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BUFORA WATCH 5

From: ej77@dial.pipex.com (Mike Wootten)
 Date: Wed, 13 May 1998 22:25:48 GMT
 Fwd Date: Sun, 17 May 1998 08:00:26 -0400
 Subject: BUFORA WATCH 5

 BUFORA WATCH 5

BURNS NIGHT

After instigating a heated debate, BUFORA WATCH can claim a victory over the Max Burns lecture debacle. At the eleventh hour chairman Steve Gamble cancelled Max's appearance.

We can also claim responsibility for saving whatever reputation BUFORA has left as Max could not use his appearance on a BUFORA platform to boost his credibility with the News of the World - who were planning to run his story and pay him 1500 ukp.

The News of the World decided not to publish the story. If they had done, Max would certainly have stated that 'BUFORA backs him and his claims'.

Our reporter on the scene takes up the story...

Max's confidence that the News of the World 'exclusive' on the Sheffield Crash would make him a national hero of some sort faded into nothing.

Our contacts in the Intelligence Services ensured that Max was pipped at the post by tales of jiggery pokery in Justin Fashanu's underpants.

I've tried to get hold of the Burns creature for his comments after the non publication, but he seems mysteriously to be 'out' (no doubt to a long lunch).

It's not over, however, until the fat ufologist sings and contingency plans are in effect to deal with any other nonsense he exudes.

Contrary to John Spencer's vapid niceness *this* is how we should treat people like Burns who, fully aware of what the facts are, seize the opportunity for power and money by distorting them and thus bringing ufology into disrepute.

 BEHIND THE MAX

Readers keeping up with the Max Fax will recall that although he did not manage to dupe the News of the World into publishing his fantasies he still believes he has 'conclusive evidence'.

Let's just reiterate what that means to Max, what BUFORA nearly gave him a platform to spout unchallenged:

1) Burns has been in touch with a witness who, on the night of the fateful incident, was returning over the Snake Pass. By the Ladybower Viaduct his van was flagged down by a man.

2) Burns contests that this man was pilot or co-pilot from the Tornado he believes came into contact with an ET triangle.

3) *This*, and only this, is the 'conclusive' evidence Burns believed backed up his claims of ETs and government chicanery.

David Clarke has, today, uncovered the truth behind these claims. The real facts are as follows:

1) The witness and his friends were flagged down, by a man described as 'asian' or afro-caribbean' - This is where Max gets his 'NATO Pilot' fantasy from.

2) The man was dressed in dark clothing and smelt strongly of what *could* have been aviation fuel - David has now spoken to the witness who is now in the RAF and fully aware of what a Tornado pilot, or indeed any aircrew would have been wearing. The man's apparel was *not* that worn by aircrew. The smell could have been from *any* fuel.

3) When Burns contacted and interviewed the man - Johnathon Degenhart - he did so only by 'phone. Prior to that he had sent him a letter in which he claimed he was a 'journalist' working for a 'national organisation'. Burns is neither a journalist nor does he belong to a national UFO organisation.

4) Burns was evasive about exactly what he believed and what he had *already* published about this case. He said he would forward a copy of his case file to the man. The former is disingenuous, the latter has not yet taken place.

5) When appraised of the full situation by David and of the claims which Max is trying to get in the News of the World, Degenhart was horrified. He realises now that should his name appear in a national newspaper in connection with the lunatic theories espoused by Burns he runs (according to him) serious risk of losing his job in the RAF. He had *no* idea of the slant which Burns would put on his incident which is only puzzling when twisted by Burns' and his fractured reasoning. We will probably *never* know who the man was but as no jet crashed it would be far more reasonable to assume that a man smelling of fuel on a lonely road at night was the victim of car trouble rather than triangular ET craft.

As we peel yet another layer away from Max Burns' interpretation of this case we can see that not only are his theories fatally flawed but that he is prepared to mislead witnesses in his quest for publicity. BUFORA was very nearly part of that confidence trick, saved only by the actions and statements of researchers unafraid to speak out for the truth and for sanity in the subject.

As BUFORA crumbles through apathy and ignorance front line ufology goes on. This case is merely instructive - demonstrating when competent investigation pierces the fantasy world of the ET believer a festival of mundanities warped by belief is revealed. Twas ever thus.

JOHN HEPTONSTALL RESIGNS FROM BUFORA

Deputy Director of Investigations, John Heptonstall has resigned from BUFORA. His reasons are highlighted in an email he sent to BUFORA WATCH...

Regards to you and all, keep up the BUFORA watch, I'll remain interested but have lost interest in the self-serving actions of a few 'Council'lors. Properly convened elections, with ALL members advised and given opportunity and time to nominate/ proxy vote etc. could only win my support.

The Council are risking legal action by not providing membership rights- UT 6 times a year for starters - yet retaining subscriptions and spending them on God knows what down there.

Delusion has set in amongst the 'few' and I hope they get their just deserts, for me they are the epitomy of why UFOlogy remains in a mess and people delude themselves 'the truth is still out there' when a modicum of sense, reason and integrity could move us ahead 40 years.

BUFORA ON-LINE (THE BUFORA WEB SHITE)

BUFORA web surfers may have noticed that BUFORA On-Line is back on line again (www.bufora.org.uk).

Since the launch of BUFORA On-Line in 1995, the service provider, Epinet offered the Association a free virtual server (a deal arranged by Mike Wootten) but due to its popularity (nearly 1000 hits a week) and the number of 5 star reviews the site received from the Internet press, Epinet stated that they wanted to charge BUFORA for the service it offered - 'BOL was taking up too much bandwidth so we have to charge'.

As BUFORA could not pay (which has to be said were very high charges) BOL went off the air.

But now BUFORA has a new service provider - Oaktree Internet Solutions, a small company who offer a very good deal indeed. For 99ukp per year they offer a 100Mb virtual server - not bad at all. It was nice to see for once Council doing something - but as always, it seems to be a worthless act.

Since the transfer of the site last month it appears that the members only area is not working, the real-time database is not working or indeed the hit counter is not working.

It pains BUFORA WATCH that Council spend out on a site and do nothing with it. Want to go to Congress 97? Well there's the button still on the front page for all to see. Fancy going to a BUFORA lecture? Well it will have to be last years lectures.

Considering the fact that BUFORA cannot afford to produce a magazine or indeed send a letter out to its rapidly declining membership it would have been a good idea to use the web site instead to publish material and tell the members what's going on. But no that would be too much like hard work.

Seeing the state of the site, Mike Wootten offered to rebuild the site, get the techy stuff working again and remove all the old material. After a week he has received a zero response.

No surprise there!

BUFORA WATCH READERS VIEWS

We thought that as John Spencer thinks that BUFORA WATCH is just made up of a couple of 'bitter and twisted' individuals, we thought you might like to see what some members think...

...here's a sample.

Thanks for taking the time to do this. It is very informative and is surprising what goes on behind almost closed doors.

Do you think that the Council have lost the plot ? It sounds like it to me.

I agree absolutely with what was said regarding the 'Max' incident. As you know I run my own website and state that I will not publish anything that does not have a substantial amount of evidence to back it up. This is not censorship this is logic, it creates credibility. I have had alot of email from people saying how much they appreciate the fact that I do not publish a load of hearsay. It can all be backed up. The areas I am interested in do not make headway when everyone is yaking on about details that have no credibility. Who needs coverups and black governments when you have got 95% of the people interested in 'alternative' theories arguing about information that has no substance.

Ufology, and BUFORA specifically will never progress the subject further into the mainstream if they present ANYTHING, lectures, press releases, publications that the mainstream can get hold of and without much thought rip to shreds. They will make the whole membership look stupid and lunatic fringe.

I for one am fed up to the back teeth with all these pathetic squablings. BUFORA council need to go back to the values they had when the organisation was at its height and well respected.

If this continues, well quite frankly I think we should all pack up and start up NBUFORA (N being New) or alternatively join the lunatics at MUFON! :-)

Rob Speight

I was a BUFORA member but failed to renew my membership for several reasons:

Infighting
Relevance for non-Londoners
What was the point any way?

Guess this is symptomatic of pretty much all UFO groups.

E Round

I am a member of Bufora and I am very grateful for any information at all, since the last letter I had from the org must be over 6 months ago now! I get no news letters or letters for that matter. Maybe my subscription has run out, but I have not been told. On hearing what is going on behind members' backs, Members whose money is presumably being spent by these "esteemed" council members, I may not bother renewing anyway.

Many thanks again for your invaluable service.

Toby Richards.

Having shouted and hollered for an inexorable time for open elections to take place, only to be told we, the membership, were not entitled to elections.. i for one would welcome a parallel organisation...

go for it...
Vince...

KEEP YOUR Es COMING IN

A CHALLENGE FOR COUNCIL

Now that the BUFORA Council can see the depth of their problems - thanks to BUFORA WATCH we would like to offer them the opportunity to use this forum and present their plan of action to getting BUFORA back on its feet.

We are sure members on this list would like to know.

Over to you guys...

TELL'EM WHAT YOU THINK

The next BUFORA Council meeting will be held on Saturday 30th May. We suggest you contact Steve Gamble - e182@dial.pipex.com of John Spencer - ek57@dial.pipex.com and tell them what you think.

ATB
Mike

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