

You forgot "www." at the beginning of the server name!

You have accessed this page though an incomplete server name: ufomind.com instead of www.ufomind.com --- so some services may not work. Please go to the [correct address for this page](#) to make this message go away.



Aliens On Earth.com

Resources for those who are stranded here



[UFOs](#) | [Paranormal](#) | [Area 51](#)
[People](#) | [Places](#) | [Random](#)
[Top 100](#) | [What's New](#)
[Catalog](#) | [New Books](#)

Search... for keyword(s)

in Book Title/Author

Our Bookstore
is [OPEN](#)

[Mothership](#) -> [Book Catalog](#) -> [Ozfiles](#) -> Here

Book Catalog An excerpt from The OZ Files

Introduction

In 1988 a Saulwick opinion poll found that 42 per cent of Australian respondents believed in UFOs. The success of recent television series such as The X-Files suggests that this level of interest has persisted. Although much of it is sensationalist, there has always been a core of evidence which no one has been able to refute. Way back in 1955, when the term 'flying saucers', rather than 'UFOs', dominated popular discussion of the subject, one of Britain's greatest airmen, Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding, put the problem in terms that might appeal to many Australians. 'I have never seen a 'flying saucer', he wrote, 'and yet I believe that they exist. I have never seen Australia, and yet I believe that Australia also exists. My belief in both cases is based upon cumulative evidence in such quantity that, for me at any rate, it brings complete conviction.' Others have not been so open-minded.

Despite the widespread hostility to the very idea of UFOs, especially by many in politics, the military, and science, the UFO enigma has persisted with a remarkable intensity for some five decades. For something that was originally cast as a short-lived, post-war fad, its persistence must surely give pause to even the most jaded critic. The standard sceptical responses are growing a little thin and rather tiresome. On the other hand, the escalation of the number of wild and unsubstantiated UFO stories in recent times has done nothing to help dispel the sceptical arguments. A confrontation with the facts, rather than fancies, of humanity's encounters with UFOs is in order.

It has been clear to me from the very beginning of my research that a true sceptical position is the best approach to this subject. By this I mean an approach taken in the true tradition of science, directed by the evidence and not by dogma from the zealots of both the UFO and the sceptical fraternities. Sceptical groups seem more intent on practising debunking than in true scepticism.

I have always been conscious that the majority of UFO reports involve genuine misinterpretations of a wide array of both prosaic and exotic phenomena. This book is a record of those Australian cases for which no 'normal' explanation has been found. These have been defined by astronomer Professor J. Allen Hynek, the leading scientific advocate for the phenomenon until his death in 1986. He wrote: 'We can define the UFO simply as the reported perception of an object or light seen in the sky or upon the land the appearance, trajectory, and general dynamic and luminescent behaviour of

which do not suggest a logical, conventional explanation and which is not only mystifying to the original percipients but remains unidentified after close scrutiny of all available evidence by persons who are technically capable of making a common sense identification, if one is possible.'

The big question is whether such cases do represent something 'alien'. Many make an unsustainable leap and apply the 'extraterrestrial' label. I prefer the term 'UFO', with emphasis on 'U' for 'unidentified'. In writing this book I have tried to keep an open, albeit a critical, mind.

Every corner of Australia has been touched by the UFO mystery, some places more deeply than others. As this book will show, while UFOs do appear in cities, it is in the country that they are most common. Coonabarabran, Tyringham and Dundurrabin, Kempsey, St George, Bouli, Tully, Pine Creek, Corrogin, Mundrabilla, the Nullarbor, Leitchville-Echuca, Rosedale, the Mallee district, Bass Strait and Cressy. All these places, and many others all over Australia, share a common link. They have played host to UFO activity for which there is no known explanation.

This book provides the first detailed history of UFO sightings in Australia. I am a scientist, and the approach I have taken in selecting material for the book is to include those cases which, after careful investigation wherever possible, have not been able to be explained by science. The strongest cases are usually the more recent, for it is only in the past few decades that UFO research groups have existed and been capable of conducting thorough investigations of reported sightings and abduction stories. For some of that period the Royal Australian Air Force was also involved in investigating UFOs, and parts of this book are based on the research I conducted when in 1982 I became the first outsider ever to see the RAAF's UFO files.

My own interest in the subject began thirty years ago when I was a young teenager. In June 1966 my home town of Grafton, New South Wales, became the focus of widely reported UFO activity. Many people, including local police, reported sightings. The same thing happened in 1969, when there was a rash of unusual 'ground effects' in the area, possibly left by UFOs, the most prominent being a large flattened crop site near Bungawalban. There was speculation that this was a 'flying saucer nest', and the affair gained national prominence because the property involved belonged to the local member of parliament. I went to Bungawalban and joined the curious throng. The four-and-a-half metre high crop of saccaline had been flattened in four distinct patches, the largest being about 18 metres by four-and-a-half. 'Lodging', a natural phenomenon that can affect crops in a similar manner, was ruled out by locals familiar with it. Two men working night shift had observed a glow in the sky in the direction of the patch, on the night of 16 April. A neighbouring farmer had also reportedly observed 'top-like objects' hovering in the area on a number of nights prior to the discovery of the impressions. While direct evidence linking UFOs with the flattened crop patches did not strike me at the time as overwhelming, I found the incident intriguing. It helped turn me into an active researcher and investigator of UFO sightings.

The Bungawalban incident lacked one personal element for me--I was not there when the crop was affected. But later that year I was a witness of a UFO phenomenon.

MANNA MATTERS

In mid-afternoon on 30 August 1969 I was relaxing on a surfboard in the middle of the Clarence River near Grafton. I noticed streams of fine white filament coming down over the river. I was immediately fascinated as this was a great opportunity to directly sample what I took to be a natural phenomenon--the floating web of migratory balloon spiders. However, I also knew that in UFO lore, material of a similar appearance, known as 'angel hair', had occasionally been linked to UFOs, some researchers suggesting it might be a by-product of whatever strange processes power flying saucers.

I paddled over to the river bank where large amounts of this 'spider web' were coming down. I was not prepared for the improbable. Here in my hands was material that was clearly not migratory spider web. I began rolling up a copious amount of the material in my hands. The filaments diminished in size, which was not too unusual. But then the material dissipated into nothing visible, leaving no trace. It gave the impression of rapid sublimation from solid to gas, yet I detected no vapours or odour.

The properties of spider web are well known, and disappearing when touched is not one of them. Realising that I might be dealing with something exotic, I raced to a nearby residence to get some sample jars. The fall of filaments had been

quite pro-fuse and much of it had come down along the river bank. But when I returned to the river a few minutes later the filaments had disappeared. There was no apparent explanation involving the landscape or the weather to explain this. My experience became even more intriguing--was this the apocryphal 'angel's hair', the manna of the saucers!--when I found out that at the same time a number of people in Grafton, including my own parents, had seen a UFO, described by some as an 'elongated white mass', travelling in a direction that would have passed over the river.

Perhaps there is some natural explanation for what I had seen and touched. Maybe the unidentified flying object was actually a compacted mass of some filaments that occur in nature? Possibly, but over the years I have never been able to find out a natural explanation for what I saw that day. It is possible that, for a few moments, I had actually held the evidence for UFOs there in my own hands.

FORBIDDEN SCIENCE

By then I had thoroughly immersed myself in the exotic world of UFOs. There was much that was rubbish and silly in the extreme, but amongst it all there was a compelling body of evidence for something that was genuinely unexplainable. I joined a Sydney organisation called the UFO Investigation Centre when I entered the University of New England to do a science degree. I was fortunate that northern New South Wales is a region--and others are found around Australia--which has more than its fair share of UFO sightings. I also joined an American organisation called the Aerial Phenomena Research Organisation. In working with all these people over the past three decades I have become part of what is known as the 'invisible college' of UFO researchers around the world. The members of the college are frequently scientists (I have an honours degree in chemistry) yet often we have to keep our interests a secret from our colleagues. The frustrating thing is not that many scientists should be sceptical about UFOs, but that they should ignore what is often compelling evidence.

Dr Jacques Vallee, a computer scientist and UFO researcher, defined 'the UFO problem' when he wrote, 'Witnesses of the strange occurrences numbered in the millions. But the study of their observations had been forcefully driven underground. It had turned into a fascinating discipline in a hypocritical modern world that claimed rational thought and open inquiry as its highest standard: it had become a Forbidden Science.' As a young scientist working with his mentor, J. Allen Hynek, Vallee realised he was working on 'one of the most profound and puzzling phenomena in the history of man'. The 'invisible college' that Hynek and Vallee organised was a secret scientific group in the spirit of the movement that preceded the formation of the English Royal Society in the early 1660s--a time when it could be dangerous to be interested in 'natural philosophy' or, as we call it today, science.

In 1973 I was a third-year science student majoring in chemistry and mathematics, also engaged in 'forbidden science'. I was experiencing some difficulties in analysing soil samples from a possible UFO landing site at Emerald Beach, near Woolgoolga, on the north coast of New South Wales. Someone suggested I approach Dr Keith Bigg, then Deputy Director of Radiophysics at the Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organisation. Dr Bigg was helpful in his advice. He was most intrigued about my descriptions of the Emerald Beach incident and the fact that 'circles' had been found. 'Seems quite a classic case,' he wrote. But his parting advice had a twist to it. 'Never admit that your interest is in UFOs or you'll get nowhere. You're more likely to get cooperation in hunting witches. Think up a "scientific" reason [for your interest in a particular phenomenon],' he wrote. These closing remarks were--and are--a sad reflection on the prevailing, myopic, view of mainstream science. The English visionary, William Blake, referred to such narrowness of perception as 'Newton's sleep'.

The late Dr James McDonald, an atmospheric physicist of world repute, passionately believed that science had been shortsighted when it came to giving UFOs serious consideration. In a 1968 lecture McDonald said, 'From time to time in the history of science, situations have arisen in which a problem of ultimately enormous importance went begging for adequate attention, simply because that problem appeared to involve phenomena so far outside the current bounds of scientific knowledge, that it was not even regarded as a legitimate subject of scientific concern. That is precisely the situation of the UFO problem now.'

In many places in this book I have used pseudonyms or initials for people who have seen UFOs or claim to have been abducted. This is often at the request of these people, who believe they would be ridiculed, perhaps even persecuted, were their identity to become known. As some of the stories in the book will show, these fears are justified.

Throughout the book I have used metric measurements in the text but, for reasons of authenticity, have retained imperial measurements (yards and miles) where these are used in quoted witness statements and reports.
