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Dr Hendry's UFO Casebook: Recent Scottish sightings

Sightings of UFOs from the ground are numerous, but here are a few recent examples from Scotland where - from November 1992 until December 1993 - there were 200 reports alone from Bonnybride, Falkirk.

In 1993, the Ministry of Defence received 258 sighting reports at its London UFO unit. The MoD has a public relations function "we give people who claim to have seen UFOs a polite reply and we usually provide these individuals with the names and addresses of clubs they can join." In the UK in January 1994, they received reports of 70 sightings.

That year, amateur artist Ian MacPherson, from Rosyth, was out sketching a scene near a dam when he heard a noise and, turning round, saw a disc. He noted that the top part was extended, but when it moved away, he noticed the extended part had collapsed into the top of the craft.

He was so shocked that he almost forgot he had a camera with him, but managed to capture the disc on film before it left the area. He subsequently made a painting based on the film and his memory of the object. I have a copy of the painting in front me as I write - the disc looks like an inverted light-grey metal plate and there are apparently five or six lights on the underside rim. The dam was near Dunfermline (the case was quoted in the Sunday Express of January 1, 1995).

In 1994 there was a strange incident at Glenochil Jail, near Alloa. About midnight for about five minutes, a brightly lit object about two feet in diameter - like a polo mint - was seen in the security cameras, moving back and forward purposefully over the security fence.

Two prison officers went outside but were unable to see anything, although those inside

the prison could see the object on the monitors hovering above them, reacting to their movements. Ron Halliday, of Scottish Earth Mysteries Research, said there had been a great many UFO sightings in the area over the years and it often happened that cameras could pick up strange, unexplained phenomena undetected by the human eye.

In April 1996, Mr Raymond Meyer (41), from Guardbridge, a civilian maintenance engineer for the Leuchars runway, was on night duty in his office. The runway lights were turned off for pilot night flying instructions using special goggles, and a number of Harrier planes were expected from Germany.

It was a fine but cloudy night. At 10pm he saw, through a break in the clouds to the north, an enormous low-shaped sausage-like structure the size of a football stadium. It was stationary and surrounded by a greenish fluorescence.

"I thought it was just the moon behind the clouds at first although it was lower in the sky, and there was no reflected light that night," he recalled later.

While watching the structure for 15 or 20 minutes, he saw a piece of the sausage "break away from the main body, arched down in the sky and then joined back on to it. I couldn't believe my eyes."

Mr Meyer returned to the office where he described what he had seen to his colleague. "A few days later it was reported in the papers that other people had seen a similar object over Balmoral Castle that same night, and sketches were drawn."

A couple living from Inverness to London saw this UFO and told their story in the News of the World, and other local people saw it.

A spokesperson for RAF Leuchars could not confirm details of the incident although two jets had been scrambled to Balmoral where the

object had been sighted, but saw nothing of it (St Andrews Citizen 13.12.96).

Mr Meyer also talked about his encounter in "Speaking Out" at 10am last Boxing Day on BBC Radio Scotland.

On September 27 last year, Mrs Margaret Ross, of Falkirk, took a video recording on a camcorder from her bedroom window at bam-

half-moon shape with four diagonal bars of high intensity brightness.

"It began rotating and returned to its original shape. It then seemed to speed away eastwards in the direction of Linlithgow," she said.

Her daughter, Alexis, and her family - two miles away - also saw the phenomenon. At 7 o'clock she phoned Mrs Ross who told her she had it on tape.

Six months ago, Mrs Ross filmed a similar light in the sky. Archie Roy, emeritus professor of physics and astronomy at Glasgow University, said: "This is one of eight per cent of sightings which science cannot recognise."

Ron Halliday, of Stirling University, added: "We will examine the tape frame by frame and this will take some time," while Kenny Higgins - who has researched UFOs for 20 years, said: "The tape is the best evidence of a UFO that I've ever seen."

On October 16, 1996, at 6.40 pm, Barry McDonald and his girlfriend, Jane Adamson, in a car travelling from their home in Hallglen, Falkirk, saw an orange-coloured saucer-shaped object low down in the sky above Camelon, just a few miles from Bonnybride.

In a video lasting a minute, it turned white against a bright blue sky and then vanished.

Ron Halliday said of the tape: "It's by far the best bit of daylight film of a UFO I have seen."

Dr David Hendry, a retired Cupar GP, has already written a book, 'Cupar Doctors - and their families', published in 1992. It is available in Cupar from the Courtyard Bookshop, Mezzies Bookshop, Cupar, and the Fife Herald office, priced £3.99.



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EVENING TELEGRAPH & POST (DUNDEE)

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PEOPLE in east and central Scotland are becoming more familiar with reports of alleged visits from the stars, with Tayside and Fife regularly "buzzed" by UFOs. One Dundee man believes they could herald the end of human civilisation.

Grahame Wylie, of Auchterhouse, says that the threat comes from a malevolent race, the Greys, intent on taking over Earth. He says this is supported by the growing numbers of people who claim to have been abducted.

In response to this, Mr Wylie and some colleagues set up a helpline for these abductees, which is soon to go international. He says the response has been tremendous - there have been more than 10 calls from this area in one week.

The Greys are regularly abducting humans, claims Mr Wylie, and conducting frightening experiments on them - provoking fear in their victims just to see how they react.

Abductees have their memories "blocked" so they cannot always remember their experiences on board the UFOs.

Mr Wylie says this may also be so that they can act as "plants" to speak out for the Greys when they finally make their presence known.

What is the purpose of this? Why don't they simply invade Earth?

Grahame says that as a psychic channeler he communicates with a friendly alien by the name of Josef, who is observing Earth from a spaceship, and has warned Mr Wylie of the Greys' plan.

The Greys have become a popular image of aliens since the days of the Roswell incident in the US in the 1950s - four feet tall, almond-shaped eyes, tiny mouths and noses, no ears and grey, leathery skin.

"One day the Greys will make themselves known to us"

Mr Wylie believes they hail from a dying planet in the Zeta Reticuli star system in the Milky Way and have found Earth, and Earthlings, an attractive and inviting prospect.

However, they cannot simply invade as that would affect human free will, the most important aspect of our species which, according to Josef, will one day make us the most developed beings in the Universe.

Instead, the aliens manipulate us into inviting them to the planet before merging with us to make a human-alien hybrid.

"If the Greys were to succeed in dominating our world, the remaining human population would always pose a threat to them, so I think they would want to exterminate the race. During the many abductions, mental blocks are placed in the mind to obscure the truth, and suitable candidates are being chosen who are malleable enough to maintain contact with them."

"These individuals are being programmed to speak up for the Greys after they have landed to allow them to take control."

Mr Wylie also attempts to "heal" abductees and says he can protect them, with the help of Josef, from further contact with Greys.

According to Mr Wylie he has gleaned from abductees that the Greys are already on course to openly come to Earth and he estimates this will be in three or four years from now.

Anyone who believes he, or she, has had an alien encounter, or would like to know more is asked by Grahame to contact the Alien Abductee Helpline on 01382 320233 between 4pm and 8pm Monday to Friday.

AN ABDUCTEE'S STORY

ONE person who says she was an abductee backs up Grahame's claims, and although wanting to protect her identity, told the Evening Telegraph her story.

Jean (not her real name) lives in Angus and says she is an average working wife and mother. She had always kept an open mind about UFOs and other phenomena, and says she had since discovered that she is psychically open - the perfect combination to draw Greys to you. "I went to hear Grahame speak in Dundee a month ago and it brought memories back to me. I thought I had imagined it and told my partner and he said the same but it all came back to me," she said.

"I was abducted about three years ago from my bed. It was absolutely terrifying. I remember a

bright light being shone in my eyes and some sort of medical examination. I felt sheer terror as they studied me.

"I could sense they had no emotions and it didn't matter how I felt. They are just like robots and it is very sinister what they are trying to do - they want us to like and accept them and they have monitored me psychically since then. Everytime I thought how awful they were I got a message about a malfunction - like I was a computer. They are trying to reprogramme us."

"I know it sounds mad but people like Grahame mad but stand up and say something otherwise what the Greys are doing will continue and it is dangerous."

DO you believe there's life out there? Let us know by phoning The Tele's special Tay Connect vote line. Just call Dundee (01382) 457457 and select:

5501 for YES or 5502 for NO

Sunday morning The UFO investigator



FIVE WOMEN WERE returning home from Southport after a bingo game and, at two o'clock on Sunday morning, they saw a lit-up thing that one of them later described to me as being like a lattice structure with blue and yellow stripes, as big as haystack. As they passed it, this thing took off and came towards them: they almost wanted a change of

underwear. It followed them for a couple of miles, then they thought they'd lost it, but it came back again and followed them all the way to Shevington, before zooming up into the sky. I can tell you, the woman I interviewed was frightened.

I haven't had a sighting of my own since 1968, so you can imagine my irritation after so many years when I heard that there were more sightings, not 200 yards from my bloody house. It was 6.30am and a housewife saw two silver discs floating 30ft above a green patch of land. She described them to me herself. And I discovered they were witnessed by five neighbours in Tintern Avenue. One woman was stirred awake by the glare outside. This thing was giving off red streaks of light.

The discs were silvery, said the housewife in Mather Avenue. One disc was on top of the other, but just a bit to one side. She described them as having a window. But the other people in Tintern Avenue apparently saw several windows, giving off reddish sparks. I always ask for precise information for my files - I ask witnesses what they saw, and then I get them to draw it. This woman was confused. I tell you.

My interest in astronomy began at nine years old, when I saw a close-up photograph of the moon in an encyclopedia at my auntie's. Then in 1947, I read about the Kenneth Arnold sighting, which set off the UFO thing.

When you go to interview a lot of witnesses, it turns out they're mistaking natural phenomena. For example, one woman described lights moving across the sky, but actually what she'd seen were the stars: she didn't know the earth revolved. But then I had my own sighting, a mothership in a clear blue sky in broad daylight in 1965. I was so enthralled, I didn't even call to my wife. My second experience was far more incredible. We were driving home after playing bridge in south Manchester in 1968 and saw this piercing white light hovering 20ft above the Manchester to Bury electric line. It didn't move for a while, then it suddenly swerved off and went over the house tops and we lost sight. We used Victoria Lane on the right to cut back and sure enough there it was waiting for us. It travelled on top of us for a while, then, my God, took off like a bat out of hell. It was only about the size of a football.

But these two new ones, early morning just down the road, I'd estimate were 12ft in diameter. The eyewitness described them as 'about the size of a small dining room'. She'll be trying to put it to the back of her mind now, but it'll always be there.

Arthur Tomlinson is secretary of the Direct Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomenon. Interview by John Hind

watching the skies, urges UFO investigator

A DETERMINED amateur UFO investigator has urged Highlanders to ignore peer group jibes and official knock-backs and to open their own 'X Files'...

The advice comes from prize-winning astronomer Johnnie Jenkins, who earlier this year took close interest in a series of bizarre sightings in the skies over Inverness.

After three years of investigating the unidentified flying object phenomenon - including hours of taped interviews with people who claim to have seen extra-terrestrial spacecraft and some who even suspect they have been abducted by aliens - Mr. Jenkins has produced an intriguing manu-

script which he hopes to see printed by a Scottish publisher.

The manuscript, "Of No Defence Significance", includes interviews with Scottish poet Pauline MacKay of Drumstrait, who spoke of the eerie close encounter to the Courier.

She drew the pulsating object to the attention of her family and remained convinced that it was a UFO.

Mr. Jenkins followed closely a string of reported UFO sightings around the Highlands in February of this year. In one incident, a Black Isle family claimed to have captured a UFO on video. The object spotted in a clear star-lit sky above the Beauty Firth remained stationary and appeared to have small

while UFO does not equate to space craft or aliens, the number of sightings which have defied explanation over the years is statistically significant.

He goes on to describe Mr. Jenkins as an honest to goodness ordinary citizen who has logical, meticulous and intelligent with an inquiring mind and a stubborn streak.

As well as interviewing people who reported possible sightings, Mr. Jenkins also secured newspapers right back to the 1900s to try and detect common links between various reports. His own sighting occurred in broad daylight in Edinburgh and involved an orange ball blazing and pulsating in the sky. Along with another amazed bystander, he watched the sight for several

minutes before his working day brought him back down to Earth. "Eventually I said, well, aliens or not, I've got a piano to tune."

A few days later, he heard there had been 40 separate sightings in Shetland - including one by an optician and another by a doctor. His detailed research uncovered hundreds of sightings in the 70s and 80s, many of them by so-called "credible" witnesses such as serving police officers.

Mr. Jenkins' research included contacting the Ministry of Defence whose responses are included in the unpublished manuscript. Officials there acknowledged that many reports are received and suggest possible explanations - including aircraft lights, kites, weather

balloons, unusual cloud formations, satellites in orbit, fire balls and meteorites.

The MoD said: "While there will always be sightings that appear to defy explanation, and we are open-minded on these... our open interest relies on whether the possibility of a threat to the United Kingdom's air defences exist."

Mr. Jenkins' pride reveals that many ordinary people have been afraid to file reports or accounts of bizarre experiences for fear of ridicule. But he urges them to keep tabs on what is happening in their own areas and says that the weight of evidence particularly from those who have made broad daylight sightings - is hard to deny.

'I told German reporter that Elvis was on spaceship'

THE Sunday Times exposed the truth 10 days ago, as if we didn't know it was out there already.

The paper led an investigation and boldly proclaimed: 'Alien insurance scam a hoax'.

But Joe still maintains that the decision to tell the truth was his own.

He explained: "I had telephone calls from my relatives in Italy who really believed I was a

millionaire. And they demanded to know why I was forcing my parents and wife to work while I was apparently raking all this money in.

"My little joke had to stop. It was as simple as that."

However, one thing's for sure, he had a lot of fun while it lasted.

"I kept trying to push the story further," he said. "One day the

German TV channel Pro 7 came down and I told them I saw Elvis on the spaceship. Another time I sent a German station to a remote village in Scotland."

However, Joe still had to pull one trick off. He had always claimed that Gillian Anderson of the cult sci-fi series The X Files was to present the £1million pound cheque. Instead of Gillian, he got his wife Carol, who bears

a passing resemblance, to appear. "Well, people at her work think she looks like her," he chuckled.

Somewhat, I doubt whether we have heard the last of Joe Tagliarini or Joe Carpenter, or any other name he may assume in the future.

"Are you interested in an insurance policy against Vampire attacks?" he asked me as I left.

UFO sightings on the increase

FIFTY years ago American pilot Kenneth Arnold told a local newspaper he had spotted a 'chain of nine peculiar looking craft' flying over a mountain range in Washington state.

To commemorate a half-century of sightings of unidentified flying objects, thousands of ufologists will be celebrating at conventions across the country.

Here in Waltham Forest, UFO enthusiasts say reports of sightings of bizarre lights and objects in the sky are increasing at an alarming rate and they believe - like the TV show *The X-Files* - 'the truth is out there'.

And UFO investigator Tony Gulbourne from

BY KARYN MICHAEL
Walthamstow is so convinced that the borough is a prime area of interest for curious aliens that he has set up a new group called ELUFON - the East London Unidentified Flying Object Network.

Mr Gulbourne says he decided to form the group after he received calls from people claiming to have seen UFOs in Waltham Forest skies.

He said: "There have been many sightings in Walthamstow. The most recent came from a woman who said she noticed a strange object while she was driving along Blackhorse Road."

"She claimed to have seen a cigar-shaped object with bright flashing lights which had begun to move very slowly towards the railway station.

"The woman got out of her car to see it, but when she got closer the object moved very quickly in the direction of Walthamstow market and she lost sight of it."

Roy Lake, from London UFO Studies, is a lecturer in UFOs and believes that although the first flying saucer was reported 50 years ago, aliens have been visiting Waltham Forest for hundreds of years.

And what is it about Waltham Forest that little green men are so keen to have a look at?

According to Mr Lake it is Chingford Reservoir. He said: "UFOs are often seen over reservoirs because it seems that they are interested in areas where there is a lot of water."

"This may account for the large number of sightings over Chingford. We think that they may also be interested in new constructions



HOPING for another sighting... Walthamstow UFO Investigator Tony Gulbourne. (C95/753/22)

Mr Lake.

The third is umbrella-shaped with a green top and underside and a row of yellow-white lights across the middle.

"All three witnesses are normal, intelligent people. One is a professional woman and another a very highly educated younger woman," said Mr Lake.

To contact Mr Lake telephone 270 9919.

UFO alert is sparked by laser display

Is it a plane? Is it a UFO? . . . No it was laser lights from a Shropshire nightclub, that sparked a UFO alert. The spectacular display led to dozens of worried phone calls to police.

The display from Oswestry's Vic Nightclub has even led to inquiries from the Ministry of Defence and the UFO Society in the past.

An Oswestry couple thought aliens were coming to Earth last night when they spotted a huge moon-like light motionless in the sky over Sweeney Mountain.

The bright sphere suddenly started to plummet to the ground before disappearing behind the mountain.

"It was a huge circle about the size of the moon. It was quite low and stationary at first. Then it started to move down towards the sky line. I didn't see an explosion," said the man who does not want to be named.

He then called his wife to the window of their home, only to see a trail of lights in the sky moments later. Neither Shropshire Fire Service or West Mercia Police had any reports of any aviation accidents in the area at 9pm.

An Oswestry police spokesman said they had received similar calls about strange lights in the past.

The last one was from an MOD official inquiring about a lorry driver who'd reported lights striking his vehicle," he said.

"It will be the nightclub's lasers which tend to spin round and reflect all over the place when they strike the clouds," he said.

Nick Power, the club's co-partner said they had been inundated with people contacting them over the lights.

"We have even had the UFO Society inquiring about them," he said.

The Complete Book of UFOs by Jenny Randles and Peter Hough (Piatkus Books, £6.99).

Is there anybody out there? This fully-updated version of the best-seller by a British research duo celebrates 50 years of modern UFO sightings. It was 1947 when bizarre sightings and findings in the USA and New Mexico fuelled the belief Earth was being visited by alien spacecraft. Interesting accounts of various mystery sightings - but don't read this just before bedtime!

Weird 'birdies'

Paranormal investigators have identified a new UFO hotspot in Scotland - the St Andrew's golf course.

UFO expert Malcolm Robinson, based in Alloa, said the sightings were of black triangular craft with red lights on each apex.



DO'S DREAM: To accompany their script for 'Beyond Human,' a movie they hoped to produce, cult members created these illustrations of life 'on the next level.' The drawings included descriptions written by the members.



DO'S DREAM: 'Member of the Kingdom of Heaven' from cult's Web site

Christ and Comets

What did 'Do's' followers believe? A bit of everything, from the Gospels to science fiction to Eastern mysticism. Inside their twisted theology. BY KENNETH L. WOODWARD

I give you my solemn word, in the new age when the Son of Man takes his seat upon a throne befitting his glory, you who have followed me shall likewise take your places. ... Everyone who has given up home, brothers or sisters, father or mother, wife or children or property for my sake will ... inherit life everlasting.

THE WORDS ARE FROM JESUS, BUT they were also gospel to Marshall Applewhite, alias "Do." His promise: new, more beautiful bodies and a "boarding pass" to a "Kingdom of Heaven" among the stars and planets. Do's own vision, pieced together from various speeches and writings, was an odd mixture of Biblical apocalyptic, New Age mysticism and science fiction. To those with eyes to see and ears to hear, there were elements of Eastern religions, black Islam,

Mormonism and Scientology. By all accounts, Do's gospel evolved and changed over the years from a 1970s-style UFO cult into full-blown sacred narrative. It was, in the end, a witches' brew: a recipe for collective death. But for all that, Do was very much in the American grain: a would-be prophet melding bits of this tradition and that into a desperate and eccentric faith aimed at saving a tiny, marginalized cult from impending world disaster.

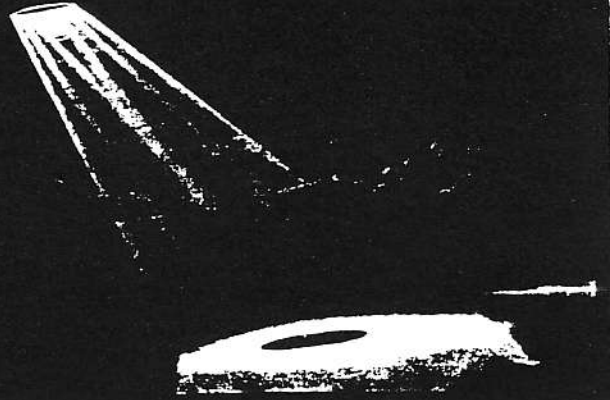
Millennial fever? End-of-the-age angst? No doubt Do's students believed him when he said comet Hale-Bopp was the "marker" they'd been waiting for, the sign that a spaceship of extraterrestrials would arrive to take their souls (minus their bodies) to the next level of existence. The millennialism Do imbibed was from the early 1970s, when every political, social and cultural upheaval was cast in apocalyptic shades of black and

white. On the one hand, there were the early New Agers, proclaiming in song, dance and swirls of pot smoke that the "Age of Aquarius" was dawning. On the other, there were millennial pessimists, cults like The Children of God, who preached that the end of the world was approaching and took to the hills to await the Second Coming of Christ. A youthful Pat Robertson saw signs of the Biblical War of Armageddon in the Middle East and Hal Lindsey wrote "The Late Great Planet Earth," a pseudo-Biblical doomsday book that became by far the biggest best seller of the decade.

The '70s were also rife with films and reports of UFO sightings and visitations from outer space. In 1970, Applewhite was dismissed from his job at the University of St. Thomas in Houston and disappeared into the space-age fringe. As the name of his cult changed, so did his philosophy. Belief in UFOs remained part of Do's evolving gospel—and part of Heaven's Gate's allure. But what gave his final vision theological ballast—what apparently made it comprehensive and believable to the 1990s youths who joined him in his death pact—were familiar themes and phrases ripped from the



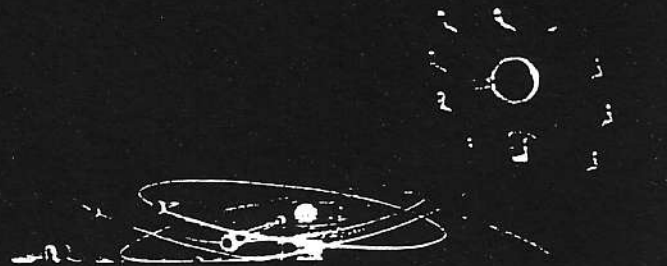
A view of the planet Pluto's so-called polar entrance, as seen from the landing space ship



The spaceship descends through Pluto's atmosphere toward the planet's 'inner core'



Onboard: 'Older Member' leaves the space shuttle and prepares to greet the inhabitants of Pluto



On Pluto, 'Older Member' holds a conference with 'Project Chief' in the communications chamber

larger fabric of the New Testament.

Here is what Do's disciples had been taught to believe. Once upon a time, the gods created a physical "Kingdom of Heaven" somewhere among the sky's more visible heavenly bodies. On instructions from the gods, these Kingdom dwellers "planted" humans as a gardening experiment on planet Earth. From time to time, "Representatives" of the Kingdom would make "soul deposits" in these human plants, preparing them for transplanting to what Do called "the Level above Human." When harvest time arrived—at the end of an "age"—a "Representative" would usurp a human body, instruct a band of the elect and take them back to their interplanetary heaven.

Two millennia ago, Do taught, the assigned Representative was Jesus. Under direction of "His father," Jesus' soul moved into his human body at about the age of 30, when he was baptized by John, and proceeded to collect disciples. Only humans blessed with soul deposits could recognize Jesus for what he was, and only by relying on Jesus as "Heaven's Gate" could they get to the Father's mansion among the stars.

Now, as the millennium comes to an end, according to Do, a new Representative had arrived: himself. "I am in the same position to today's society as was the One who was in Jesus then." Do wrote on his cult's Web site. "My being here now is actually a continuation of that last task as it was promised to those who were [Jesus'] students 2,000 years ago."

Early Gnostics: Bizarre at it is, the Heaven's Gate theology has an ancient pedigree. Many of its central points mirror those of the early Gnostics, a first-century school of thought within Christianity. Like Do, the Gnostics "had a secret knowledge about God, the universe, where people come from and where they are going, that is not known to the uninitiated," says Robert Ellwood, a specialist in new American religions at the University of Southern California. The Gnostics also stressed a radical dualism of soul and body: the soul descending from above and taking on a body as if it were a necessary but unworthy container. "Container" is the word that the Heaven's Gate cult routinely used for the body, and in a video they left behind, members expressed only contempt

for the ones that they were about to shed.

This Gnostic-like contempt helps to explain some of Heaven's Gate's most peculiar practices. Since bodies link us through procreation to parents and siblings, Do taught his students to reject family life and ties. Much like baptized Christians, all initiates into the cult took new names, reflecting the belief that they really were new people with newly implanted souls.

For Do, sex was an especially troubling facet of bodily experience. He demanded celibacy of himself and his followers. Reproduction the human way was "evil," he said. "It's barbaric, it's beneath me." There is evidence that Do himself, though married earlier in life and the father of two children, discovered that he was homosexual. In any case, he said repeatedly that he felt imprisoned in his body and that once his soul arrived he was no longer the human person he was before. Neither were his disciples, and their transformation clearly brought relief. "Basically, these kinds of people are very repressed and have a lot of trouble with impulse control," says Chicago psychiatrist David Zinn. "Whether it is homosexuality or the expe-

rience of day-to-day living, they need external control to contain those impulses."

From the looks of the bodies police found, that control was indeed severe. All were dressed alike in black shirts, pants and Nikes. All wore the same short, unisex haircuts as a further suppression of gender difference. And some men were also castrated. But the strangest twist of all was the gender transformation of Bonnie Lu Nettles, Do's companion and the cult's co-founder. After her death, in 1985, Do announced that Ti was really "My Father," the "other Member" sent to Earth to help him at the command of her own father in heaven. To Do, this revelation was proof enough of Saint Paul's dictum that in the kingdom of heaven there is neither male nor female, and his followers were to act accordingly. "I work like crazy every day rejecting the human desires," a member called "Wknody" confessed on the cult's Web site.

Sexless singles: Do's notion of implanted souls resembles the Mormon doctrine that all human beings begin life as "spirit children" of heavenly parents. But while the Latter-day Saints reserve the highest heaven for married couples and their offspring, Do's heaven was strictly for sexless singles. Do's science-fiction universe strongly resembles the imaginings of L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, which teaches that human beings have Thetans, or spirits, that are independent of the physical body. Do's vision of time is cyclical, like that of Hindus and Buddhists. Just as Buddhists believe

that Gautama was the Buddha for this life, so Do believed that each age on Earth has its Representatives from the Kingdom Level. And his final vision of rescuing spacecraft mirrors the "Mother of Planes" that Nation of Islam founder Elijah Muhammad predicted would destroy the "enemies of Allah."

Suitcases packed, their California mansion all in order, Do and his flock departed in orderly fashion. James Charlesworth professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary, sees the mass suicide at Rancho Santa Fe as foreboding: a sign of deep spiritual drift. "The apocalypticism that is boiling up is related to the end of the millennium and the search for meaning. When you come to the end of the time, just as you come to the end of your life, you ask, 'What is the meaning of all this?'" Tragically, now we know Do's answer.

With BRAD STONE in Chicago

Sensing Trouble in the Skies

For most of us, Hale-Bopp is a celestial joy. But for Heaven's Gate, it was a sign that it was time to go. BY DAVID A. KAPLAN

NIGH, THE END IS near — the millennial comet is approaching, and we have to escape the Earth before it's too late!

Before Rancho Santa Fe, it was easy to dismiss such apocalyptic theories as the harmless fantasy of Internet lunatics with too much time on their hands. Now it's not so funny. Hale-Bopp may be a rare celestial show to enjoy, but this Great Comet is also a reminder of how dangerous the human imagination can be.

Comets have fascinated the Earthbound since the earliest

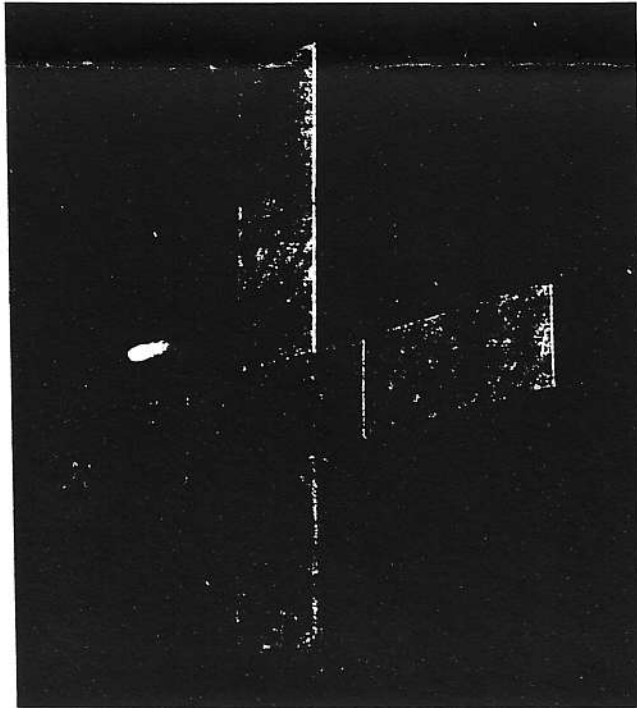
of civilizations. Before science and with the night sky as one of the few constants in everyday life, comets meant a cosmic "uh-oh." "Disaster" is a rough translation of the Latin for "bad star." How else to explain the mysterious appearance of these brilliant streaks of light? Volcanoes and floods, the death of Charlemagne — comets portended doom. "Comet pills" still did a brisk business in 1910 upon the return of Halley's.

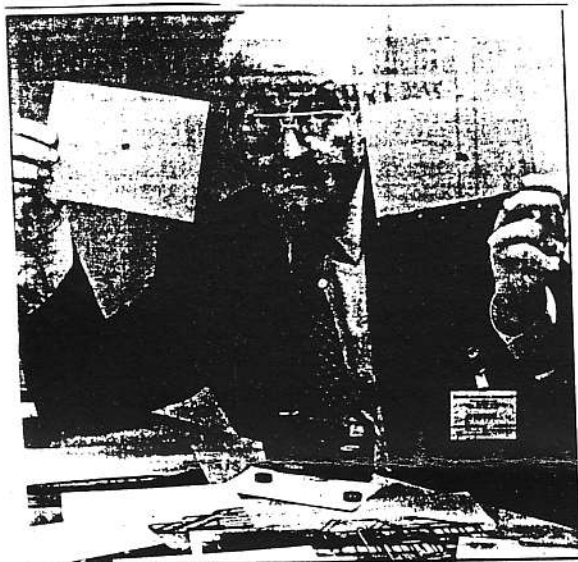
The Higher Source cult tapped into just this vein. It was apparently Hale-Bopp

that gave it the pretext to seek "the Next Level" and an astral trip to eternity. Cult members earned a living designing pages on the World Wide Web, and it was there they likely first learned about a UFO supposedly en route to Earth. Last November a New Age gadfly, Chuck Shramek, claimed he had photographed a "Saturn-like object" (SLO) behind Hale-Bopp. Shramek went on a late-night radio show with his revelation, leading others to say the SLO was a huge alien mothership. The thing turned out to be

nothing more than a star that had blurred in photography. Alan Hale, one of the comet's discoverers, who tried to debunk the supernatural claims, was denounced online as "an Earth traitor." Shramek, on his Web site, would have none of the scientific explanations. After Rancho Santa Fe, Shramek told NEWSWEEK he was getting hundreds of e-mail messages blaming him.

Other conspiratorialists suggest Hale-Bopp isn't the real threat to Earth. "Nancy," at her ZetaTalk Web site, says the Zeta Reticulans are using the comet as a diversion for the "12th Planet" — the "true messenger of death" a few years from now. Then there's the notion that Hale-Bopp is the first horseman of the apocalypse, since it will pass over the constellation Pegasus. Whether comets have predictive powers or not, their magic has always been their power to transcend time. We see what our ancestors saw and our grandchildren's grandchildren will see a long time from now. But so, too, comets show that superstitions connect the generations. Comets never killed anyone; beliefs about them can.





CLOSE ENCOUNTER: Surprised Jim snapped UFO on four occasions

JIM'S SNAPS OUT OF THIS WORLD!

SEND for Scully and Mulder! Snap-happy Jim McLean has sparked an X-Files style mystery after catching a UFO on camera—four different times.

An investigation is focusing on his amazing photos which were all taken on building sites in Scotland.

UFO experts are now closely examining the snaps which each show a dumbbell shaped object moving across the skyline.

But construction worker Jim, 54, is in no doubt that he has had a close encounter with aliens. Jim's first sighting was in December 1995 as he photographed a building at his company's HQ in Mount Vernon, Glasgow.

He was amazed when the object appeared again four months later, this time in Rutherglen, Glasgow, when he snapped a rainbow.

And the strange shape turned up on two more pictures which were taken two weeks apart at Mount Vernon last August.

Sightings

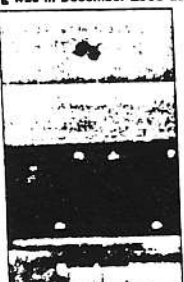
Even more bizarre, a compass he was carrying now points due south instead of north.

Jim, of Toryglen, Glasgow, said: "The object is not in any other pictures taken immediately before or after."

"What happened with the compass makes it even more strange."

"A colleague said that could only happen if it was in close proximity to another compass—or with a strong electro-magnetic current. And that raises all sorts of possibilities."

"At first I didn't see anything. But when I had the



TAKE 1: UFO at Rutherglen

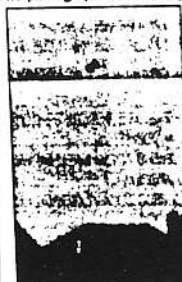
EXCLUSIVE

By MARIE SHARP

pictures developed there it was. I've checked my camera, the negatives and everything.

"Now I believe in UFOs and no one can convince me otherwise."

Ron Halliday, who has researched UFO sightings for years, said: "These pic-



TAKE 2: At Mount Vernon

tures do appear to be authentic.

"The problem with the compass being affected is a common feature of such phenomena."

Jim insisted: "I'm certain what I have captured is a UFO."

But he is having a trouble convincing pals.

He added: "Most people think I'm barmy but no one can give another explanation."

By Simon Jones

AS he lays back in his end of terrace house in Enfield Wash, it's difficult to understand how Joe Tagliarini became the centre of a worldwide media frenzy.

Yet, while he was bored one summer day, this 23-year-old unemployed messenger concocted an amazing story which would eventually fool more than 200 newspapers and TV stations around the world.

TV reporters from as far away as Sydney and Los Angeles offered big bucks to hear what Joe had to say. He appeared on live TV debates in Britain and became a celebrity in his own right.

Joe fooled the media into believing an insurance company paid him £1million because he had been abducted by green men in a spaceship.

The story started way back in June when Joe contacted The Advertiser and a downmarket local freesheet with his story.

He claimed he was selling alien abduction insurance policies at £17.99. We refused to publish the story.

Shortly afterwards the national press picked up on the idea and Joe managed to sell around 150 of his policies, making around £2,000 in profit.

In return for the money, clients would receive a glossy alien abduction policy certificate.

But shortly after came the call which would change Joe's life.

An insurance broker by the name of Simon Burgess contacted the Enfield man and vowed to publicise the scheme around the world.

He sold alien abduction insurance policies at £100 a time and made around £80,000, of which Joe received a small percentage.

But what they really needed to push the policy was for someone to make a successful claim.

Enter Joe, who assumed the name of Joe Carpenter, an electrician from Edmonton. For the record, Carpenter is the Italian translation of Tagliarini.

"We were invited to go on a live show on Carlton TV and we got a bit merry to say the least," Joe told The Advertiser.

"So we decided to test the

water and manipulate the media. Simon Burgess was introduced as the man who sold alien policies to the feeble minded, but now people were going to have to eat their words because someone had successfully claimed. That someone was me.

"I told how I was beamed up by aliens in October while out searching the skies in Swindon. I said that I recorded the whole event clearly on my camcorder."

Newspapers around the world were fed the story that Joe was to be paid £1million after being abducted by aliens by Mr Burgess's insurance company, Goodfellow Rebecca Ingrams Pearson Ltd.

The news made the front page of American newspapers and before long Joe found himself in front of one billion people worldwide, and was the top story on TV stations from Berlin to Melbourne.

NBC of America even offered to pay £1million for the footage and Joe received a call from Michael Knighton, the millionaire chairman of Carlisle FC, who himself claims to have been abducted by aliens.

Joe even says that the President of the United States was informed about the story as it could have affected national security.

"I honestly can't believe that people believed me," said Joe. "But as it went on I became better and better at giving interviews and any questions were easily fended off. I became a real media mogul."

"When they asked for the video evidence, I said we had exclusively sold it to an American news channel."

"Don't get me wrong, this was never about making money. This was about seeing if I could pull it off, while getting more people interested in ufology."

Joe regularly scans the skies at night but even he doubts the concept of alien abductions.

"I do believe there has to be something more out there," he explained. "There's in no way that we are alone in the universe. But I really can't see little space ships hovering over us and beaming people up at will. It just wouldn't happen...would it?"

THE NEWS (PORTSMOUTH)

06 FEB 97

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UFO investigator ready to accept your challenge

■ Fascination for unexplained stems from childhood experience.

By NEIL DURHAM

The News

Cult sci-fi TV series *The X-Files* may have coined the phrase: 'The truth is out there' but it aptly describes what motivates UFO investigator Stuart McLaren.

Stuart, 25, is so intrigued by glimpses of unidentified flying objects that he is offering to research sightings in the Portsmouth area.

His fascination for the unexplained springs from an unforgettable childhood experience.

'It was 1977 or 1978. I was in

Bridgeman and I saw something I can't explain,' said Stuart, of Magennis Close, Bridgeman, Gosport. 'It was a bright orange cigar-shaped object in the sky.'

'I was with my brother and his friend and, although we never spoke about it, it has always stuck in my mind.'

Recently the former Ministry of Defence storeman joined the British UFO Research Association.

He has about eight weeks to go before he completes a six-month training course run by the group into how to investigate UFO sightings.

His enthusiasm was further fuelled by a mysterious sighting at 9.55am on January 21 this year over Gosport.

He saw a perfect sphere, measuring about 3ft across, between 1,000ft and 2,000ft above him.

'It was moving across the sky in a straight line at between 40 and 60 miles per hour,' he said.

'I watched it for around 10 to 15 seconds until it disappeared behind trees.'

He investigated by following his training methods step by step, which involved contacting local airports, military bases, weather centres, neighbours, police and media for any duplicate sightings - all without luck.

'My own personal theory was that it was a natural ball of light,' he said.

Stuart believes it is probable that there is life beyond earth but is sceptical if it is advanced enough to undertake space travel.

■ Readers who would like their UFO sightings investigated can contact Mr McLaren on 01705 502296.

Chase with a Dragon

Super-torch helps UFO hunters see if truth is out there

UFO WATCHER Martin Jeffreys flashed a powerful torch nicknamed the Dragon at a mystery object flying low over Sheffield's Fox House - and it changed direction to investigate, he claims.

But Martin, director of investigations for the city-based Yorkshire UFO Network (YUFON), who says his sighting was witnessed by 30 other people, is not convinced its crew are little green men.

He believes it is a secret American craft codenamed Aurora with a flightpath over the city.

There have been so many sightings of rectangles and triangles over the city that the 100-strong network has bought the powerful 20,000 watt krypton torch to investigate.

"It was weird. I flashed it and it seemed to turn and fly overhead with a humming noise. As it disappeared towards the west two white vans with no number plates came flying round the corner as if they were following it," he says.

The craft, said to be the size of a double decker at 500 feet, was seen during a YUFON skywatch but all attempts to photograph it proved fruitless.

Flying triangles are almost

The group hears of around 20 sightings a month - the latest from two men who saw a mystery object over Woodhouse

two a penny over the Rivelin Valley.

But Martin, staging a UFO conference in Sheffield on April 6 to mark UFO Week, believes these also have a terrestrial origin - a British plane called HALO (High Altitude Low Observation) which can hover.

The group hears of around 20 sightings a month on its UFO Hotline (0114 275 6144) and one of the most recent came from two men claiming to be policemen who saw a mystery object over Woodhouse on January 17.

Signals

With so many flying triangles, rectangles and doughnuts over Sheffield - a mini car driver was chased by one which disappeared - the group has had the torch specially made to flash signals and illuminate the craft.

UFO Week starts on March 20 with skywatches around the county to coincide with the appearance of Comet Halley-Bopp.

"There are claims that a UFO is following it but I don't believe it," says Martin.



UFO watcher Martin Jeffreys with 'the Dragon' - a high-power torch



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: Kerry and a mystery crop circle and (below) with husband Tom



TV'S X FILES ARE REAL FOR UFO HUNTERS TOM AND KERRY...

watching "glowing lights" above a crop circle in a new home. "I look at people now and think inside UFOs," said Kerry. "But I'm not convinced governments do."

"All most people are interested in is the nine-to-five existence chasing after money. But I know it's just not worth the effort."

She is now the area representative for the group called The X-Files Alien Acknowledgement Society.

"I'm a 24-hour helpline on behalf of the group for people who have sighted UFOs," she said. "Usually they contact me in desperation because they have been ridiculed by everyone they have tried to tell their story to."

"The public is being conned about UFOs and if they knew the truth they wouldn't be so quick to laugh."

Kerry now believes her family are "take them seriously."

'We saw seven bright green lights...we were on a high for months'

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set about learning all they could about extra-terrestrials. "Since I've been researching aliens I've learned far more about life than I ever did at school," said Kerry. "Some people laugh but my life is far richer now."

Since their first sighting the family have seen numbers but the most phenomenal occurred four years ago while they were standing in a field in Dorset.

Kerry said: "The whole family was there and we all saw seven bright green lights suddenly appear. Shelli shouted at me to get the camcorder and for the first time I captured a sighting on film."

"Mum just stood there with her mouth hanging open in awe and my husband Tom grabbed my arm in excitement."

"We were all on a high for months afterwards. I had a film of her car being chased by a military helicopter after she was caught

The X Files would have been just another TV programme for the Blower family - if they hadn't gone to that barbecue in Abergavenny.
JOHN EARLS reports...

KERRY BLOWER saw her first UFO six years ago - and it changed her life. Now, as she cheerfully admits, she and her family are obsessed by aliens.

And recently Kerry, her husband Tom and their 11-year-old daughter Shelli, moved to Marlborough, Wiltshire - just to be nearer the centre of local UFO sightings.

Like their old house in Gwent, the Blowers' new home is a shrine to extra-terrestrials. UFO posters and newspaper cuttings plaster the walls and shelves are littered with model flying saucers.

An investigative crop circles and off-site spots where there have been mysterious sightings.

Kerry, 34, said: "It's like an obsession that has overtaken my life. Since I saw my first UFO my life has been transformed. The fact that my family feels the same way is a bonus."

The family, not surprisingly, are all addicts of the cult BBC1 series The X Files. Kerry even has the stories are "I couldn't believe my eyes. I thought it was meant to be fiction but they used so many details, even actual names of cases that are true!"

"Obviously, they use a bit of dramatic licence but The X Files is entirely based on reality."

Before she saw her first UFO in 1990, Kerry had never heard the term "Unidentified Flying Object".

"I'd never given aliens a second thought," she said. "But what I saw when we were coming back from a barbecue in Abergavenny changed my family's life for ever."

The Blowers' family, with five other members, own two cars along a quiet road in the hills from their home when Tom spotted a "gold sphere" in the sky.

Gardner, a 45-year-old landscape gardener, said: "Although it was quite small, the sphere was fairly close to our car. I could tell straight away that it wasn't from this planet."

"It was glowing and the metals the craft was made of were just far too sophisticated to come from Earth."

From then on, Tom and Kerry

Who are you going

SPECIAL REPORT



TO CALL?



SPIRITS have entered their bodies, books have mysteriously flown across rooms, pictures have crashed on to floors and the voices of dead people have called out to them.

Just a normal day in the life of ghostbusters Steven and Stuart Munda.

The duo, who run a ghostbusting business from their Northampton homes, are rarely frightened by what they see and hear.

They claim to have communicated with the dead, seen UFOs and tracked down alien animals.

To be on the safe side they always protect themselves with special latin spells. And, whenever they try to gain contact with a ghost, the brothers construct a barrier from live electric cables - designed to keep evil psychic spirits at bay.

The brothers' paranormal experiences date back to their teenage years. Steven, 36, claims he saw a UFO and was abducted by an alien when he was 13. Stuart, 32, an electronics whizz, remembers his grandparents' house being haunted, furniture spinning around the room and strange noises coming from every corner.

Strange, you might think, that these two brothers have seen so much paranormal activity between them.

Not so, they argue. Steven and Stuart put it down to having an unusual amount of sensitivity, a quality they believe is hereditary. And when you meet them it's impossible, even for the most cynical, not to start believing them.

The duo officially set up their paranormal research group a couple of years ago. They don't charge and they don't pretend to capture and get rid of ghosts, although they say that is sometimes possible.

What they do is investigate the presence of a spirit, find out why it is there and try to communicate with it. Sometimes the ghost will be a relative of the house owner, who has died suddenly. Other

Chronicle & X-Files

IDENTITY: Special agent Jessica Pilkington

ASSIGNMENT: To seek the truth out there about people who seek the truth

times it will be a stranger who died in the house.

Whatever the story, Steven and Stuart always take it seriously.

"People are often confused and embarrassed about what they've seen or heard," said Steven.

"That's why they ring us. We never laugh at what's said, however ridiculous it might sound."

The ghostbusters' first job was 12 years ago, before they had officially set up their research group. A friend told them about strange happenings in her Northampton home at George's Place.

"Our friend kept seeing an old

woman sitting on the second floor in a chair and it was scaring her," said Steven. "The dogs kept howling at night and footsteps could be heard."

Steven and Stuart spent a whole night camping out at the three storey house. At 9pm the temperature in the house plummeted by nine degrees and noises started coming from everywhere.

The brothers used an ouija board to communicate with the spirit and recited some latin spells, to protect themselves.

"We are not exorcists but just try to find out what it is," said Stuart. "We are not nutters, and always like to stay away from the lunatic side of things. We try to approach things scientifically but at the same time we take certain things along for protection, just to be on the safe side."

These things include spells, a Bible and a generator to send a current through electric cables, in the shape of a pentagon.

SPIRITS, spells and spooks - who are you gonna call? Features editor JESSICA PILKINGTON speaks to two real-life, Northampton ghostbusters ...

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Belief in UFO sightings growing

By BILL SUTHERLAND

OPINION polls show that most people now believe in unidentified flying objects. It was claimed at the weekend when a near-capacity audience gathered in the town hall for the second Falkirk UFO Conference.

Certainly, there were no cynics present. This was very much a case of preaching to the converted - an audience eager to believe that the truth is out there, if only the governments of the world would stop hiding it from us.

However, Mr Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO Magazine and an active researcher for 30 years, distanced ufologists from all paranormal and other unexplained phenomena except animal mutilations, a subject on which a later speaker was to elaborate.

Mr Birdsall admitted that only about 5% of all observations remained unexplained after any length of time. He revealed that the year with the highest incidence of reported UFO sightings is still 1947.

That, of course, was the year of the first "flying saucer" description by an American pilot, and also the year of the Roswell incident in New Mexico, where aliens are alleged to have crash-landed and the bodies of these extra-terrestrials secretly examined by the US military authorities.

Recently, the most commonly described shape has shifted from saucers to triangles, as in the new film Independence Day, and the highest incidence of sightings currently appears to be in Belgium. The Bermuda Triangle, it seems, has been replaced by the Belgian triangles.

There is also a degree of conformity about the description of aliens from abductees - people who claim to have recollections of having been kidnapped and taken aboard an alien craft. Ufologists prefer to call them contactees.

Some 80% of such people, without there being a concerted campaign to standardise their stories, describe the aliens as 4ft tall men with grey skin and large black eyes.

Mr John Carpenter, a leading American researcher, reported on the abduction phenomenon and warned anyone who might be abducted not to expect to be returned to exactly the same location. The aliens could dump you back in your neighbour's garden instead of your own.

"They're not real careful about where they drop you off," he quipped, but more seriously, added that paranormal activity such as unexplained electricity surges generally persists after an abduction experience.

The top Brazilian researcher, A J Gersard, told a Roswell-like story of an alleged crash-landing last year. Two young girls reported to their mother that they had seen "the Devil," which apparently turned out to be one of two injured aliens who were pursued by the local military, captured by nets, and later died in hospital amid the customary cover-up by the authorities.

Former policeman Tony Dodd spoke on various aspects of the UFO phenomenon and moved on to the related issue of animal mutilations.

Such incidents include, for example, the case of 30 seals and some sea birds found decapitated in the Orkneys as well as other unexplained mutilations, all conforming to a pattern, in the past few years.

The surgical precision of the cuts and the fact that the carcasses are left behind rule out predators, and there is a feeling that this is a phenomenon which could benefit from more exposure by the media.

Local interest continues to centre around Bonnybridge, where there have been sightings galore and the occasional alleged abduction, although the attention has been spread a little wider to a triangle taking in Falkirk and Stirling.

This triangle is alleged also to have a higher-than-average success rate for national lottery prizes.

Win a sci-fi album

TO coincide with the re-release of Star Wars at cinemas throughout Northamptonshire the Chronicle & Echo now has 10 copies of The No 1 Sci-Fi Album to give away.

The power-packed double album, a must for film buffs and die-hard sci-fi fans, features 40 theme tunes from hit movies and television shows, including Star Wars: Main Theme, Close Encounters, The X-Files, Blake's 7 and Joe 90.

To enter, all you have to do is answer this question: Who plays the character of Dana Scully in the TV show X-Files? Send your completed entry form to Sci-Fi



Competition, Samantha Philpott, Chronicle & Echo, Upper Mountings, Northampton, NN1 3HR. The first 10 correct entries will receive this great album. Normal Northamptonshire Newspapers rules apply.

Dana Scully is played by

Your name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

by LINDSEY SHAUGHNESSY

UNEARTHLY languages, alien landings, shimmering spacecrafts and unfathomable body implants are science facts, not science fiction, according to Cheshire's answer to Fox Mulder.

And Eric Morris, founder of the British UFO Studies Centre and the Abduction Research Counselling Centre in Wharton, believes Mulder and his partner Agent Scully, from TV's popular cult sci-fi series *X-Files*, are partly responsible for the recent sudden upsurge of interest in all things extra-terrestrial.

Crewe-born Eric, a former psychiatric nurse at the Barony Hospital at Nantwich, said: 'It's absolutely gone crazy these past few months but, as far as I am concerned, that's brilliant.'

'It shows that more and more people are prepared to listen to what we have to say with an open mind.'

The ARCC sees people from all over the country who claim to have been abducted by aliens - and the service is growing.

Every day brings phone calls and letters from people who are convinced that they have survived alien experiences.

Such is the demand for help that Eric, aged 43, has given up his job as a psychiatric nurse to devote all his time to his ARCC clients.

He said: 'Every day I receive letters or phone calls from people who truly believe they have been abducted by aliens.'

'We get teachers, doctors, company directors, professors and manual workers from every walk of life and, to everyone else, they are stark, raving mad. But they know we will listen and believe them.'

Eric shies away from hypnosis, which he says is dangerous, and uses simple relaxation techniques to get people to tell all.

He said: 'Regression is not harmful at all and I trained in relaxation techniques for three years when I was in the Royal Navy.'

'I served in the Falklands during the

Giving help to 'alien abductees'



SKY WATCHING: Eric keeps an eye on the skies, searching for the latest UFOs.

1070H12

war, saw trauma first hand and counselled soldiers when we got back, so I have plenty of experience.

But although he believes what his clients tell him - about spaceships, alien creatures, strange languages and even sex with alien beings - Eric remains a sceptic.

'I believe that they believe it, but I have never seen a UFO or anything like it myself.'

'When I was about 10, I did see a cigar shaped object in the sky. It was

identified as an ordinary aerial object, but it did trigger a life-long interest and I have been investigating other people's experiences for about 15 years now.'

Recently, a woman from Essex told Eric she had been taken from her bed in the dead of night by a blue reptile-like alien to a spacecraft and forced to learn a strange language called Sersar.

Eric has taken recordings of the sounds in various colleges and universities, but none have been able to

understand or decipher them.

Another woman, from Cluster, claimed to have been the victim of several alien abductions and even to have been impregnated by an alien and given birth to the offspring.

Eric said: 'Around one in four memories are genuine, but some are obviously false and all sorts of reasons can be behind the stories, including migraine, stress and even epilepsy.'

And to people who call him a nutcase, Eric says: 'Maybe it is all pie

in the sky, maybe it isn't.

'But come along to our meetings and hear what is being said and then make your mind up.'

'The important thing is to find out the truth, and that is my quest.'

■ The British UFO Studies Centre members meet every third Wednesday of the month at 52 Dart Walk, Wharton, near Winsford.

The next meeting is on March 12 at 7.30pm and anyone interested is welcome to go along.

LEICESTER MAIL

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Are UFOs targeting a county village for their aerial manoeuvres? A winter's tale - of a UFO encounter

By: RICHARD LOMAX

THE last thing you might expect to see from your kitchen window on a cold, dark winter's night is a UFO parked in a field, preparing for take-off.

But that's exactly what happened to a county man last year - and he still can't explain what he saw.

Mr Frederick Orton (85) lives in a bungalow overlooking ploughed fields in Chapel Lane, Sharnford, near Narborough.

It's a quiet rural village, surrounded by farmland and woods.

Mr Orton told the M-Files: 'It was about eight o'clock at night, and I had just gone into the kitchen to fetch something.'

'On glancing out of the window, I noticed some bright lights in the field beyond the hedge at the bottom of my garden, about 40 yards away.'

'At first, I thought it was a tractor, but I realised the lights were not moving.'

'I watched the object for about 30 seconds, then it suddenly rose up into the air.'

'I saw that it was a dark, triangular object, the two brilliant white lights were on the sides.'

'There was a shower of what looked like golden snowflakes or sparks coming out from the centre of the craft and falling on the ground.'

Mr Orton says that as he watched, the object started to move towards his house. 'It didn't make a sound, so I knew it wasn't a normal aircraft, and it started to move towards me.'

Disappeared

'When it was about 10 yards from the bottom of my garden, the lights suddenly went out and the craft disappeared.'

Mr Orton says he is not the only person to have seen the object in the area.

'Our local vicar, who



BAFFLED: Mr Orton looks out from his window to where he saw the object

is now deceased, saw something similar, and my grandson, who is a lorry driver, stopped his vehicle on the main road one day to watch a craft in a field near here.'

Mr Orton remains baffled by what he saw: 'I have no idea where it came from, but I am sure

it wasn't a helicopter - it didn't make any noise.'

The description Mr Orton gives matches many classic accounts of sightings - but unless any other witnesses come forward, or until the Sharnford UFO shows itself again, this case will remain a mystery.

Is this the face of a Martian?

IS THERE life on Mars?

An answer to that tantalising question could be transmitted back to Earth later this year by a vehicle called Sojourner, sent to the red planet by NASA and expected to arrive, after 10 months flight, in July this year.

A previous unmanned mission to Mars - the 1976 Viking lander - sent back pictures of a bleak desert landscape, littered with rocks (main picture), disappointing many people who had hoped for some signs of life.

However, one of the pictures, of an area called the Cydonia Plain, showed what appeared to be a gigantic, human-like face (inset).

Many people, respected scientists among them, have speculated that this object was created by intelligent beings, some time in the past.

Then, in 1996, scientists studying meteorites thought to have fallen to Earth in Antarctica 13,000 years ago discovered evidence of fossilised bacterial life, which they believed proved that life had once existed on Mars.

The space agency NASA obviously took the findings seriously, as both the USA and Russia launched new missions the planet - Mars Global Surveyor

in November, Mars Pathfinder in December, and Russia's Mars96, which blasted off on November 16.

The Sojourner roving vehicle, part of the Pathfinder mission, will travel around the surface of Mars collecting live ples and transmitting video back to Earth, including pictures of the Mars Face, as it has become known.

■ What do you think? Could there be life on Mars? What would it mean for us if there were? Write to: The M-Files, St George Street, Leicester, LE1 9PQ.

