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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: 'Fire Balloons' & 'Exeter'

From: **Mark Cashman** <mcashman@ix.netcom.com>
 Date: Thu, 4 Dec 1997 23:34:05 -0800
 Fwd Date: Fri, 05 Dec 1997 11:17:56 -0500
 Subject: Re: 'Fire Balloons' & 'Exeter'

> Date: Thu, 4 Dec 1997 06:25:53 -0500
 > To: " UFO UpDates - Toronto" <updates@globalserve.net>
 > From: " Jerry Cohen" <rjcohen@li.net>
 > Subject: "Fire Balloons" and "Exeter"

> Those people that think "fire balloons" are the definitive answer to
 > "Exeter, N.H. 1965" are cordially invited to examine this theory for
 > yourselves by visiting the following websites:

Jerry, you have done some fine work. My compliments.

There was one item that I noticed, which is also relevant.

Robinson states: "Data about the distance of the object from the observers is inherently unreliable due to the fact that binocular vision is only good out to about 20 feet unless the object passes directly in front of or behind a known object."

While he cites no source for this, a standard reference on optical illusions is Minneaert's "Light & Colour".
 LC# 54-10021

On p 160...

"Street lights farther away than 160-170 yards seem at night to be all the same distance."

This does not mean that the viewer cannot tell how far away they are, BTW.

Minneaert also states:

"The average uninstructed observer underestimates all long distances, e.g. a fire at night."

And he describes the Von Sterneck calculation for correcting for under-estimation beyond 200 yards (600 feet), which is:

$d' = (cd)/c+d$

where d' is apparent distance, and c is a constant varying from 200 yards to 10 miles.

According to "Incident at Exeter" the estimated distance was 300 feet. This is well within the Minneart distance, and thus would be perfectly accessible to an observer.

I believe that Robinson's claim is a common misconception, even among UFO investigators. Note that Minneart's information, backed up by research done on Von Sterneck's equation, shows that even beyond 600 feet, the distance estimates made by witnesses may be correctable.

Some might claim that the distance to an object which is being misperceived, and thus which is not comparable to a known object, cannot be considered accurate. However, Minneart makes no such distinction and implies that the Von Sterneck calculation is valid regardless of what is under observation. Certainly the examples he mentions (fires, street lights, and distant city lights) are germane to UFO observations.

I'd also say that I have actually visited Tel & Tel pole #668 and looked out over that field. If hoaxers picked this location, they certainly were crazy. This is an empty location even in the daytime. The lack of a fire caused by these alleged balloons is, given the treeline, is very hard to explain.

You may enjoy my recreation of the Exeter sighting, which can be found at

<http://www.geocities.com/~mcashman/ufo/report/650903.htm>

and

<http://www.geocities.com/~mcashman/ufo/image/exeter.jpg>

The image is based on my inspection of the site, and is also a computer model which uses the distances, sizes, and angles estimated by the witnesses to provide a good sense of the angular size of what the witnesses observed.

(Note that the background of the image is NOT a site photo, however).

Mark Cashman, creator of The Temporal Doorway at
<http://www.geocities.com/~mcashman>
- Original digital art, writing, and UFO research -
Author of SF novels available at...
[http://www.infohaus.com/access/by-seller/The Temporal Doorway Storefront](http://www.infohaus.com/access/by-seller/The_Temporal_Doorway_Storefront)

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