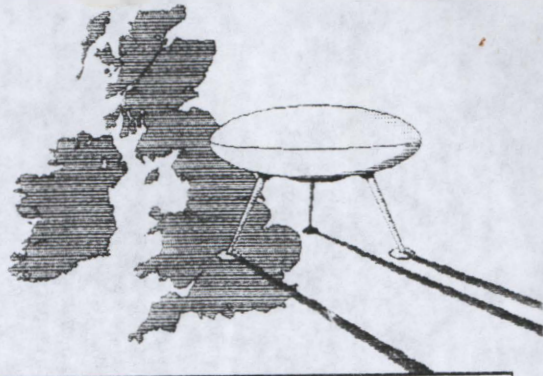


UFO NEWSFILE



Issue No: 1.

A BUFORA Publication

Price £1.00

Seers soothe Bulgaria's earthly woes

SHE is 80, blind, and known only by her first name, Vanga. With the help of sugar cubes, she claims to be able to see the future; and Bulgarians, beset by economic woes and political upheaval, are increasingly turning to her for help.

In a country where earthly existence gets harder every day, Bulgarians are taking more interest in psychic phenomena. Extra-sensory healers, clairvoyants and reports of poltergeists and UFOs help distract people from their daily misery.

Dozens queue every day outside Vanga's home in a remote southwestern corner of Bulgaria near the town of Petrich, clutching a few sugar cubes wrapped in handkerchiefs or crumpled paper, waiting for audiences booked months in advance. Following instructions, they will have slept on the sugar cubes the night before.

Then the "patients", as Vanga refers to them, are ushered to the table outside the farmhouse where she conducts her business. Admission is 10 leva, the equivalent of a day's salary.

Most waiting to see the white-haired clairvoyant want to ask questions about their health and their future. Last week, a 45-year-old woman was told that her sister should go ahead with an operation and the doctor would not find cancer. The woman left the session tearful but satisfied.

Todor Zhivkov, the deposed Bulgarian dictator, supposedly consulted Vanga often. Even though she was unable to predict his downfall, and has not yet discovered a solution to the economic and political crisis, she remains popular.

Marin Marinov, a Bulgarian professor of physics who specialises in paranormal studies, believes Vanga is not a clairvoyant but a phenomenon with real powers. During the 30 years he has studied her, he

by Connie Sokoloff
Sofia

claims she has been 80% accurate.

As economic conditions worsen and food shortages grow, there are other signs of people's growing reliance on the supernatural. A new crop of psychic-oriented newspapers has bloomed. In a recent issue of Phenomenon, a tabloid newspaper, readers could learn how to interpret tea-leaves. An article in Psychotronica, another newspaper, explains that Vanga asks her patients to sleep on sugar cubes because their crystalline structure concentrates bio-energy.

Bulgaria has had its cases, as in Britain, of mysterious circles appearing in corn fields. The official Sofia Press newspaper recently reported that two sisters had discovered four identical circles, five me-

tres in diameter, in an unharvested wheat field near Sofia. It said a nearby railway line had prevented magnetic analyses being made, but scientists were studying links with UFO sightings.

Bulgarians claim to have a high proportion of people with extra-sensory skills who are able to tell with their hands where a body needs healing. Marinov performed experiments with Stara Zagora, one such extra-sensor, and claimed she was 75% accurate in her diagnoses.

The boom in things spiritual has also led to a growth in religious worship. Churchgoing has become almost fashionable. The World Bible Society has donated paper for a reprinting of the Bible, which had been almost impossible to find in Bulgaria.

It is not only mainstream religions that have benefited. About 100 professors and academicians from Eastern

Europe attended a recent conference in Sofia held by the Rev Sun Myung Moon's Unification Movement, the Moonies. Yoga seminars attract the curious as well as the devout.

Many Bulgarians see their country as an ancient centre of spirituality experiencing a modern revival. Deyan Kyuranov, a sociologist in Sofia, has a simple theory about this source of national pride, suggesting it helps balance the national inferiority complex caused by 500 years of Turkish

rule and the more recent communist era.

Despite their increasing reliance on the paranormal, Bulgarians have not lost their sense of humour. Kiki, a poltergeist that speaks through an 11-year-old girl by knocking once for yes and twice for no, has become a sought-after soothsayer. Cynics, however, believe Kiki has no special powers. He is knocking his head against the wall, they explain, in despair at having been sent to the living hell that is Bulgaria.

SUNDAY TIMES

19 AUG 1990

Fresh sighting in UFO hunt

From JOHN FRASER in BRUSSELS

BELGIAN UFO hunters were yesterday investigating a new sighting of a triangular object, which has made thousands of appearances in recent months.

They are trying to discover whether a colony of men from outer space has chosen their country to establish a new home.

The latest sighting of the triangular object was reported by a motorist near the Belgian-Luxembourg border.

"He was driving his car down a road when he saw some lights and thought there was an accident," said Belgium's chief UFO hunter, Mr Lucien Clerebaut. But when he drew closer he observed a huge triangular object at least 100 metres long.

"It was hovering several metres above the ground in a field by the road. There were green and red lights. Then it rose slowly to a height of about 50 metres before extinguishing the

lights and accelerating away out of sight."

The motorist reported his experience on Mr Clerebaut's answerphone at his home in Brussels.

"The same night we had at least a dozen calls from several parts of the country, including Flanders," Mr Clerebaut said.

So far this year, there have been around 10,000 sightings of UFOs over Belgium, but no positive proof of what the triangular-shaped object can be. It has been spotted on air force radar, but the mysterious craft sped off when fighter jets were scrambled to intercept it.

Meanwhile a word of caution has come from Prof Leon Brenig, a physicist at Brussels Free University. The professor, who is analysing the witnesses' reports with computers, said: "I have some information that the object could be an ultra-secret new US plane.

Belgian air force put on UFO alert

From JOHN FRASER in Brussels

THE Belgian air force has scrambled two fighters to intercept a triangular UFO with three huge red lights.

Military officers have refused to give details of the night-time UFO-search, and the two pilots have been told not to talk about it. But the air force admits it found nothing, because the craft appeared to put out its lights and zoom away at an incredible speed.

While many people regard the issue as a joke, it has puzzled many experts. There have been more than 10,000 reported UFO sightings in Belgium this year alone.

The air force has even put two planes — a C130 troop carrier and an Icelander reconnaissance aircraft — at the disposal of Belgium's Society for the Study of Space Phenomena. For four days the two planes, equipped with infra-red cameras, flew up and down the country with the UFO hunters on board, but again the only results were a crop of jokes in the Belgian Press — mainly in Dutch-language publi-

cations mocking French-speaking "UFO freaks".

The sightings and photographs taken by witnesses are now being analysed by computers at the Royal Military Academy. Experts at the Free University of Brussels are also making a study of radar-echoes picked up by two F16 jets.

Prof Leon Brenig, who is in charge of the research, said: "I am a sceptical man, but I feel that something is happening which is very strange. There have been too many sightings — 10,000 at least this year — and 80 per cent of them concern a triangular-shaped object.

"There have been reports from people in all social classes, from countesses to dustmen. More than 100 of the people concerned were policeman — there was even a Flemish tax inspector who saw a UFO from his garage near Liege.

"People lose their fear of seeming ridiculous when a solid, respected citizen like that is a witness."

Yorkshire Post 11/10/90

Yorkshire Post 12/10/90

UFOCALL 0898 121886

Those baffling close encounters

IT was just like any other night in Redcar town . . . until one young couple's baby awoke with a startled scream.

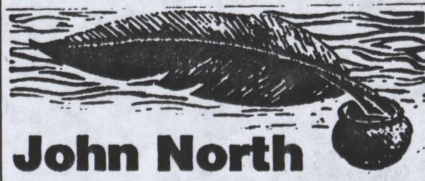
What happened next has baffled experts and laymen alike – a close encounter of the most peculiar kind which involved bright lights, a space ship and three-foot tall aliens coming up the stairs.

Why creatures from another planet would want to land their space ship on a half-built carport in the suburbs of a North-East seaside town remains a mystery.

But the couple concerned – who, unsurprisingly, wish to remain anonymous – are adamant they came face to face with large-eyed aliens who entered their home. Everything after that is hazy.

Their story has convinced others, including experts from the British Unidentified Flying Object Research Association who have spent many hours investigating the sighting. Three people are working on the case. Now Bufora's director, Philip Mantle, is considering using regressive hypnosis to draw out more detailed information from the puzzled pair.

In his 11 years as a UFO investigator he has come across many weird and wonderful cases – from the young boy in Wales who had unexplained scars on his wrists after an encounter with a bright light to the policeman apparently whipped aboard a flying saucer for 15 minutes in Todmorden. Little surprises him: "The Cleveland couple described a UFO landing in their carport and have vague recollections of very small entities ascending the stairs. There was a small light and through a haze they



saw these things."

He and other researchers have interviewed the couple in detail separately at their home and compared their accounts with those of other sightings: "They are not lying, they haven't made the story up. They have had a genuine experience. As to the nature and origin of the experience I am still open to ideas," he says.

"They are puzzled by their experience and are perhaps looking for an answer to what happened to them. We can't give them any answers, perhaps we can help them understand and come to terms with it."

The Cleveland case is just one of hundreds – including a record number of sightings in the Pennines – Bufora is still struggling to understand. The self-funding organisation, set up in the 1960s to gather and investigate UFO information, is the only one of its kind in Britain.

It has more than 400 members, as well as a host of scientific experts it can call on for help. New research is published in UFO Magazine or raised at international conferences and information is stored at the organisation's London archives. Philip, who works full time in the printing industry, remains, unlike some of his ufologist colleagues, open minded: "I haven't got a conclusion, I'm a fence sitter. I believe nothing

and I question everything."

Now 32, he first became involved after he saw strange lights in the sky at Warminster: "I wrote letters and read some books. I realised there was a genuine phenomena behind UFO reports."

He met his wife on a UFO watch in the Pennines – the top tier of their wedding cake was an iced flying saucer – where there have been more sightings than in any other region. Bufora has now launched a new investigation called Project Pennine: "There has been everything and it has not just been over a short period of time. It has gone on for decades."

Ufologists call it a 'window area'. The most recent case, in South Yorkshire, involved hundreds of sightings of a slow-moving triangular shape. In another incident a man travelling from Carlisle to York claimed he saw a UFO and later woke up in bed with no recollection of the journey home.

Two investigators have been despatched: "What they are looking at is the strange nocturnal lights and unusual luminosities. One theory says they could be caused by fault lines in the earth."

Some researchers believe UFO sightings are due to altered states of consciousness or hallucinations brought on by powerful earth lines. Scientific advances increasingly narrow down the possibilities.

Another theory, of course, is that everyone could be having Bufora on. Philip admits: "We are not infallible, if people want to go to great lengths to fool us it can be done. But experience plays a part, and being involved in various cases."

Ufologists use certain key words and

phrases, which Philip likens to IRA call signs, which separate genuine experiences from the hoaxer: "There are various things which crop up from time to time that are not reported and are only known to a certain few."

He admits there is no hard evidence of the existence of alien visitors – only isolated eyewitness reports.

It would take a lot more than the mysterious corn circles to convince him there is intelligent life on other planets: "If they really come all that way and all they can do is crush some corn that's not intelligent, that's stupid."

He says 95pc of UFO sightings are easily explained by aircraft, stars, planets or even the moon being misinterpreted in the sky. But the other five per cent remain a mystery.

One case in West Yorkshire, where a middle-aged woman and several of her children saw an aircraft in the shape of a Mexican hat land in a field and suddenly disappear, will always have Philip baffled: "I have never been able to explain it."

"They saw two tall men in overalls and gloves wearing a visor and scanning the ground with instruments they held in their hands. We interviewed them separately and they all reported what they saw, they didn't call it a space ship or a flying saucer."

Philip adds: "There are sceptics who say it is all bumpkin. Even if it is all bumpkin, it should be of interest to someone. Why are people reporting these sightings, why are they having these experiences?"

Anyone in search of an answer should call Philip on 0924 444049.

Ruth Campbell

Cover-up over spacecraft that fell to earth

UFO MYSTERY OF THE FOUR TINY COFFINS

By ANTHONY WALTON

FOUR tiny aliens were killed when their spacecraft crashed into desert scrubland, according to shock new revelations.

For 43 years a wall of silence surrounded what happened in New Mexico and US officials refused to explain why they ordered child-size coffins.

But witnesses, who were sworn to secrecy, are now beginning to speak out — and shatter the official explanation that it was a weather balloon that crashed.

The mysterious craft plummeted to earth near sleepy Roswell in New Mexico on July 2, 1947.

Orders

A stunned rancher heard a thunderous crash and called in the authorities after stumbling across wreckage scattered over a huge area.

Retired US Air Force Major Jesse Marcel, sent to probe the accident, followed orders and kept silent for three decades about what he saw.

He told satellite company BSB's First Edition programme: "I was amazed at what I saw. It took me a long while to realise there was something strange about it. What it was I still don't know."

With his wide-eyed 12-year-old son Jesse Jr., he gathered up armfuls of the mystery wreckage.

Rubber

They took a car and vanload to their home where they pieced it together on the kitchen floor.

Jesse Jr., now a family doctor, recalls: "There was a lot of foil-like remnants and a lot of rubbery-type plastic mate-

Military hanger hides an

out of this world secret



SPACE VISITOR

THIS UFO was photographed by a student near the 1947 desert crash site 20 years later



PROBE: Jesse Marcel in 1947 (left) and today



rial. But it wasn't flexible like rubber — and it was the colour of Bakelite."

His most vivid memory of that childhood adventure was the craft's support beams.

He adds: "They had what appeared to be writing on them."

"It consisted of various types of geometric figures."

But the military soon confiscated the material

and within 36 hours sent it to a secret location.

Hangar 84 at Roswell Army Airfield, where the items were temporarily stored, is STILL off-limits and mysteriously sealed and unused.

Assistant Flight Safety Officer Bob Shirkey witnessed twisted sheets of an aluminium-like material inside the hangar. But it was a chance conversation with a pal years

later that alerted him to the sinister mystery behind the crash.

His friend, Roswell's mortician, received an emergency telephone call request from military chiefs.

They urgently needed up to four child-sized coffins — but refused to say why.

Mr Shirkey says: "They wanted to know how many child-size caskets he had available."

"I don't recall now what he said in terms of how many he sent out there. There was supposed to be three or four bodies."

Retired Army Lieutenant Walter Haut also broke his silence to admit his press release about the crash was a FAKE.

He says: "I got a phone call from my colonel who was the base commander telling me that the base had in its possession parts of a flying saucer."

Debris

But his bosses later doctored what he'd written.

The official line was that the accident involved an unmanned weather balloon crashing.

Those involved were ordered never to speak about the changes that took place to hide the real facts that day.

And witnesses were immediately transferred to other postings — with one even ordered to the Philippines.

UFO-watchers probing the incident have been allowed access to confidential files since America's Freedom of Information Act in 1974.

Yet still they have been unable to crack the mystery.

And ex-NASA technician Robert Oechler says: "The official government position of secrecy is such that they are not permitted to acknowledge what really happened."

The Star. 17.08.90

Drafting paper shows model built after photos taken, states Walters

On Tuesday morning Ed Walters brought to *The Sentinel* a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Lynn C. Thomas that was accompanied by a copy of the house plan Ed had drawn for them on the 6th and 7th of September 1989.

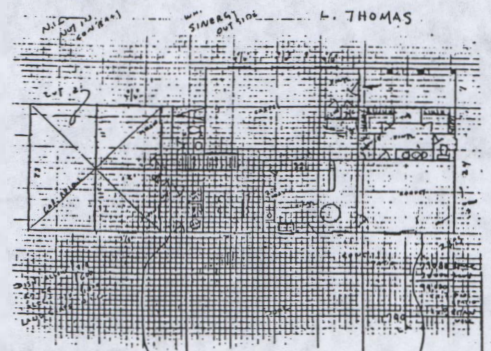
The plan shows a living area of 1740 square feet and a slab area of 2393 square feet, the same dimensions seen inside the UFO model found in Ed's old home.

The letter and plan prove conclusively that the model was constructed after September 7th,

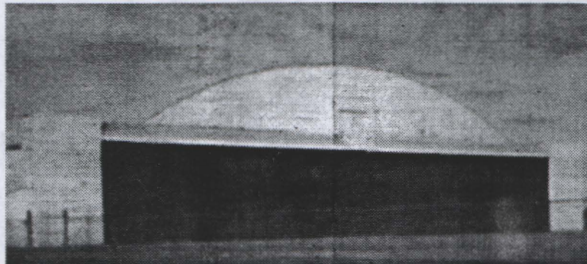
1989, or one and one-half years after Ed's last photograph of the elusive craft.

As a builder of custom homes, Ed has never designed two homes with the exact same living area and slab area.

As further proof the model could only have been made from the Thomas' plans, Ed also provided a list of all the homes on Jamestown he designed and none of them had the same living area and slab area as the Thomas' plan.



The Sentinel. 05.07.90



DARK SECRET: Hangar 84 where the wreckage of the UFO was hidden

Man who saw aliens

PHOTOGRAPHER Nicholas Van Poppen, called in by military intelligence to record the UFO crash scene, actually SAW the dead aliens.

He claims the aliens were thin, with human-like hands, and between two and four feet tall. "Their faces were very white and they wore shiny black attire, without pockets," he says.

Van Poppen took hundreds of

photographs of the crashed UFO near Roswell, the US Bomber Group HQ, home of the only combat-trained atom bomber in the world. Each night he had to hand over all the photos to intelligence experts and was warned NEVER to reveal anything of what he saw.

But he told friends the doomed craft was 30 ft wide, with the bodies strapped into seats in the cabin.

PENSIONERS SPOT.

'GLOWING RED UFO'



The nearest thing to the UFO spotted by Mrs Annie Bingham (left) and Mrs Dorothy Bird — a flying red colander. (Photo: 9007926/26)

A UFO sighting by two city women is being treated seriously by personnel at a local airbase, and will be reported to the Ministry of Defence.

Staff at RAF Wittering have taken details of the sighting by two shocked city pensioners, who watched spellbound as a luminous object hovered in the sky for nearly FIVE minutes.

And Flight Lieutenant Bob Chalmers, the base's community relations officer, said:

"We had a similar report of a red light in the sky about three years ago, and nobody can rule out something extraterrestrial being involved."

The two women, Dorothy Bird (71) and Annie Bingham (84), described the object as "the size and shape of a big red glowing colander."

They spotted it hovering in the skies while they were in the garden of Mrs Bingham's home in North Street, Stanground.

GLOWING

The amazing sighting comes as the mystery of strange crop circles — found all over Britain — deepens. Earlier this month mysterious circles appeared in a cornfield at Gedney Drove. Mrs Bingham said: "We saw a big red glow in the sky. We must have been watching for nearly five minutes, then it disappeared behind cloud."

Mrs Bird saw what she thought was a brilliant shining moon from her friend's window on Sunday. The two women then both went out into the garden and could see a round, red glowing light.

Mrs Bingham said: "We just stood speechless watching it. It could not have been the moon because it was only 6.45pm in the evening and the moon rises in the east."

● If you spotted the UFO or think you have seen one recently please ring the ET newsdesk on 555111 and tell us about it.

An elaborate corn circles hoax which fooled scientific researchers and TV crews was carried out by the Army which was acting on official instructions, according to a new book.

Author George Wingfield claims the Army acted to defuse "public hysteria" over the appearance of the mysterious circles in farm fields.

The hoax took place in a field at Westbury Hill, Wiltshire, in July. Video cameras captured the movement of orange lights during the night as a series of circles appeared.

But the following morning, as the research team believed it had uncovered firm evidence, it found a ouija board and wooden crosses at the site. Pranksters from Fleet Street were suspected of staging a hoax.

In his book, *The Crop Circle Enigma*, to be released in mid-October, Mr Wingfield, a member of the Centre for Crop Circle Studies, writes: "Information reaching the COCS, from a source I cannot name, shows that the hoax was perpetrated by a special detachment set up by the Army for this purpose. "It was officially inspired. It was practised at night. It used known circle configurations and it was executed with military precision."

"The purpose was to defuse the situation which verged on public circles hysteria."

Peterborough Evening Telegraph. 24.07.90

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT!

On a warm August night three years ago, Mrs Jenny Adams saw something which baffled her completely. 'I've never seen anything like it before

or since,' she says.

What she saw was a UFO — an unidentified flying object. Only it wasn't flying, it was 'parked' on a road junction, just a yard away from the car she was driving. 'I can only describe it as bigger and wider than a double decker bus, and covered in large headlamps,' she explains. 'All I could see were these lights, so I couldn't tell what depth the thing was. I drove off straightaway, although I kept thinking I should stop and investigate. But something told me not to . . .'

Within 10 minutes she was back at the spot with her husband and son, but the road was dark and empty.

'I keep watching cars on the road at night now,' she admits, 'to see if I can see anything similar, but I haven't. The thing is, it wasn't a distant object in the sky, it was there, on the road!'

Mrs Adams isn't a sci-fi enthusiast. 'I don't really have that sort of imagination,' she says. 'I feel that there must be a very down-to-earth explanation for it, but I don't know what it is.'

Reluctant to report her sighting at first, 'in case they came to take me away', she finally plucked up the courage to tell a local UFO group but despite their efforts to investigate, whatever she saw still remains completely unidentified.

Getting worked up about strange sights in the sky is nothing new. Ancient cave drawings show that primitive people were just as awestruck by lights and odd

Continued on page 55

If it's not a spaceship ...

WHAT ON EARTH IS IT?



EXCLUSIVE on an amazing close encounter

COP: I WAS KIDNAPPED BY ALIENS

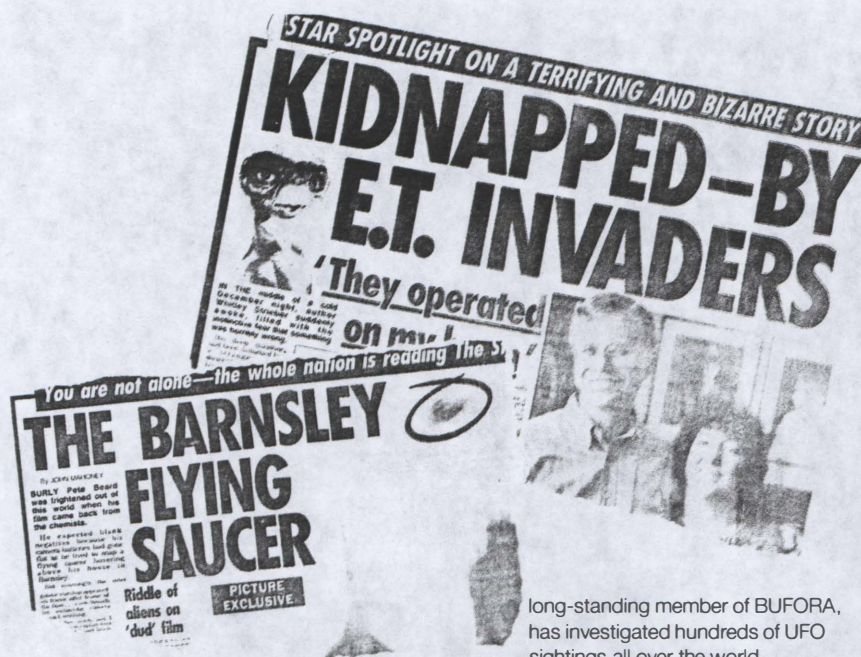
By JOHN HANCOCK
A told last night of his
with creatures from
by a 7ft tall



UFO LANDS IN SUFFOLK

And that's OFFICIAL!

UFOs the size of buses and green things that fly overhead all have explanations, say the experts. But if they're not aliens, what in heaven's name are they?



objects that appeared to float in the sky.

Yet today, despite all our sophisticated technology, we don't seem to have an obvious explanation. The British UFO Research Organisation (BUFORA) has 10,000 sightings from Britain on their books.

However, most UFO experts, or 'ufologists' as they're called, will tell you that 90 per cent of sightings can be explained, and even the remaining 10 per cent simply remain 'unidentified' and aren't necessarily spacecraft. But, if they aren't spaceships, what can they be?



Is it a bird, is it a plane?

Sorry to disappoint you, but the vast majority of UFOs are probably no more exciting than aircraft flying low at

night, or, in remote areas, huge weather balloons which trail silently across the sky.

Many UFOs can be renamed UAPs (unidentified atmospheric phenomena) which cover a host of little-known natural occurrences easily mistaken for something more supernatural.

One example is the rare ball or 'beaded' lightning — literally a ball of lightning which travels from the earth or water up into the sky. Imagine how easily this could look like a spaceship taking off in the dark.

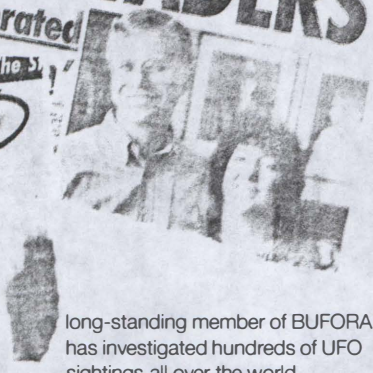
Some explanations are less sensational. The moon has been mistaken for a UFO when it's very low on the horizon as has an owl which had eaten a fungus that made him glow in the dark!



Little green men are good for you

So how do we know that what we're looking at is really there, unless we reach

out and touch it? After all, practically everyone has woken up from a dream that seemed so real it's easy to believe it had actually happened. 'The mind plays disturbing tricks sometimes,' says Jenny Randles in her book *Mind Monsters* (Aquarian Press/Thorsons, £6.99). Jenny, a consultant on the paranormal and



long-standing member of BUFORA, has investigated hundreds of UFO sightings all over the world.

However, she points out that spaceships and aliens may simply be fulfilling a modern craving for things unexplained.

Science, says Jenny, has helped us explain away most phenomena but as humans we need to believe in the unbelievable. 'We're having to cast our net wider in order to find a home for the "beasts" which science may continue to deny, but our minds still somehow desire,' she says. 'The idea that unfriendly or alien creatures are waiting to lure us away is certainly not new either — it's been part of our folklore, fairy tales and mythology for centuries. The Celtic legends, for example, tell tales of humans spirited away by the *sidhe*, the "little people"!'.

Many psychologists agree that the human mind needs to release its darker side at times, so perhaps we're simply updating these age-old myths in the form of spaceships.



Close encounters of the screen kind

Many UFO reports sound surprisingly similar, even down to what the aliens were wearing! But perhaps it isn't so surprising when you think how we've been bombarded with sci-fi novels, TV series like *Star Trek*, and blockbuster films like *Alien*, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

So we're now *more likely* than ever before to believe an unusual sight in the sky is a spaceship just because we've actually 'seen' it all before in a film or on TV.

More seriously, though, the basic human feeling that there 'must be more to life than this', or our wish to believe that we're not the only form of life in the universe, has been unashamedly cashed in on by the entertainment makers.



Do they know something we don't?

Could a UFO be something more sinister than we think? Some ufologists, including

HEARD THE ONE ONE ABOUT...?

● Turkish cake shop worker **Fatima Mahaat** nearly died of fright when the meringue she dropped was no sweet treat but a disguised UFO. 'It sort of whirred into life,' said **Fatima, 21**. 'Next thing, it was under my pinny. It came out with my undies and flew off.'

● In 1961, the 109 bus from Croydon to London ended up in the South Pole. A witness said, 'This little green chap announced he was driving and asked for my fare. I don't remember much of the Pole. Next thing I remember was finding myself in Brixton High Street covered in ice.'

● **Dustman Stephen Roberts** revealed how he lifted the lid of a bin to find an angry, green, three-foot high alien inside. 'It leapt out of the bin and levitated over the house. Dozens of them started turning up in dustbins. A lot of them are drunk and I've seen them chuck cans into the streets,' said **Stephen**. 'The dustmen get the blame for the litter.'

Taken from *The Best of Sunday Sport* (Sphere Books, £3.50). Used by kind permission of Sports Newspapers Ltd.

Jenny Randles, subscribe to a conspiracy theory, where governments use the UFO theory as a cover up. She wonders whether a so-called UFO which crashed in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk in 1980 was fact an aircraft carrying a nuclear missile, a USSR spy plane.

The forest is just outside a NATO base owned by the Ministry of Defence, so servicemen were immediately on hand in the very early hours of 27 December to whisk it away before prying locals could investigate. The official report puts it down as a UFO, describing it as 'metallic in appearance... triangular in shape, approximately three metres across the base and two metres high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light...'

But when the landing area was later tested for radiation, the readings were found to be positive. Would a government prefer the public to believe a UFO had landed, than admit that a radioactive missile had come a cropper...? Whichever story you believe, the MOD, according to Jenny, denied all knowledge of the event for over two years.



What do you want to believe?

Experienced ufologist, **Andy Walmsley**, based at The Independent UFO Network

in Yorkshire, believes that UFOs are '50 per cent actual and 50 per cent created' by our imaginations and what we've seen on the screen. How it's interpreted depends on who witnesses it. 'A sci-fi buff may immediately jump to the conclusion that strange light in the sky is an alien spaceship while an ordinary person in the street may only see a light,' believes **Andy**. 'People who see something with no immediate explanation will often refuse to accept what they saw was a mundane object viewed under strange conditions.'

So another UFO sighting goes down in the record books. And **Andy** admits, 'Sometimes when someone believes they've seen an extra-terrestrial object it's best to leave that person in ignorance rather than to shatter his or her illusions.'

But if you do believe firmly that those there want to make contact with us down here, you may be disappointed to learn that according to **Andy Walmsley**, 'Very few investigators believe UFOs are alien spacecraft. We're all too aware that the words behind the acronym UFO mean just that: unidentified flying object — of any sort! Space aliens don't necessarily come into it.' But **Andy** insists he has seen a UFO. In September 1989 on the Withens Moors, an area far from 'supernatural' sightings, and he has an explanation for it — yet.

Have you been seeing things?

The Independent UFO Network gather information on sightings. They operate a 24-hour UFO hotline on 0924-444049.

FACT AND FICTION: *Nicholas Lezard fails to identify the ring of truth in the reports of UFO spotters . . .*

Antidotes to paranormal pies in the skies

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE UNKNOWN by Colin Parsons. Hale, 187 pages, £11.95. **UFOS: THE GULF BREEZE SIGHTINGS** by Ed and Frances Walters. Bantam Press, 348 pages, £14.99. **PHANTOMS OF THE SKY** by David Clarke and Andy Roberts. Hale, 204 pages, £12.95

I HAVE mislaid a packet of cigarettes I remember seeing five minutes ago. Either I have forgotten where I left it or it has been snatched by research-happy aliens. I incline to the former hypothesis because I fail to see why aliens should be interested in an opened pack of Deluxe Mild Silk Cut when there are so many others to choose from. The latter hypothesis is comforting because it excuses me from suspecting that I am undergoing a mild form of mental decay.

Truth has a hard time. Especially if Colin Parsons can call his paranormal accounts "true" and announce, by way of opening the brief section of his book that deals with experiences of UFOs: "I don't think there are many rational people left who think that . . . UFOs don't exist." As they used to say, it all depends on what you mean by UFOs and existence.

Believe it or not (and truth is

stranger than fiction, sometimes), there are not only many people who would give my theory the time of day, but would also fail to find an oxymoron in the sentence, "I have identified the strange light in the sky as a UFO". U is for Unidentified, and we abhor ignorance so much that we let the wildest speculation rush in to fill the vacuum. Parsons should simply have said, "I don't think there are many rational people left". It would have been less insulting.

Encounters with the Unknown is a collection of speculations masquerading as narrative. There are stories about hauntings, reincarnation, prophecy (a favourite is the Welsh clergyman who has correctly dreamt the first three placings of every major horse race since 1963, but refuses to act upon his knowledge), and time travel. The stories are diverting, but are not so much food for thought as food for wonder.

The author's vocabulary, though, is proscribed by the limits of his imagination. Terms whose viability rational people still ought to argue about are used fearlessly. Words like "spirit" and "soul" are employed on a first-resort basis.

What the stories share, says Parsons, is "an impression of underlying truth", which makes truth sound like something placed beneath a carpet to make it more comfortable. The ring of truth is another matter, and it is difficult to forge. What Ed and Frances Walters have done in *UFOS: The Gulf Breeze Sightings* is to

give their story the urgency of fiction. Not very good fiction, but then we are not meant to quibble. This is the truth.

"Bang! Something hit me. All over my body. I tried to lift my arms to point the camera. I couldn't move them. They were blue. I was blue. Everything was blue. I was in a light blue beam. The blue beam had hit me like compression." Ed Walters has been chased and abducted by aliens, has taken numerous photographs and videos of their craft, and has a mass of detail to support the photographic veracity of his account. Dr

Bruce S Maccabee, brought on to vouch for or refute the authenticity of Walters's story, concludes that it "and the photos make a coherent whole, which would tax the capabilities of a Hollywood scriptwriter". You don't have to be a drum-banger for Hollywood scriptwriters to be disappointed with that.

Walters's account may, of course, be true. There is no point in complaining that the photographed UFO looks very much like one of the less spectacular special effects from *Day of the Daleks*. We indulge the claims made on our credulity because we do not want to have to say that Walters is either lying or deranged. Once you have read *Phantoms of the Sky: UFOs - A Modern Myth?*, though, you will have enough ammunition to take on frauds and the self-deluded.

Clarke's and Roberts's thesis is that most UFO sightings are explicable by known phenomena. The remaining

ones can be accounted for by rare natural occurrences, about which we know little, or by neural aberrations. Even abductions can be accounted for. Michael Persinger, a neuroscientist, plonked a magnetic field-generating helmet on people who claimed no experience of UFO sightings, threw a switch, suggested his subjects could see a light in the sky, and then sat back as they fabricated an entire abduction sequence - which they took as objective truth - from virtually nothing.

I have the feeling that Clarke and Roberts will not be popular in this silliest of silly seasons. Their book is an antidote to stupidity, but those who have succumbed to the condition rarely feel the need to be cured of it. The *Guardian* now devotes a weekly page to Chinese horoscopes. Where will this get us? Out of the superstitious hole we have dug for ourselves over the centuries? Or deeper into it?

The Sunday Correspondent. 05.08.90

Jets 'shot down UFO'

SOVIET fighter planes shot down a UFO but secret police hid the incident, it was claimed yesterday.

Scientists attending a conference on UFOs in Munich said parts of the craft were recovered after it was shot down over the Caucasus mountains in March, 1983.

They said a recently-leaked picture of the wreckage proved the KGB was hiding something 'sensational'.

The Daily Mail. 25.06.90

Window on East Anglia

High-speed UFO visit which baffled air base personnel

THE sighting of cornfield circles in Norfolk prompts memories of UFO incidents, one of the most striking East Anglian examples occurring in 1956.

On August 13, a Douglas C-47 transport plane was flying over the Bentwaters-Woodbridge air base, when the crew saw a streak of white light flash beneath them at an unbelievable speed.

It began at 9.30 pm when Bentwaters radar picked up an unusual object 25-30 miles south-east, heading straight at the base at 4500-5000 mph. It was on them in 30 seconds, then sped inland.

A profusion of other strange objects appeared on radar, slowly crossing the base. For some time, they flew in intricate formations, occasionally appearing to merge into one.

At 10 pm, another high-speed target flashed across the radar screen before disappearing. At 10.55 came the object sighted by the C-47, travelling at seven times the speed of sound; a brilliant glowing white light, but no engine noise or sonic boom.

USAF Lakenheath was immediately alerted. Contact came within five minutes. The object was stationary, then acquired an air speed of 600 knots and shot off north-west.

Nuclear bomber crews were brought to a heightened state of readiness; armed air police sealed off the base; anti-aircraft defences were activated.

Radar at RAF Neatishead detected the mass of strange objects criss-crossing East Anglia. A jet fighter from Waterbeach near Cambridge was scrambled.

The fighter pilot made contact around midnight and closed in. But the UFO took the initiative. Too fast for the fighter but tracked by Lakenheath and Neatishead, it circled with blinding speed behind the jet.

Efforts to shake it off failed, then it seemed to lose interest and dived away.

The UFOs were not finished with Lakenheath, however, for 18 months later, on April 18, 1958, five unidentified contacts were detected on the base's radar. Once again fighters were sent to intercept without success.

So what did happen? Equipment failure and meteorological phenomena were ruled out. An official USAF report offered no explanation.

It was not "Ball lightning," suspected to be the cause of many superficially similar UFO sightings, as it can only sustain itself for a minute at the most. And no aircraft could have achieved such performance. The mystery remains.

Eastern Daily Press. 06.08.90

Lights in the sky mystery

PEOPLE were mystified when they saw strange beams of light in the night skies over Malvern.

The town's police station was flooded with calls from residents wondering what the late Wednesday night spectacle was all about.

Suggestions ranged from search lights or UFOs to secret exercises being carried out from the Ministry of Defence's Royal Signals and Radar Establishment buildings in the town.

But the real cause was pinpointed to an exhibition of lasers at the Showman's Show at

Malvern's Three Counties Showground.

Stunned motorist Mrs Pat Botfield was driving to her Malvern Wells home when she saw the lasers.

She said: "The first thing I saw was a flash of blue light. Then every now and then there were more lights. It was quite unnerving. They were big beams of light."

A spokesman for Malvern police said there had been "numerous" calls from the public.

He added: "All these people who think we're into Star Wars were mistaken."

Evening News. 28.09.90

Mystery in the rice paddy

FARMER Shunzo Abe says two 'mystery circles,' similar to those causing a stir in Britain, flattened grain this week in his western Japan rice paddy.

Kyodo news agency reported there was no evidence that either man or machine had created the perfect circles which caused damage to the rice of at least £120.

It said Abe was bitter because he did not know where to lodge a complaint.

Jersey Evening Post. 21.09.90

Researchers seek clue to power-cut UFO in the sky

UFO researchers are on the trail of two mysterious flying objects seen hovering around Twyford Avenue in Great Wakering, at the beginning of July.

In the first case a local woman spotted the object about 300 yards from her back door. It was circular with three lights and three brighter lights inside, and appeared at about 8.30pm on Friday July 6.

UFO investigators in South East Essex are convinced it is the strongest ever sighting in the area. Power in the woman's house went off three times while the object hovered.

After it took off over her roof at a 90 degree angle, her power came back on.

Another UFO, this time a mass of bright lights, was also spotted off Twyford Avenue at around

8pm on April 16.

Now members of East Anglian UFO and Paranormal Research Association, which covers South East Essex, have launched a 24-hour phone hotline in a bid to find out more about the strange objects.

Club secretary Bernice Carr, of Hall Avenue, Aveley, said: "We want to find out as much as we can about this UFO because we know it wasn't a plane or wind balloon."

"It's the first case we've heard of where electricity has gone off and we would love to establish exactly what it is. That's why we've set up the helpline and are asking anyone who might be able to help to call."

The hotline number is 0875 373065 or you can phone Mr Carr on 0708 860363.

Evening Echo. 13.08.90

I SAW A FLYING SAUCER!

My eyes nearly popped out of my head and my jaw fell open in astonishment as I gazed ahead of me through the car windscreen.

Behind me, my son and his friend gasped, as we all wondered whether our eyes could be deceiving us. Directly facing us, below the clouds, two large searchlights sent long, parallel beams across the night sky.

Between them was a small red, glowing light. They were clearly all part of the same craft. Yet they were far too big and too far apart to belong to an aeroplane. What on earth could it be?

What happened next left us too stunned to move. As we watched, the lights turned downwards and began to move directly towards us. All we could do was sit in the car like three hares caught in the headlights, and stare incredulously ahead at the craft.

Almost paralysed with fear, we realised that it was coming straight towards us and that, although we couldn't see clearly because it was night, this craft was bigger than a house.

To our relief the lights stopped with a jerk, above the rooftops just across the road from the junction where we were. The two huge lights continued to stare straight at us.

Most uncanny of all, there was absolutely no noise at all. The night was peaceful, ours was the only car on the road, and we could have heard a pin drop. If it had been some kind of aeroplane, the roar from its engines would have been deafening at such a close range to us.

Shaking myself out of the trance-like state I was in, I thought fast. Should we stay and wait for the next move? Or go and hope it would let us drive off in peace.

I decided to go. I couldn't stand this any longer. I wanted to get home, where I'd be safe and warm and where, no doubt, we'd think of a very logical explanation for this monstrous, silent craft.

I turned towards home and put my foot down. But when I'd gone a little distance the three of us couldn't resist turning to see what was happening.

High in the sky the craft was heading back in the direction it originally came from. The

Whenever I'd read about someone seeing a UFO I thought the person must be making it up. But now I knew just how real the whole thing could be



Picture by David Porter

headlights had been replaced by amber glows on either side of a red light, with, high above them, a small green light. This was clearly the back of the craft. And we just couldn't believe how far it had travelled in the short time that we'd taken to drive away.

What on earth could it be? My son Giles and his friend Richard, who are both 17 and watch so much science fiction that the idea of Martians seems quite normal to them, were both convinced that we'd just seen a spaceship from another planet—an unidentified flying object, or UFO as they're more commonly known.

I, being of a more down-to-earth disposition, dismissed that, and was positive that there'd be a simple and logical explanation.

Even so, when we got home a few minutes later, I found myself feeling quite shaky as we told my husband the story of what had just happened to us. What had been a quick trip to town to pick the boys up from the local cinema had turned into a baffling mystery.

We live in a village in Kent, near

Herne Bay, and the area around us tends to be very quiet in the evening. There had been no one about as we set off from the bus-stop where I'd met the boys, towards our home.

That night I couldn't sleep. I tossed and turned as I wondered over and over again what it was that we'd seen. I had an uncanny feeling that it was something very, very strange. Perhaps the boys were right and it was a UFO.

The next morning I phoned the local airfield, but the air traffic control people assured me that there'd been no aircraft anywhere in our vicinity at that hour on the previous evening.

I decided to ring the police. Perhaps it was one of those giant airships, blown off course. But even I knew that an airship couldn't have moved at the speed of our craft.

The police were mystified and said there were no reports of any craft showing up on radar.

There was nothing more I could do, so I tried to forget the whole thing. But the local paper had

picked up the story from the police and they came to interview us.

After the story had appeared in the paper, someone came forward to say they'd had a very similar experience at the same time, a couple of miles away from where we'd been.

It was on an October night last year that we saw our UFO. But after the story appeared I heard that the summer before, while we'd been on holiday, a giant depression had appeared in a field near our house. Overnight the grass had been flattened in a giant circle, with no logical explanation at all.

What could I make of all this? Giles and Richard were quite matter of fact about our flying saucer. But I still found it hard to believe that I'd actually seen a craft from another planet.

I'd never even believed in UFOs before. Whenever I'd read about someone seeing one I thought the person must be making it up, or have a very vivid, over-active imagination. Now here I was, one of them, and I knew just how real the whole thing could be.

I began to wonder who might have been on board the craft or if there was anyone in it at all. In retrospect, I wished that, instead of taking the cowardly course and driving off, I'd got out of the car and gone to meet the craft. Perhaps someone would have come out of it. Though I might have turned tail if they were little men with green heads!

Since our experience, friends have told me they've seen similar things—an amber glow in the sky, a strange set of lights—but not bothered to report them.

I even went to the local library to see if I could find an explanation, but I couldn't find a description of any kind of flying craft that matched what we saw, or that could have been as big and yet moved as fast.

So now I have to say I really do believe in UFOs. None of us can know what or who is out there watching us, obviously with much better technology, since this craft wasn't only fast and silent but must have come a very long way. I just hope that, whoever they are, they're friendly. ■

Caro Thompson was talking to Solange Hando

'The silent craft was bigger than a house'

HISTORY MYSTERY

with RICHARD HOLLAND

THE mysterious circles of scorched grass found on a farm on the Denbigh Moors recently has sparked a great deal of talk about UFOs.

Most people assume that the UFO phenomenon is a recent one, dating from the Flying Saucer craze of the 1950s, when everyone was urged to "keep watching the skies," but in fact UFO-type sightings date back many hundreds of years.

In Welsh tradition they are called tan-we, a 'fiery web'. The tan-we is described as a "straight and long" light in the night sky which moves in a straight line for three or four miles, lighting the air around it and the ground beneath it.

"When it falls to the ground" — states an old account — "it sparkleth and lightneth all about." They tended to descend on the land of recently deceased persons.

On December 20, 1661, a woman travelling over a common at the village of Weston in old Montgomeryshire fell off her horse in terror at the

sight of a "blazing star, which she and six men with her saw, sometimes white and sometimes red, with a tail like an arrow, which seemed to hang just over their heads."

Another UFO landed at Buckley in the 1880s. Striking miners, made desperately poor by a fierce dispute over wages in the Buckley Collieries, were forced to take up poaching to find food for their families.

A group of miners were poaching on land near Padeswood one moonless night when they suddenly felt as if they were being watched.

One chanced to look up, and there hovering above them was a large, purplish red luminous ball. They hid under a hedge. Eventually, they raised their heads just in time to see "a swirling ball of smoke, with small tongues of flame issuing from the base" ascending into the heavens.

Several weeks later the miners plucked up the courage to revisit the site of the landing, and there they found a circle of scorched grass, just like

those found on the Denbigh Moors. There are several people living in Buckley today who can remember their grandparents recounting this story to them as firsthand witnesses.

The mysterious circles are interesting in that not so long ago country folk would have described them as "Fairy Rings", believing them to be impressions caused by round dances performed by the Fairies at night.

Fairies and UFOs are sometimes linked. A folk tale from the Penrhyn-deudraeth area tells of a man watching the descent of "a brilliant meteor" followed by a "hoop of fire." Out of this hoop stepped two little people. They began to dance and were soon joined by other small folk, and they all danced in a ring.

This is just a smattering of old accounts of what we today would call a "Close Encounter." Perhaps one day the mystery of UFO sightings will be solved, but until then — Keep Watching The Skies!

Richard Holland is the author of *Supernatural Clwyd; the Folk Tales of North-East Wales* published by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch at £4.50.

Scientist studies size and distance of UFO

Multiple sightings and photographs help scientists locate the size and distance of the red glowing object that flew over Gulf Breeze on Wednesday, April 18, 1990. Several of the thirty-plus witnesses who saw the object also video the sighting which further aids the investigation. Using the 35mm photos of the object, the angle of elevation and distance to the object was calculated to be approximately 3.4 miles when first seen to approximately

1.7 miles when the object disappeared.

An optical study is now being conducted by a leading expert from Washington, D.C., **Dr. Bruce Maccabee**. If, upon further study, the image on the 35mm negatives proves to be .0625mm, then the object was about 15 feet wide. The brilliant red glow of the object was also witnessed by officers **John Rhodes** and **Don Stevens** who said, "It was not an airplane or helicopter, it was a very bright red light at

least several miles away. We don't know what it was."

Doug Wilkos witnessed the object and later reported to Police Chief **Brown**, "I'm ex-military and an expert on helicopter profile; this was no helicopter or flare or anything that I could identify."

From April 11 to April 18, there were five multiple witness sightings involving as many as 60 people, four videotapes and dozens of photos.

... and more sightings

BY VICKI LYONS
MUFON Investigator

An unusual light was seen in the skies over Gulf Breeze on Tuesday evening, April 17th at 8:54 p.m. For approximately 3 minutes, fifteen witnesses watched an elliptical, bright red light moving from the direction of East Bay toward Gulf Breeze. The light could be seen at the same time as a plane flying in the same area, so a comparison could be easily made. The unidentified light was completely different from the plane light. There were no other visible colors on the

unidentified light and it did not blink. It seemed to be a soundless light moving in a drifting pattern, coming to a stop, changing to a white color and then continuing east. It was probably 2500 feet high. A helicopter had also been in the area shortly before the light was seen and the light was easily distinguishable and different from both the helicopter and the plane. As a MUFON UFO investigator, I thought it was a highly unusual light with odd characteristics. I am currently working with three other investigators, **Carol** and **Rox Salls-**

berry and **Joe Barron**, to try to check out all possibilities for identification. This unusual light resembles several other reports occurring in the area in the last couple of weeks. At this time, we

have no idea what the lights are, but our investigation is continuing and we will report to *Sentinel*. readers what we find out. If you have any information concerning these unusual lights, please call our local MUFON hotline at 436-2700.

Denbighshire Free Press. 22.06.90

Sentinel. 14.06.90

Flying objects: Humanitarian aliens with sun-tans and no spots

*Flying saucers are real
Flying saucers are friendly
Your government knows this*
The Aetherius Society

IS THERE anybody out there? Dr Richard Lawrence, of the Aetherius Society, believes there is. Not a body as such, but there all the same.

He even knows what some of them look like. "Obviously there have been different reports, but most are of humanoid form. They have long hair and are taller than the average man, 7ft normally. They look compassionate, unblemished and sun-tanned. Most seem between 30 and 40 years old.

"But these are only the ones which live in our solar system. Extra-terrestrials from other solar systems could take different forms altogether.

"They have an existence not limited to any physical plane. They have power over matter, and can appear or disappear at will." This explains why flying saucers can come and go as they please.

"They have a tremendous interest in humanity. They will not directly interfere with our lives unless we specifically ask them. They are much more subtle than that."

Dr Lawrence believes that if they landed they would cause too much fear to do any good. Their powers are so immense they could rule our lives. However, as they are so humanitarian, they realise this will deny us the gift of experience, so they have avoided this.



Coming down to visit us, or black stickers stuck on a window?

"The interesting thing is that they have been appearing more and more often since the advent of nuclear power. They realise that we are damaging our earth, and are trying to help us stop the self-destruction."

This point was proved before the Chernobyl disaster. Dr George King was warned of the disaster a few

hours beforehand. He told his friends, and they managed to get 50,000 man hours of prayer and positive energy out before the disaster actually happened. Greenpeace claims it was miraculous that the damage was not a lot worse after the disaster. Mr Lawrence believes this was because of his group's help. During the Cyprus War in 1974 they put out 532,000 man hours of positive energy; the war ended the next day.

Dr Lawrence is a leading member of the Aetherius Society, a group set up in 1954. Part of their research is involved with the study of extra-terrestrial beings. Not the question of their existence, they do not dispute that, but their psychology. They study why extra-terrestrials do what they do.

"UFO spotters are like train spotters. They just deal with sightings and take down recordings of these, like taking down serial numbers. We actually meet the train and see who gets off."

The Aetherius Society was founded by Dr George King in 1954. This was after his first contact with extra-terrestrials. They have been keeping close to him ever since and nobody has ever been able to disprove this.

Mr Lawrence is aware that some people may not believe all he says: "People used to believe the Earth was flat. Now they would be locked up. There will come a time when people who do not believe in extra-terrestrials will be locked up."

Mistaken identity

Alternatively, UFOs could be:

1. Weather balloons
2. Ball lightning
3. Comets
4. Low-flying aircraft
5. Planet Venus
6. Kites
7. Signal flares
8. The moon
9. Meteors
10. Lights reflecting off low clouds

The Indy. 05.07.90

COMMUNION

Starring: Christopher Walken,
Lindsay Crouse
Director: Philippe Mora
Certificate: 15
Running time: 109 mins

IN HIS best-selling book *Communion*, Whitley Strieber claimed he was taken off and investigated by aliens. Some people dismissed the claim because it was a 'documentary novel' and he is the main character. Still, Aussie director Mora, who collaborated with the author on this project, had a freaky experience while staying at Strieber's New York cabin, where all the weird stuff started, so...

While the book runs into the realms of cod-philosophy and speculation, the celluloid version is pure Hollywood sci-fi. Yet *Communion's* strength is that it's an offbeat domestic melodrama, chronicling the way Strieber's experiences disrupt his personal life. It seems his family and friends had as much difficulty swallowing his story as some of his readers.

Casting Christopher Walken as Strieber is questionable. A mannered actor, Walken's character is too wacky in the first place, so believing in his sanity becomes even harder. Then there's the creatures themselves and their monstrous rectum probe (is this a rape phobia drama in disguise?), which will raise more titters than amazement.

Perhaps the main problem is that Strieber's dream-like experiences, real or imaginary, do not transfer well to the literal medium of film.

■■■■■ MARTIN SUTTON

SELECT Nov. '90

a crisis of identity

Nothing new about UFOs

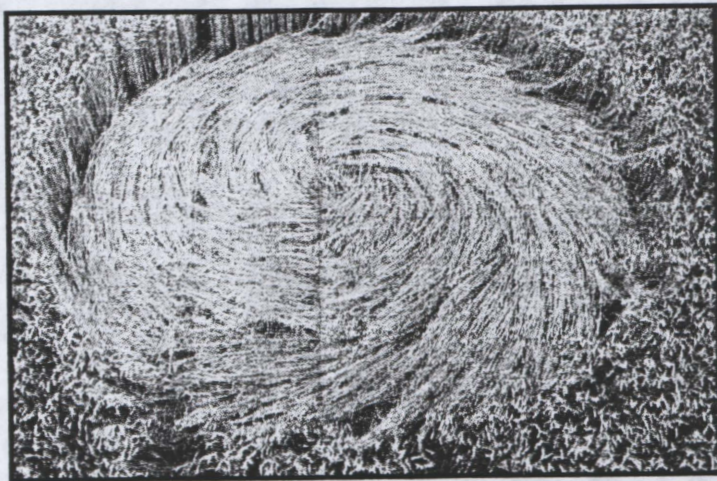


Photo from *Circular Evidence*, published by Bloomsbury Publishing, £9.99

Solving the circles

EVERY SUMMER something strange happens in the fields of southern England. Flattened circles are appearing in the crops. As more and more appear, so do more theories.

Are they caused by UFOs landing, mad hedgehogs, hoaxers going to incredible amounts of trouble with bits of rope, or bacteria killing the crops? It appears the truth may be much more mundane.

The circles themselves also vary. Some are small and plain, some are 30 metres across, with swirling patterns and other satellite circles around them. They were first studied seriously in 1976 when they were spotted in a field in Hampshire. They reappear there every year.

Two weeks ago about 150 scientists met in Oxford to talk about the mystery. They believe the circles are caused by strong winds and special weather conditions which often occur in southern England. The winds are small cyclones which leave the perfectly formed circles.

They only seem to happen at night, and are accompanied with flickering lights and weird noises. The special conditions the winds require are that the days are warm and the nights cold.

A layer of cool air settles in a pool on the ground; it is trapped under a layer of warmer air which in turn develops into a column of rapidly spinning air.

At present, the biggest stir the circles are causing is among farmers. They are bored of scientists traipsing over their fields with cameras and tape-measures trying to find out the truth.

Scientists are still not totally sure as to their cause. Dr Terence Meaden, head of Britain's Tornado and Storm Research Organisation, and a world expert on crop circles, said: "Perhaps in 50 years we will know the full answer". So, if you want to believe in the hedgehogs, nobody can prove you wrong. Yet.

Gary Jackson

IN 1290, the peace of Bylands Abbey in Yorkshire was broken. Monks were startled to see a large silver disc flying overhead. The monks had not seen any science-fiction films, they knew nothing of space travel and had never even heard of ET phoning home. UFOs have been around for years, and we still have a lot to learn about them.

In those days, they were not even described as UFOs. This term came about in 1947 when Kenneth Arnold reported seeing a formation of gleaming discs flying over the Rocky Mountains in the north-west of the United States. He described them as "skipping like saucers across water", and the name flying saucer caught on. An official investigation adopted the more cautious name of Unidentified Flying Object. Now, all strange sightings in the sky are called UFOs.

Sceptics have never believed in their existence. In 1976 President Jimmy Carter made the following pre-election pledge:

"If I become President, I will make every piece of information this country has about UFO sightings available to the public and the scientists. I am convinced that UFOs exist because I have seen one."

More and more people are beginning to accept that UFOs do exist. People who see them are not cranks, or people desperate for publicity, they are ordinary people.

Five million claimed to have seen a UFO in America in 1980.

Philip Mantle is a member of the British Unidentified Flying Object Research Association. This group was set up to monitor UFO sightings around the country. People who spot UFOs contact his group. Mantle is in charge of investigations.

"I suppose 95 per cent of UFO sightings can be explained in mundane terms, such as aircraft, weather balloons, satellites or bright stars, but it is the other five per cent which we are interested in," he says. Mr Mantle believes this field has been neglected by scientists:

"Even if UFOs do not exist, the social sciences should be interested in why people keep on reporting sightings of them."

UFOs come in all shapes and sizes. The most common are flying saucers, cigar-shaped objects, glowing spheres and luminous balls of light.

However, there are many more variations. In 1971, a UFO looked like a household steam iron, was twice sighted near Loch Ness, Scotland.

On the second occasion it landed, three figures climbed in and the UFO took off. Apparently the people who saw it missed out on seeing the Loch Ness monster while they were there.

The existence of UFOs is still debated all over the world. Until science finds positive proof of their existence, many will take unidentified to mean non-existent.

The Indy. 05.07.90

Down-to-earth UFO

BELGIUM: Excited UFO spotters convinced that men from outer space have chosen their country as a landing site have been brought back to earth with a bump. Physicist Leon Brenig, tracking the 10,000 sightings on computer, says he has proof that the brightly-lit triangular craft is a top secret US plane.

GUARDIAN 11/10/90

COMMUNION (Prince Charles, 15) is taken from the book by Wilhelmy Strubler, who wrote the script and helped produce it with Philippe Mora, the director. We must thus believe that it is as authentic a version as possible of the peculiar psychic adventure that he says happened to his family. Certainly the film makes a strenuous attempt to encapsulate Strubler's tale without sensationalism. It also has the benefit of one of Christopher Walken's most serene and watchable performances. If ever a man looked as if he'd just seen a ghost, or actually is one, it's Walken. Strubler thinks he was the victim of an attempted abduction by sentient and not necessarily hostile non-human visitors who nevertheless terrified his family in the process. The trouble with it has half in our expectations of a genre practised mostly by second-rate film-makers these days, and half in the own high seriousness. In the end, we get something more than a little dull and not much more creditable than your average sci-fi subgenre.

UFO facts?

* UFOs are seen most often between the hours of 9.00pm and 10.30pm.

* The UFO speed record is held by a saucer seen flying over South America in January 1977. Its speed was calculated to be about 28,000 km/h - the same speed as an artificial satellite orbiting Earth.

* In the early morning of 17 June, 1957, a US Air Force RB47 jet was chased by a UFO for well over 1,100 kilometres.

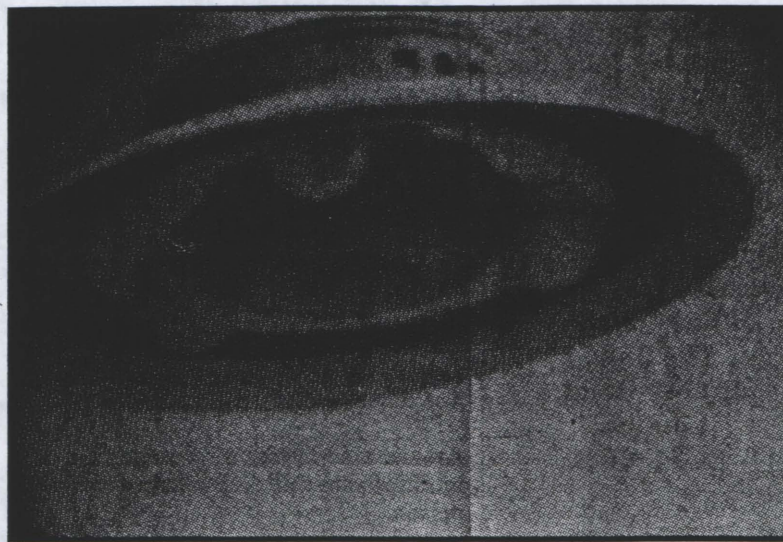
For an hour-and-a-half, as they flew from Mississippi, over Louisiana and Texas, and into Oklahoma, the six-man crew attempted to outwit the UFO using the jet's complex electronic equipment. The UFO seemed to play hide and seek, appearing and disappearing from the aeroplane's radar screen.

* Five children and their mother saw a UFO land in a field close to their home in Normanton, West Yorkshire. The mother described the UFO as being shaped like a Mexican hat.

Three tall men, wearing white boiler suits, came out of the craft. They were holding black instruments and appeared to be searching the ground for something. They returned to their craft which took off silently.

* During the morning of 26 October, 1958, in Baltimore USA, two motorists turned a corner to see a 30-metre long, glowing, egg-like object. Their car stalled as they approached. A few seconds later a bright light and a wave of heat radiated from the object, then it shot upwards with a thunderous roar and disappeared. Later both motorists' faces showed marks which doctors thought to be radiation burns.

* Many thanks to *Usborne publishers for the use of their book UFOs, available from major book shops, costing £2.95.*



Chicken feeder or flying saucer?



MR ADAMSKI, from California, claimed he took these pictures when he was visited by some Venusians. They could not talk to Mr Adamski due to the language barrier but they managed to get this message across to him telepathically:

We are of more advanced form of civilization than yours. We know the kind of dangers that threaten you. We come to warn you of them.

Experts studied the pictures and said: "It looks like a chicken brooder."

Glossary of UFO terms

Alien

Any creature unknown on Earth and therefore possibly from another world. It also refers to any suspected life in outer space.

Extra-terrestrial

Anything which originates outside Earth, such as an alien creature.

Galaxy

Gigantic cluster of stars, of which there are millions throughout the Universe. Our sun is in the Milky Way galaxy, which is about 100 million light years wide.

Humanoid

A creature resembling the human

form, standing upright with two arms, two legs and a head.

Orbit

The curving path of one body as it moves around another, such as the moon moving around the Earth.

Radar

Device which uses radio signals to detect far-off objects. The signals are beamed out by a transmitter. They bounce off objects in their way and the returning echoes are displayed as blips on a television-like screen.

UFO-naut

Alien creature which might be one of the crew of a UFO.

The Indy. 05.07.90

Salisbury & Avon Advertiser 08.08.90

PORTON resident Jane Manning-Phillips has always considered herself a sensible, down to earth sort of person so, at first, she was loath to tell anyone of the unearthly object she saw flying over her home on Monday week at 10.30pm.

"I said to my mother, 'I'm going to keep quiet about this in case people want to come and take me away'", she laughs. "But then I heard about another sighting near the Isle of Wight so I thought 'I'd give you a ring'."

"I'm no crackpot," said the 41 year old physiotherapist. "But what I saw must have been a UFO. I have never seen anything like it and we have a lot of strange MOD aircraft flying over here."

"It made a terrible noise, like it was about to crash. It was ugly, and really quite frightening."

It was the heavy-laboured and very loud noise which woke Jane that evening.

"It sounded like an aeroplane in trouble which is why I got up and looked outside," she explains. "Then I saw this strange cylinder shaped object which was flying along vertically. That was what amazed me most. It was upright."

"It had two very big red lights at the top and bottom and an orangey yellow light either side in the middle," she says. "I watched it fly over Porton school towards Highpost and then round to Boscombe Down where it seemed to disappear."

"My mother got up and saw it as well, when it was a little further away, and my neighbour heard it but didn't bother to get up," adds Jane.

She immediately telephoned the MOD at Boscombe Down to see if it appeared on their monitors.

"I spoke to the MOD police who said they could see no sign of it," she said. "I couldn't believe that no-one there saw or heard anything."

The MOD confirmed that they had spoken to a "genuine-sounding" Jane Manning-Phillips, but said they had seen nothing.

Ms Manning-Phillips, keen to restore her peace of mind, would like anyone in the Porton area who might have seen or heard anything unusual on the night of Monday July 30 to contact the Avon Advertiser.

How they took the news from Mars to Ghent

HAVE the lords of the universe chosen their first colony on Earth?

If they have, their subject people could be ... the Belgians.

The question is exercising the minds not only of the Belgian scientific establishment but also of the air force and police.

UFO freaks can forget all that stuff about flying saucers, according to a series of sightings over the tiny

country more often concerned with eating, drinking and minding its own business.

The mysterious visitors are appearing in flying pyramids.

Belgian police have logged more than 2,600 sightings of a triangular object, with three huge lights, hovering in the night sky — including reports from at least 20 of

their own gendarmes. And UFO-spotters are euphoric after the latest sighting was apparently backed up by the Belgian air force's own radar log.

According to a physicist at Brussels Free University, Professor Leon Brenig, two F-16 fighters scrambled from Ghent after reports from the public of another UFO.

He says their radar locked on to an object which accelerated away before they could see it.

The pilots have been forbidden to say anything. But air force Colonel Wilfried de Brouwer, in charge of an official investigation into the incident, admitted: "They are convinced it was something special."

Professor Brenig, formerly an unbeliever, now claims to have seen a UFO himself.

He is hoping the analysis of photographs and radar echoes of earlier episodes will be ready this week and will be discussed at a

gathering of the country's scientists later this month.

He is also arranging a UFO hunt for members of the Belgian Society for the Study of Space Phenomena, with the backing of the Belgian army and air force, he says.

"No country has ever taken UFO sightings so seriously," he said.

"I am a sceptical man, but I feel that something is happening which is very strange ..."

Daily Mail. 11.10.90

Aliens taking human babies

Aliens are abducting women and stealing their babies, according to a leading American authority on the subject.

Well, you don't need to lock up your daughters just yet, but the news was announced in all seriousness at the London Business School this week by Budd Hopkins, who has written two books on alien abductions.

There was no dissent among the 100 UFOlogists who crammed into a lecture hall in Regent's Park to hear and see the evidence.

Mr Hopkins, a painter-sculptor from New York, has spent the last 15 years studying the phenomenon of alien abductions.

He claims to have documented more than 300 individual cases, including pregnant women whose babies "disappeared" after their close encounters, confounding them, their gynaecologists and the fathers-to-be.

The victims are always, so far as one can gather, returned to terra firma after being whisked aboard alien spacecraft for a once-over by an ET GP.

Children and young people seemed to be a particular target for the aliens, said Mr Hopkins, who showed slides to illustrate their experiences, including their impressions of the aliens they had encountered.

You had to admit they all bore an uncanny resemblance to each other. You also had to admit they looked like close cousins of the aliens in Steven Spielberg's Close Encounters Of The Third Kind.

As for his own opinions, Mr Hopkins displayed a reluctance to go on the record. "I don't think they come from Birmingham or Central America," he opined, adding, helpfully: "They come from somewhere else."

Wherever they do come from, he thought they probably had some kind of "genetic evolutionary problem" hence their eagerness to examine humans so closely and take our babies.

"I don't think it is an invasion," declared Mr Hopkins to the audience, members of the British UFO Research Association. "It could be some kind of infiltration. But I see terrible psychic damage coming in the wake of it."

Shropshire Star. 19.07.90

FLYING saucer enthusiasts from all over the world are expected to flock to West Lothian once a plaque is installed at the site of the Dechmont Law UFO sighting.

That's the view of two organisations who are convinced that the mysterious story of forestry worker Bob Taylor is genuine.

As revealed in last week's Courier, the Livingston Development Corporation have latched on to an idea from Strange Phenomena Investigations (SPI), who research para-normal incidents.

LDC officials are currently designing a plaque which will be fixed at the woodland clearing where Bob claimed he had a close encounter with a spaceship in 1979.

This week, the LDC's move won praise from SPI president Malcolm Robison and East Calder man Kenny Higgins, chairman and foun-

der member of Scottish Research Into UFOs.

"I believe this will be the first time that a UK sighting of a UFO will be marked with a plaque," said Mr Robison.

"Bob Taylor's story is one of the most important and intriguing cases to involve UFOs being sighted in Scotland."

Mr Higgins said: "Dechmont Law sighting is one of the most recorded and publicised incidents involving UFOs ever to have taken place in Scotland."

"People from all over Britain, and indeed from all over the world, have been coming to Livingston to see where the spaceship apparently landed."

"Marking it with a plaque is a great idea."

Both organisations say they believe Bob's story — because it has never been disproved.

"It's very, very difficult to come up with a satisfactory explanation to what happened," said Mr Robison. "All we can say is that it appears there was an object resting on the ground at that location."

And Mr Higgins commented: "We have not found any proof to suggest that Bob

Taylor's story did not take place — we actually believe that the event happened."

"The ground depressions suggested that something had landed there, even though Edinburgh airport reported that nothing had shown on their radar."

Lothian Courier. 10.08.90



Left: Howard Blum, secret chaser. Below: one witness's attempt to record a close encounter of the extraterrestrial kind

members were generals – to investigate, like other committees before it, the big, transcending question. Its mission, as delicately phrased at the committee's inaugural meeting, was to discover 'whether or not the human race is alone in the universe'. The Unidentified Flying Object Working Group is still investigating, says Blum, meeting regularly in the Tank, the most secure conference room in the Pentagon, but the government continues to deny its existence, or admit to any other official curiosity about life in space since it was definitively dismissed as fanciful by the air force in 1969.

However, according to Blum, the United States has been systematically monitoring UFO activity ever since, has even intercepted alien signals, and was so alarmed about 'UFO intrusions' over Strategic Air Command bases that it actually prepared for an intergalactic invasion. 'The government is actively looking into the possibility of extraterrestrial life,' says Blum. 'They are spending hundreds of millions of dollars, and government scientists and generals are convinced that there is something out there. But they are not interested in sharing this information and, more intriguing, they are trying to cover up their work with a disinformation campaign designed to discredit anybody with an interest in UFOs.'

'Why so much illegality and subterfuge? I have been lied to and misled more on this story than in all my life as a reporter. Why is the government so concerned, so fascinated, spending so much money and denying it?' They are compelling questions, and the search for answers has led Howard Blum to write a compelling book, *Out There*.

Blum is a serious reporter – his book about Nazis in America resulted in a congressional hearing and the subsequent deportation of 37 war criminals – and his story involves some of the nation's most distinguished scientific minds. He does not necessarily accept the existence of UFOs, but he believes there is other life out there.

The potential number of civilisations in the wide black yonder is, well, astronomical. Dr Frank Drake, an astrophysicist at the University of California, says there could be as many as 100,000 advanced societies among the 400 billion stars of the Milky Way alone.

Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan both say they have encountered UFOs but, as far as we

know, George Bush, the only president ever head the CIA, has only seen the one that landed on the White House lawn in the movie *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.

Polls show that 57 per cent of Americans believe in UFOs, and nine per cent think they've seen one. For comparative purposes, 42 per cent say they have had contact with the dead.

Having established two separate contacts inside the UFO Working Group – in Washington sound tends to travel faster than light – for two years Blum followed in the working group's not-so-secret footsteps, beset 'by official spokesmen and institutions doing their collusive best to hinder and obstruct my efforts'.

The trail took him through the swamps of government files and to the giddy heights of bureaucratic whimsy. Inside the National Security Agency, America's most secretive organisation, he found a group that believed that UFOs had already landed. They called themselves the Dundee Society, after the marmalade jar in which their leader, known as His Cerebral Phosphorence, kept his pencils.

The NSA insisted to the UFO Working Group that if an ET landed and said, 'Take me to your leader,' the President of the United States was the leader it should be taken to, and the group, Blum reports, has unanimously adopted the NSA recommendation that the government must 'exclusively supervise, monitor and control' all communications with other planets.

In October 1992, the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America, America will try to discover other worlds. A ten-year \$10 million programme will begin to scan the skies systematically for evidence of life, simultaneously monitoring 14 million radio channels listening for signals from advanced civilisation that may be out there. But, according to Blum,

quoting no less a source than the President's science adviser, repetitive signals from space have already been picked up by NASA's listening equipment in California's Mojave desert. But this too has been formally denied.

'Why,' writes Blum, 'was the government so committed, so conspiratorially determined to perpetuate the mystery surrounding its fascination with other worlds? Is it because, he asks, conspiracy is a habit, because the explanations are no simple, because at the end of global political conflict

all that is left for a great nation to protect and believe in is its secrets? 'Or because they know? Because for our own safety, or in the national interest, or even for our own psychic good they have decided not to tell us what is out there?'

YOU

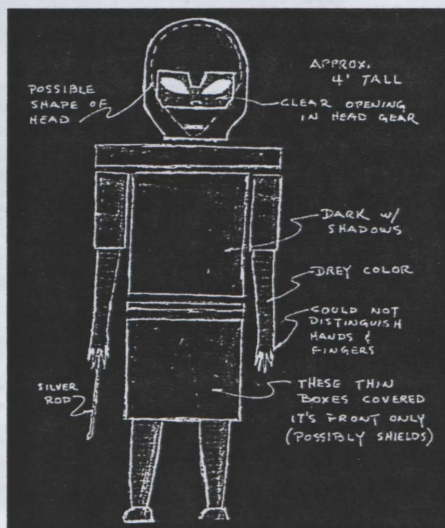
Out There, by Howard Blum, is published on August 28 by Simon & Schuster, price £14.95.

The place they call The Cave is burrowed out of the granite of Cheyenne Mountain in the Colorado Rockies. This is where America patrols the last frontier, scouting for World War III. Half a mile below ground, the orbital analysts of the United States Space Surveillance Center sit in the surrealistic green glow of their computer screens, sieving the skies for menace and tracking all the stuff that man has lobbed up there.

One evening in early December, 1986, as a snowstorm snarled across Cheyenne Mountain, the air-force technicians monitoring astral traffic locked on to something that wasn't supposed to be out there. This one wasn't on the world's inventory of the 7,087 known objects in space, and it was performing in a manner implausible to all human technology. It jinked across the screens, swooping and climbing at unbelievable speeds and altitudes, a cosmic joyrider moving eastwards across the southern United States.

Finally, when all possible explanations had been eliminated, the crew chief lifted The Phone – the one coloured Armageddon gold – and issued a flash alert to the commander-in-chief of the North American Aerospace Command. Then, just as suddenly as it had appeared, object 7,088 had gone, leaving behind only one certainty – it wasn't one of ours – and a classified report, circulated to the President, the joint chief's of staff, and the intelligence agencies, that some scientifically improbable space vehicle had tangoed across the United States and then vanished.

This incident, says Howard Blum, a former investigative reporter for *The New York Times*, provoked the Defense Intelligence Agency to set up another top-secret committee – four of its



It's myopic to dismiss UFO reports

■ RE Comment column (The News, July 4). The centuries have shown that any great radical proposal travels through the three stages of ridicule, discussion, and finally acceptance.

An impressive number of the scientific hierarchy have been studying the aerial phenomena (UFOs) for well over 30 years, with every major world government maintaining a governmental department that collates reports of UFO sightings, so obviously the theme is no longer confined to the realms of fantasy.

It is people who have made no study of the subject that pro-

ound irrational hypotheses *ex cathedra* as if it were an established fact. Commendable caution is one thing, but unreasoning fear, expressed in ridicule or cynicism, is quite another.

With the advent of the Freedom of Information Act in America, a vast amount of hitherto classified material has been made available to the public, viz. reports and photographs formerly in the custody of the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

We learn that at least two alien craft, with the bodies of 14 crewmen, were held at a maximum

security air base in Alabama.

Apparently the American Government declassified this information only after consultation with social psychologists regarding the public reaction to such a revelation.

A further confirmation concerned the sightings of alien craft that regularly escorted the various spacecraft from Earth.

More than 20 UFOs have been seen and filmed by some 30 astronauts - including the Russian crews.

Prior to the early 1950s, reports of sightings were freely pub-

lished, then the various governments became concerned that UFOs constituted a threat to national security, and ad hoc scientific advisory committees were formed, whereupon the whole subject was classified top secret, and the debunking policy was adopted.

Obviously there is no oracular certainty that investigation will be productive, but to dismiss the thousands of UFO reports from all over the world by basically credible witnesses epitomizes the authorities' myopic mentality. - John A. Wright, Wyndcliffe Road, Southsea.

The News. 13.07.90

COMMENTARY

Transfixed by the Martians

■ WESTERN society is entranced with the idea of UFOs or unidentified flying objects. In a survey 50 per cent believed in Martians; five per cent claimed to have seen Martians and one per cent said they were Martians.

Any strange phenomenon prompts the question from the media, 'Is it men from outer space and will they sell their story?'

Now, if a huge saucer shaped object lands in someone's garden and a two headed being emerges, people jump to the conclusion that 'the Martians have landed.'

The evidence is tenuous. Paul Sikoe's claim to have regularly seen the landing of huge glowing objects full of strange creatures was taken seriously until it was found he worked at Heathrow.

Most other encounters can also be rationally explained. The famous Yorkshire case in 1957 when a young man reported seeing a large blue and red object floating overhead was evidently a weather balloon.

Another recent case where two people were taken aboard a strange craft by what

By NIGEL DAWKINS



appeared to be eight foot, green stick insects and flown to Saturn was almost certainly yet another weather balloon.

This raises two questions: First, should the authenticity of all such stories be dismissed and second, with all these weather balloons floating around how come they cannot predict the weather?

Squatting

There have been many investigations. The scientific validity of some of these have been questioned.

One in particular, chaired by Professor Weakheart, concluded that not only are we

being continually visited by aliens but that a group from Jupiter like it here so much they're squatting next door to him and beginning to bring down house prices.

A more eminent investigation headed by Doctor D'Menthead has concentrated on the widespread belief that there has been a cover-up of evidence by the authorities.

In response to suggestions that the Government had brought undue pressure on his committee to find a negative result Doctor D'Menthead, now Lord D'Menthead, said that was preposterous.

As the evidence mounts, though, in favour of UFOs, we need answers to several fundamental questions: why should members of a super intelligent race want to journey millions of miles just to hover above Wales, and why, when they make contact, is it only with people who also believe in reincarnation, horoscopes and have a garden full of gnomes?

Only when we have answers will man finally know whether he is no longer alone in the Universe or that it is just a lot of kids with frisbees.

Daily News. 02.08.90

WARNING! Your saucer has landed

JFO hysteria broke out in Gulf Breeze, Florida, when builder Ed Walters produced photos of what looked like a flying saucer floating in the dark sky above the town.

Within days, dozens of similar sightings from excited townspeople were reported. Mr Walters then wrote a book of interviews with locals who had seen the mysterious flying saucer and illustrated it with his own photos.

Recently Mr Walters sold his house to Mr Bob Men-

zer, who was sorting through junk in the attic when he came across a cardboard model of a spacecraft, identical to the one in Walters' photographs.

Since then, local photographer Tommy Smith has confessed he helped Mr Walters fake the photos using special lighting and a black backdrop at his home.

Mr Walters must now be feeling very silly. But not half as silly as those locals who saw that UFO so clearly...

Debunker photo evidence exposed as fake

Motivated UFO debunkers have a history of making fake evidence and sending it to the media. The *Sentinel* has received several such fake evidence hoaxes. Of particular interest were their fake Gulf Breeze type UFO photos over the Chrysler Bldg and others taken in

the front of Ed Walters' yard. Sent to the media, the debunkers implied that Ed Walters took them. Later the real photographer from New York, Manuel Fernandez, came forward to expose their fake evidence plot.

Sentinel. 14.06.90

Sunday Express. 14.10.90