondent for *Fortean Times*, added, "There will never be absolute proof either way, but Wales has always had a history of these sorts of sightings – it's a real hotspot for them, whether they're just atmospheric phenomenon or not.

"It used to be perceived as fairies and little folk, but now we're in the space age and everybody's seen *Battlestar Galactica* and *Star Wars*, everything is aliens and space ships."

SOFAS AND CHAIRS, BEDS AND BEDROOMS, DINING ETC