

CHARD & ILMINSTER NEWS
18 MAR 98
Page 5

UFO sighting report

□ IS there something out there? A couple living in Old Station Court, Chard, think so after a close encounter on Wednesday last week. They spotted a round silver object in the sky above Chaffcombe at about 12.35 pm. It suddenly disappeared from view.

20 The Editor October 24

Fed up with "unwelcome bedroom visitors"? Tired of "missing footoses, alien implants and hybrid babies"? Then you need to read Ann Druffel's *How to Defend Yourself Against Alien Abduction*. "Harassing aliens", "intruders", "greys" — whatever you prefer to call them, they are out there, says Druffel. Should they ever come knocking at your door, you will need to know these resistance techniques. And yes, she is being serious

Mental struggle: Block their mind control

Effective against the first stages of abduction, particularly paralysis and a general feeling of terror. A high-pitched, irritating sound is at times involved. A stout-hearted feeling that the "intruders" are violating your inalienable rights must be sustained. Maintain patience: this technique requires strong, internal, silent struggle, directed toward moving one small part of the body, usually a finger or a toe. When movement occurs, the paralysis usually breaks abruptly and the visitors vanish.

Physical struggle: Fight back

This technique is effective against initial stages of abduction, before the onset of paralysis. The technique can be instinctively employed when entities are already present or used in a more deliberate manner with weapon backup when the entities are seen approaching outdoors. The intent should never be to kill or seriously injure the intruders, but to inform them that their presence is violating the witness's right to privacy. *Caution:* firearms are not recommended in urban or suburban areas where small children and/or innocent bystanders may be jeopardised.

Intuition: Sense them coming

The earlier resistance techniques are employed the better the chances for success. Intuition

breaks the progression of events before they begin. Perceiving the creatures' approach intuitively permits experiencers to prepare themselves emotionally for the creatures' arrival, adding confidence and strength to the resistance techniques they plan to use. The visitors seem to detect that their intended victims are ready to resist and often don't bother to come, knowing their attempts will meet with failure. Perhaps they are intuitive as well.

Righteous anger: Summon up your inviolate rights

Righteous anger often builds up after repeated visitations and abductions, but the anger must be focused towards asserting one's rights rather than actual hatred directed towards the intruders. This technique is best combined with strong commands, either verbal or mental, such as "Go away!", "Leave me alone!" and so on.

Repellents: Use time-tested fend-off substances

Herbs, flower essences, and essential oils are proving effective as resistance techniques. Experiment with these carefully, as the strengths needed for individual experiencers have not been determined. Yarrow, St. John's wort and pennyroyal, traditionally used for defence against harassing spirits, have been reported effective against harassing entities in current research. Iron bars, crucifixes and crosses of iron have traditionally been used to ward off incubus and succubus attacks. Metal fans and bar magnets crossed over the chest have recently been reported to help against abductors. Experiment with bar magnets to attain the polarity that works best for you.

From How To Defend Yourself Against Alien

Abduction, by Ann Druffel (Three Rivers Press, \$12). For details, see www.randomhouse.com

Keep 'em peeled - the lights are out there

PEOPLE in Stourbridge have been put on alien alert. UFO Research Midlands asked people who attended its recent meeting at the Mitre Pub, Stourbridge, to be extra vigilant, after UFOs were seen in the area.

"Over the last 12 months there has been an increase in activity, particularly from triangular shaped objects," said organiser Steven Poole. "These sightings are typified by bright objects which veer off at a 90 degree angle or move up and down rapidly."

Research by the group indicates that these objects are not extra terrestrial but remotely piloted vehicles being tested by the armed forces but Mr Poole said: "We are asking members to take note of any they see." As well as reports of UFOs over Norton and Stourbridge in December, Mr Poole says people in Stourport, Kidderminster, Wolverley, Romsley and most recently, Wall Heath, had seen strange red lights, shooting towards earth. If you have had an unusual sighting, phone 0121 585 7464 or 0958 812115.



The origin of the species known as...

UFOs

Scientists still can't decide if they are from another planet, the movies, our dreams or shifts in the tectonic plates

Those who refuse to believe in ET have always argued that UFOs and aliens are just a modern reaction to space travel, science fiction films and comics. But new reports claim that UFO sightings, far from being a reaction to tabloid-induced hysteria, took place much earlier than we previously thought, and certainly long before the term flying saucer was coined in 1947. If true, the research would suggest that UFOs are not just post-war oral science fiction, which could make their existence more likely.

One of the best-known UFO researchers, Timothy Good, says in his new book (*Alien Base: Earth's Encounters With Extraterrestrials*) that Earth may have been 'visited' at least as early as 1920 by intelligent life forms from outer space. Not even Good goes back far enough: other evidence indicates that UFOs were spotted in ancient times.

According to new research in China, UFOs were seen as early as 1914 BC. Ancient scribes record the appearance of "10 flying suns" and note how the strange craft caused a wave of panic among the Chinese people. In 216 BC Roman historian Julius Obsequens recorded that "ships" were seen in the sky above Italy.

Japanese historians were particularly careful to record cases of UFOs, so we now know that on 27 October 1180, a massive object shaped like a "glowing earthenware vessel" flew slowly across the night sky; while on 24 September 1235, General Yoritsume was frightened by

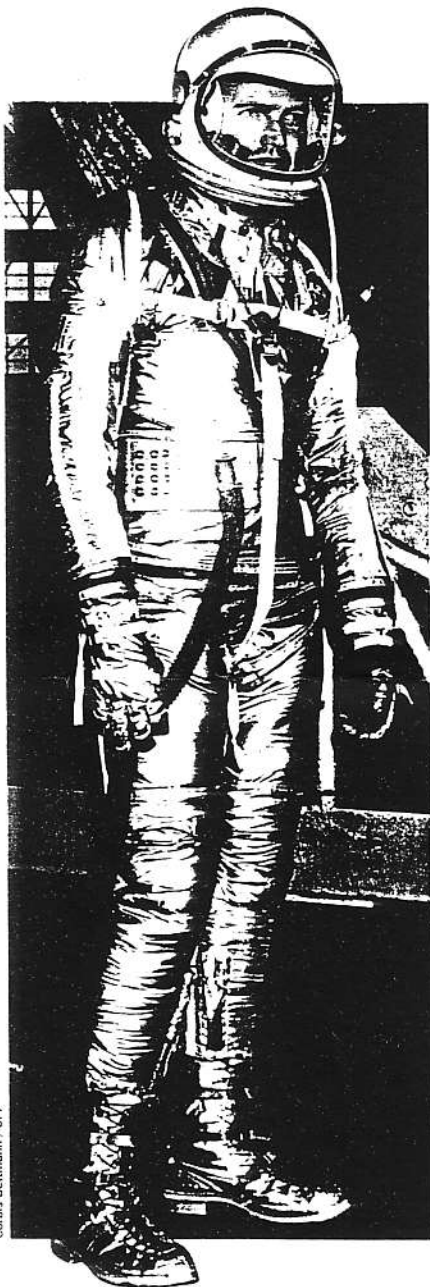
strange lights flying in loops over his troops. The general's advisers told him it was simply a strong wind blowing the stars around in the sky. Again, in 1749, three huge round objects were seen by thousands of people hovering in the sky over Japan for four days.

A ninth century sky ship

In Europe during the ninth century Agobard, a bishop of Lyons, was once taken to see four prisoners locked in chains by terrified locals, who accused them of falling from a "sky ship" that had passed nearby and taken local crops away to a kingdom in the sky called Magonia. Agobard was clearly one of the first UFO sceptics: he ordered the prisoners to be released immediately and wrote a book about the incident condemning "those senseless fools who believe in the reality of such absurd things".

Agobard may have approved of the punishment meted out to one woman in 1645 who claimed to have seen a UFO: she was promptly burned at the stake. God only knows what he would have thought of some of the men and women who say they have witnessed UFOs and aliens this century. In *Alien Base* Good claims to have the first convincing photos of aliens, "sensational" new encounters with aliens and "new cases of the Men In Black".

Those who fear that Good may have found definitive proof of aliens need not worry. Good relates the testimony of Albert Coe, who ▶



Curtis Bettmann / UPI

"It's very likely they are here already but I absolutely do not think they've made contact. They're watching us"

▶ apparently found a friendly alien fishing in Ontario in June 1920. "It is outrageous, I accept that," said Good. "But that does not necessarily mean it is not true. We have preconceived ideas about how aliens would behave. Who can say whether they want to go fishing or if the story is true or not." However Good admits he deliberated "for a long time" about whether to include the story in his book, such was his concern at the truthfulness of the witness, who he never met (see panel, page 39, for Albert Coe's story).

Good confirms that, despite the hundreds of thousands of UFO sightings and thousands of alien abductions, there has still been no real proof that UFOs are anything but normal phenomenon, and that alien abductees don't invent their dramatic stories. "It is certainly true that British claims of alien abduction increased after they started showing *The X-Files* on TV here," says Good. Funny that. "Contactees frequently are given seemingly ludicrous points of alien origin, which tend to devalue their accounts. We're still waiting for proof to come

through and I'm very cynical about us finding that proof."

The stories are dismissed by such experts as John Pike, Director of Space Policy for the eminent Washington-based Federation of American Scientists, which boasts 55 Nobel laureates among its

supporters. "I do not think that this is convincing evidence for contact," said Pike. "Indeed I don't think there has ever been any convincing evidence for contact."

This doesn't mean Pike doesn't believe in aliens. Talking to *Focus*, he said he now thinks it "very likely" that there is extra-terrestrial life: "I think they are here already [on Earth], but I absolutely do not think they have made contact. They are probably watching us unobserved - their technology would be so much more advanced than ours and it is ridiculous to suggest they are crashing their spacecraft and needing to do repairs. They are probably millions of years more advanced than us."

Sandwiches with a Venusian couple

Other academics agree. Dr Tobias Owen, professor of astronomy at the University of Hawaii (and the first person to identify the 'Face on Mars' anomaly) has just written a book entitled *The Search for Life in the Universe*. "It is clear there could be life elsewhere in the Universe," he said. "But aliens have not made contact with us, unless they have disguised themselves so well we can't detect them, which would mean that everyone around us, including you and me, could be an alien, observing our reactions."

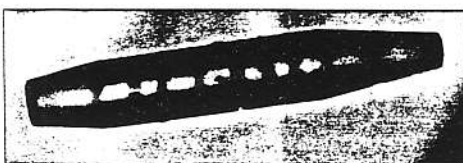
In *Alien Base* Good reports more bizarre stories of so-called alien encounters, such as that of Shropshire newsagent Hubert Lewis, who had his first alien contact in November 1957. The same alien group from Venus, alleged to live among us, made contact with Lewis again in July 1958, and he travelled to

Not alone...

Astronauts such as Major Gordon Cooper have hinted that they might not have been alone when they flew into space. But NASA won't comment on the possibility

A hundred years of UFOs

UFO sightings occurred even before Roswell, and in the 20th century they have exerted a powerful fascination and consistently mirrored changes in the cultural climate



1897 Kansas farmer Alex Hamilton sees a 300ft cigar-shaped craft hovering above his pasture. After abducting one of Hamilton's cows, it flies off. The governor of Kansas says: "I don't know what this is, but it may solve the railroad problem."

1920 Sixteen year old Albert Coe finds an injured alien near the Mattawa river in Ontario, Canada. Coe and the alien, known as Zret, begin a lifelong friendship which lasts well into the Seventies.

1947 Roswell, New Mexico, is the scene for the most controversial and extensive UFO sighting to date. Among the witnesses at the UFO crash site are an Air Force major and an archaeologist. The eyewitness accounts are later obscured by the controversy over the footage of the 'alien autopsy'.



1952 Hamburger salesman George Adamski finds a UFO, chats to the owner and goes for a ride into space. The FBI later denies that its agents

took Adamski's account of his meeting with aliens as true.

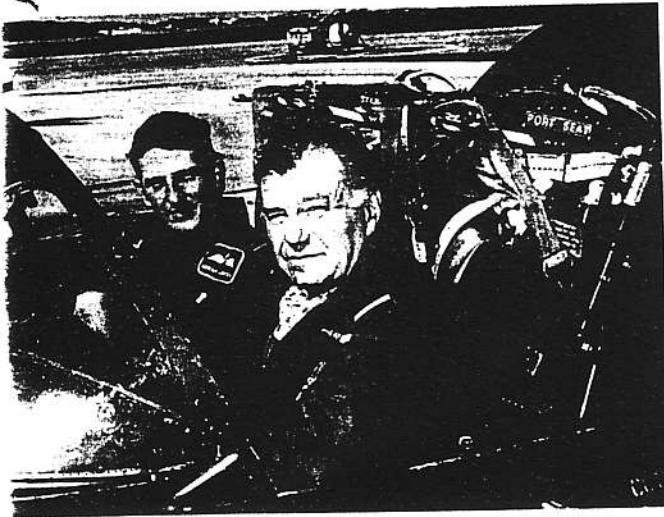
1951 *The Day The Earth Stood Still* ushers in a spate of alien movies. The visitors here are surprisingly altruistic, but later films tapped into paranoia over communist invasion

1953 Hollywood's alien invader boom reaches its nadir with the release of *Robot Monster*. The monster is a robot in a gorilla suit and diving helmet. The film receives such a critical mauling that director Phil Tucker tries to kill himself.



1954 A cigar-shaped craft is seen by thousands in the sky above Rome in September. Dozens more sightings are reported throughout South America and Western Europe with 21 in France alone

1968 It's official: UFOs don't exist according to the US Air Force report on the subject. But the report is undermined when two members of the committee producing it are sacked.



Crown Copyright

Paddington Station to meet a Venusian couple. "Later the trio drove to Wanstead Flats, and then to Forest Gate, where Lewis had a meal and the others tea and sandwiches!" writes Good cheerfully. How jolly pleasant.

For those who genuinely believe in intelligent extra-terrestrial life, these stories do nothing but harm. Good, who has never met Lewis, believes he was sincere while admitting: "It is perfectly possible he made the story up."

Although opinion polls regularly show that up to half the population think there is intelligent life elsewhere in the Universe, anyone who claims to have met an alien or seen a UFO is still subjected to ridicule. While 95 per cent of supposed UFO and alien sightings can be explained by natural events, psychological delusions or scientific reasoning, a significant number of incidents still defy rational explanation.

For example the American government is still yet to provide a convincing explanation for what happened at Roswell in 1947, when wreckage of a strange craft was later claimed, by the military, to be a 'weather balloon'. ▶

Air Marshal Sir Peter Horsley met an ET called Janus who said: "Prince Philip has great vision." Bit of a blow for intelligent life forms



Rafael Bereng

Could this be a murdered alien?

This mysterious, small creature was found in Puerto Rico in 1979 or 1980 and appears to have been dealt a fatal blow to its skull. If it proves aliens exist, it also shows the lads they've got nothing to fear from its stunning good looks

71 Muhammad sees what looks like a "huge electric light bulb" in the sky above Central Park in New York when out jogging. This was the first of seven UFO sightings by the champ.



1977 *Close Encounters* and *Star Wars* convince Hollywood that aliens spell big box office. Spielberg's movie, starring Richard Dreyfuss as the power worker whose life is changed by a close encounter, still stands as the ultimate UFO movie

1993 The truth is out there. *The X-Files*: America is run by a 'secret government' which, knowing that aliens exist, has suppressed the evidence for the last 50 years

1990 Gorbachev says: "UFO phenomena are real and should be taken seriously." Could his birthmark be proof of other-worldly origins, then?

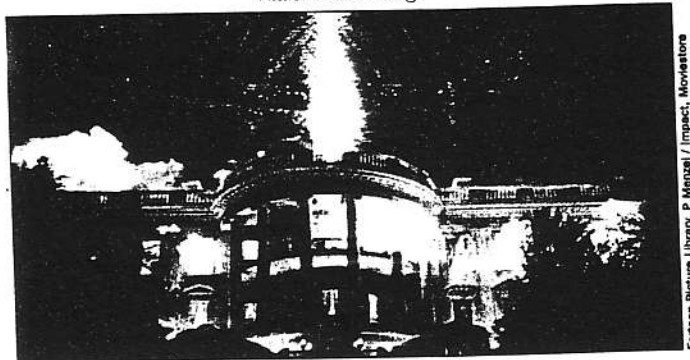
1996 *Independence Day*, essentially a kitsch twist on *War of the Worlds*, earns \$306m at the American box office. A sequel is planned immediately. The following year alien movies *Men In Black* and *Mars Attacks!* also hit big.

1997 A fleet of UFOs is alleged to be parked in the sky over Iceland, delaying civilian airliners trying to land at Reykjavik airport.

969 The moon landing prompts recurrent rumours that the astronauts saw UFOs. Other astronauts, like Gordon Cooper, are said to believe they weren't alone in space. A tape of Armstrong informing NASA of a UFO fleet is later released on the Net.



1973 The year aliens may have invaded America. Between August and November 1973, UFOs are sighted in 11 states. On 17 October, five different sightings occur. In Falkville, Alabama, police chief Jeffery Greenhaw takes a photo of an alien which cynics insist is a man in a NASA fire suit. In Lehti, Utah, Pat Roach claims to have been abducted with her four children for 30 minutes.



Fortean Picture Library, P. Menzai / Impact, Moviestore



Corbis-Bettmann / UPI

FBI boss Hoover told his deputy he was going to solve the UFO mystery. Then he denied ever mentioning the subject

Even the MoD admitted all the witnesses couldn't have invented the story

► Similarly, the Ministry of Defence has failed to explain what happened in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, in 1980, when a UFO was allegedly witnessed by United States Air Force (USAF) personnel and others.

Floodlights and radios failed, and according to some accounts, in a report to the MoD, Colonel Charles Halt, the Deputy Base Commander of the US Air Force base at Woodbridge, wrote: "the object was described

as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across and approximately two meters high... hovering or on legs."

Then there is the mysterious sighting, witnessed in Britain and Ireland for 30 minutes in the early morning of 31 March 1993. Dozens of policemen, an RAF security patrol and a family of five were among hundreds of witnesses who reported seeing either two bright lights and one fainter one, or a huge 300ft wide diamond-shaped object flying at low levels and emitting a strange humming sound.

An MOD investigation admitted there were no aircraft in the area and it would have been impossible for all of the witnesses to invent their story. Eventually the investigation into the incident was quietly dropped when all earthly possibilities were exhausted.

Yet more respectable witnesses have admitted they believe in UFOs. Astronauts, military chiefs and politicians all say more investigation is needed. J Edgar Hoover, the founder of the FBI, told his deputy in 1945 he would "get to the bottom of the mystery" (while later denying the Bureau ever investigated it). Robert Galley, the French Minister of Defence, said in 1974: "I must say that if listeners could see for themselves the mass of reports coming in from the mobile gendarmerie, and from the gendarmerie charged with the job of conducting investigations [into UFOs], they would see it is all pretty disturbing." Only last month an Australian MP called on his government to open its X files to the public.

The sightings are not just limited to the



Foreman Picture Library

Is this the first man into space? George Adamski claimed he'd been taken into space by aliens nine years before Yuri Gagarin's flight

An American nightmare

In the United States, 1973 marked a significant change in the nature of UFO sightings. Not only were an enormous number of encounters reported, but an unprecedented

proportion of them concerned occupants, abductions and craft sitting on the ground. This was in sharp contrast to previous waves of sightings, where the saucers were usually airborne.

Among the most notorious encounters of the 1973 wave,

and a virtual blueprint for abduction scenarios since, was that related under hypnosis by Susan Ramstead of Copeland, North Carolina.

Ramstead claimed she was taken on board a domed disc by creatures with pasty faces and

elongated eyes. There she was thoroughly examined. The aliens took skin and saliva samples, monitored her thoughts via hypnosis and probed her body with a cold metal tube. Once the study was complete, she was escorted back to her car.



Was this Independence Day?

In 1973, UFO sightings were so common in America as to suggest the aliens might have staged a mini-invasion



Sighting/Photo

X Abductions

☾ Contact

● Sighting/Photo (1973)

X Abduction (1973)

st. Two UFOs are reported to have hovered over the Baikonur Space Centre, based in Kazakhstan, for 14 seconds. The Russian cosmonaut GM Manakov, who was in orbit around the Earth in the Russian Mir space station, once claimed: "I saw an unidentified fly-object... it was a great silvery sphere. There was a clean, clear sky. It is difficult to determine if the object was at a great altitude over the earth, perhaps 20-30km."

A 37 second signal from Sagittarius

Contrary to popular belief, the American-led search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) has not been a complete failure. In August 1977 a scientist was checking throughreams of paper which comprised the results from the 'Big Ear' radio telescope at Ohio State Radio Observatory - part of the SETI project - when he saw something of jaw-dropping significance: from a static line of nothing, the chart recorded that voltages had rocketed as a powerful radio signal had been intercepted by the telescope. It came from the direction of Sagittarius and lasted for precisely 37 seconds. Realising the importance of the signal, Professor Jerry Ehman, the scientist reading through the paper, scribbled down the word "Wow!" in the margin. To this day, scientists have been unable to explain convincingly the 'Wow signal' as anything other than either a previously undiscovered astrophysical phenomenon or a radiation signal from another civilisation. SETI had its funding withdrawn in 1993 but has been succeeded by Project Phoenix. Unfortunately for those wanting more evidence the chances of finding the same signal again are put at one in a million.

Yet these scientific findings are ignored because of more dramatic claims, such as those involving one British admiral who claims he has met an alien called Alan, and the case of Air Marshal Sir Peter Horsley, the former deputy commander-in-chief of Strike Command. ▶

Fishing with an alien

"Oh help me, help me!" It was June 1920, and 16-year-old Albert Coe was on a canoeing vacation in Ontario with his companion Rod. Alone at the time, Coe heard the muffled cry while clambering to the top of an out-cropping of rocks in remote terrain on the Mattawa River. Slightly to his right he heard a cry: "Oh help me, I'm down here."

"I had walked about 25 feet in the direction of the voice when I came to a cleft in the base rock," said Coe. "Wedged down this crevice was a young man.

"When I eventually freed him, his legs were so numb he was unable to stand." The first thing he asked for was water.

"He wore an odd silver-grey garment that had a sheen of silk to it. Just under the chest was a small instrument panel. Several knobs and dials were broken.

"I asked where he was from. He said he had a plane parked in a clearing downstream, and had started out the previous morning to do some fishing. He'd almost given up hope of getting out alive. When he cried out, my answering yell was like a miracle."

By now, the circulation was returning to the stranger's numbed limbs. Although occasionally grimacing from pain, the man's composure was astonishing. An offer to help him back to his plane was at first declined. "He didn't want to impose on me and said I should think of starting back."

"From the condition of his leg I doubted that he could even walk.

He took two steps, swayed and grabbed a tree to keep from going down. I threw one arm around his waist. He finally gave in, but made me give my solemn word that I would not divulge to anyone anything that had taken place." Agreeing, Coe half-carried the man downstream to his aircraft.

Fully expecting it to be some type of conventional plane, Coe was astounded by what he saw.

"A round silver disc, about 20 feet in diameter, was standing on three legs, without propeller, engine, wings or fuselage. As we approached, I noticed a number of small slots around the rim, and it sloped up to a rounded central dome. I had to duck to walk with him underneath, between the legs, although it was slightly



A new book documents the amazing relationship between a man and a refugee from a dying planet

disconnected sequences only found in dreams."

In later meetings, Zret explained that his race had originated on a planet called Norca, slightly smaller than Earth, with four moons, orbiting 85 million miles around Tau Ceti (a star about 11 light years from ours). Fourteen thousand years ago, Norca began dehydrating slowly, inexorably, to the extent that drastic action was necessary to preserve the race. Everything

The Norcans' breeding with earth people created a blond, fair race

was tried to counteract the effects of dehydration, but nothing worked. The only solution was to migrate to another solar system. Ours was chosen.

Eventually, after a successful exploratory mission to Earth, during which contact was established briefly with Cro-Magnon humans, the expedition returned to Norca. It was decided that Norcans would colonize Earth. 243,000 Norcans left their planet in 62 huge spacecraft. But only one Norcan Ark made it. Even then, it crashed on Mars, killing 1,300 of the 5,000 or so on board.

"Succeeding generations," Zret explained, "advanced to the scientific potential of launching probes to Venus and Earth, both of which were subsequently colonised. In the primary stages of this expansion, bases of research were established on Venus to study its atmosphere, [but] the main colonisation concentrated on Earth."

If Coe - and Zret - are to be believed, these colonization areas were, in chronological order, the mythological continent of Lemuria (at a point about 1,000 miles east of the Marshall Islands); northern Tibet; and the Lebanon. Norcans reproduced with native inhabitants, Zret explained. The indigenous Earth people at that time had black or brown hair and eyes, and the interbreeding led to a blond-haired, fair skinned people. Timothy Good's *Alien Base* is published by Century, £16.99

Just then, the perimeter edge began to revolve. At first it gave off a low whistling sound, picked up speed mounting to a high-pitched whine, finally going above the audible capabilities of the ear. At that time I experienced a throbbing sensation, which was felt rather than heard. It seemed to compress me within myself. As it lifted a few feet above the ground, it paused with a slight fluttering, the legs folded into the recesses as it swiftly rose with the effortless ease of a thistle-down caught in an updraught of air, and was gone.

Coe set off back towards camp in a state of bewilderment. "It all seemed like a pantomime of unrealities," he commented. "It was an episode lasting not much more than an hour that may have carried me a thousand years into the future, and yet left an uneasy feeling of witnessing something that did not actually exist, an impression of

From the condition of his leg I doubted that he could even walk.

Paul Villa Collection



Seeing is disbelieving: no UFO picture has yet managed to convince the cynics

The debate about UFOs desperately needs to be saved from its supporters

► who says he met an alien called Janus in 1954 that wanted to make contact with the top levels of the British establishment. However this was no profound 'Take me to your leader' situation.

Horsley, then a Squadron Leader and eque-ry to Prince Philip, went to meet a Mrs Markham in a flat in Chelsea, London. When he got there Janus told him Prince Philip "is a man of great vision, a person of world renown and a leader in the realm of wildlife and the environment". (Is this the first example of extra-terrestrial political satire?) The conversation ranged widely (naturally Janus explained the secrets of deep-space travel), but Horsley never got a proper look at Janus. Strangely, when he left, Horsley briefly mentioned the meeting in a report and then apparently forgot all about it for more than forty years.

Thankfully neither of these cases is mentioned in detail by Good in the *Alien Base* book. Instead the best-selling author prefers to describe three cases where mysterious men tried to prevent UFO and alien witnesses from revealing their evidence to the world: the so-called 'Men In Black' (MIB).

Compared to the indestructible agents played by Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith in the blockbuster *Men In Black*, Good's MIBs are ludicrously ineffectual. They failed to silence the author of the book himself, and each and every witness. Nor do they wear the same cool sunglasses as Smith and Lee Jones.

The cases Good describes include a clean-shaven 'Greek' looking MIB who threatened 'consequences' against one witness, or a 'Scandinavian' MIB who told a Mexican UFO witness not to talk of his experience. It is all highly implausible: even Good will admit

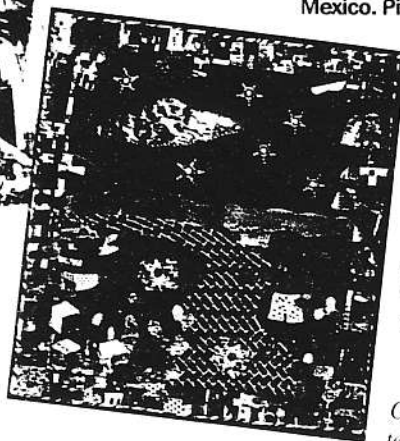


Paul Reas / Network, Peter Menzel / Impact



Comics, tapestries, films... if these saucer-men didn't exist, the media would have to invent them

Alien drops in for 50th anniversary of his last visit to Roswell, New Mexico. Pity the transporter lets him down again



have been abducted by aliens and subjected to the sort of medical experiments they see almost every Sunday night on *The X Files*.

Even worse are the credulous UFO-ologists who claim that Apollo 11 saw a fleet of alien ships on the moon in 1969. Here's an extract from a 'conversation' between Apollo 11 and Houston which you can find on the Net: Mission Control: *What's there?*

Apollo 11: *These babies are huge sir. Oh God you wouldn't believe it! I'm telling you there are spacecraft out there lined up on the far side of the crater.*

Allegedly taped by former NASA employee Otto Binder this makes Albert Coe's alien angling story seem positively humdrum.

If we could ignore much of the testimony of the 'abductees', perhaps science could get on examining the more plausible parts of the subject. After all, the argument goes, few respectable scientists want to be involved with a subject dominated by complete nutters.

Susan Blackmore, senior lecturer in Psychology at the University of the West of England in Bristol, puts the stories of alien abductions down to 'sleep paralysis', which can happen when deep sleep intrudes into the shallower first stage of slumber. The effect is of feeling awake, and sensing a malevolent presence, but being unable to move.

Michael Persinger, professor of psychology and neuroscience at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, has offered another solution. Professor Persinger has established a 'Heaven and Hell' chamber where faint pulses of magnetic energy are directed into the brains of volunteers, giving them bizarre hallucinations that can terrify and excite the subject in equal proportions.

Persinger's controversial theories suggest ►

that there are: "many ludicrous aspects to the claims about MIBs."

The whole debate about unidentified flying objects and aliens desperately needs to be rescued from most of its supporters, particularly the thousands of Americans who claim they

UFOs: the assumptions challenged

1 Aliens and UFOs are only sighted by nutters: They have been spotted by nutters, an American president (Jimmy Carter), William Shatner and Clyde Tombaugh, who discovered Pluto.

2 People have only started seeing

UFOs since they first saw them in movies: Not quite true. People began reporting UFOs once they were confident they wouldn't be burnt at the stake as a witch for doing so.

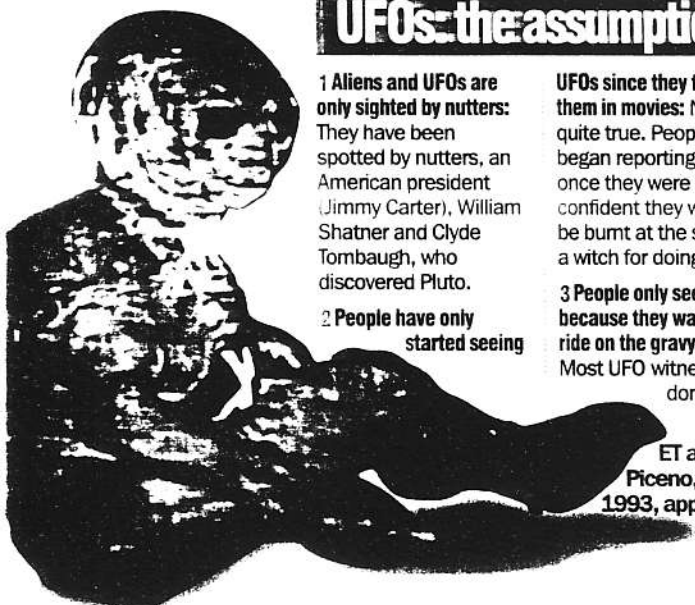
3 People only see UFOs because they want a free ride on the gravy train: Most UFO witnesses don't get to

board the gravy train; they're too busy having their sanity questioned by local officials, the media, and their neighbours.

4 UFOs only appear to lone farmers in the mid-West: Or to 400 people in Rome, or to a dozen British policemen and an RAF security patrol

5 UFO photographs are obviously faked: If UFO photographs really were faked, they'd look far more convincing.

ET at Ascoli Piceno, Italy, in 1993, apparently



Filipeiro Caproni

"Faster space travel could change our view that we are alone in the universe"

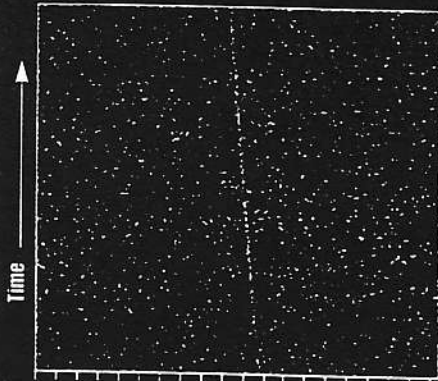
► the energy can cause the release of a flood of images from the past "which are automatically made to seem terribly real and important", such as belief in alien abduction. He believes earthquakes lie behind many 'abductions' because, when tectonic plates rub against one another along fault lines, massive pressure is placed on crystals in the rocks, which in turn produces the same type of electromagnetic fields generated in the Heaven and Hell chamber. He says those living around active fault lines will suffer more than others (hence the number of sightings in California?), which should be some small comfort to those abductees who tear they're going mad.

So what do the officials think? Downing Street says it has no immediate policy on aliens, referring all queries to the Ministry of Defence, presumably because ET is seen as a threat to national security since Tony Blair watched *Independence Day*.

Officials from Paddy Ashdown's and William Hague's offices also suggested asking the MoD, where Squadron Leader Tom Rounds said: "We look into all UFO sightings, primarily to see whether our air defences have been breached. To my knowledge we've never found any evidence that UFOs are not an earthly phenomenon."

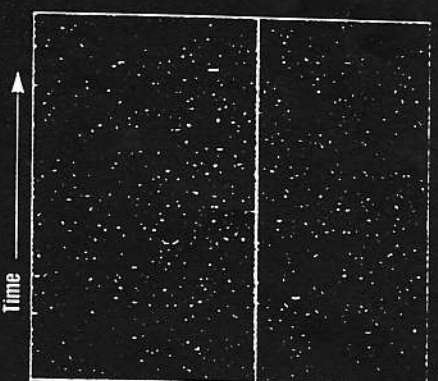
The CIA, behind most of the alien and UFO cover-ups according to the conspiracy theorists, were less forthcoming. "We'd need to get back to you on that one," said 'Kathy', one of their agents, before suggesting, like NASA, that the Pentagon should comment officially.

The Pentagon, in turn, suggest that anyone



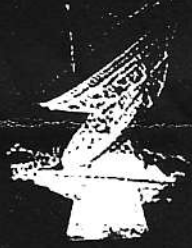
How to listen out for ET

- 1 Buy enough radio telescopes to monitor one trillion channels per minute.
- 2 Buy a shed load of computers to analyse the waves.
- 3 Point these telescopes at the right area of space. Try Tau Ceti or Alpha Centauri, the Andromeda Galaxy may
- 4 Switch your telescopes and computers on and consider warning the National Grid.
- 5 Check your plots (see above), which is



how your computer records information from space.

- 6 If you get a plot where the white line drifts (above left) you could be onto something.
- 7 Call NASA to check the drift isn't caused by space junk.
- 8 If it's not, then congratulations! You've exposed Earth to alien invasion.



All you need to listen to aliens. (Not available at comet)

wanting to discuss UFOs should speak to the USAF, and Gloria Cales from the USAF said: "We don't investigate UFO claims anymore. From 1947-1969, as part of Project Blue Book, we investigated 12,318 sightings, of which 701 remain unidentified. The project was terminated because there was never an indication that UFOs were a threat to our national security."

Academic experts say that we are nowhere near to finding aliens. Colin Pillinger, the Open University professor who worked with NASA to find possible evidence for ancient life on a

Martian meteorite, says we still need to prove that conditions are possible for extra-terrestrial life. "I'm not interested in most of the research into little green men or even SETI," he told *Focus*. "We still need to show life could exist. There are several places in the space system we should look at. The next big thing is to make space travel faster so that we see if the conditions exist. That in itself would be a giant leap forward for Mankind and could change our view of ourselves as being alone in this vast universe." *Simon Reeve* ■

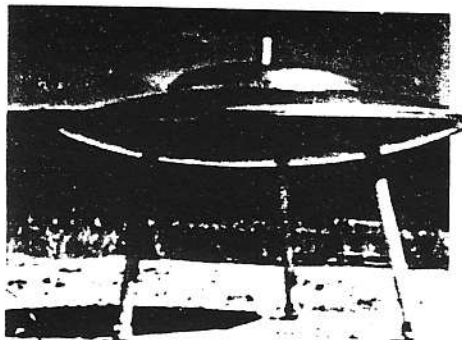
Unidentified Flying Objets d'Art Do aliens have style? Photos suggest that their engines are pokey and their coachwork's rubbish

18 June 1963
Abuquerque, New Mexico



● Extremely modish for its era, with a solid, rounded chrome design. This was a look pioneered by American designer Raymond Loewy, who designed the greyhound bus and the Studebaker car. He was most famous for his Lucky Strike

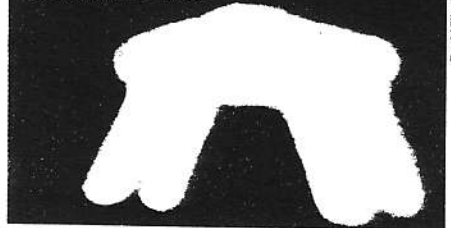
cigarette packet but was also contracted to style the Saturn-Apollo Skylab - NASA wanted a slick craft for such a public project. This UFO is a simple but slightly dull design. It would make a cool radiator, but as a spacecraft it lacks verve.



● Unless the designers were anticipating the Fifties revival, they were a bit behind the times on this one. The spindly tripod look is very retro, as is the simple nob on the top. The ball-shaped feet

would look more at home on a Fifties table lamp or magazine rack. Curiously, this futuristic style was itself inspired by a spacecraft - the woefully dated Sputnik satellite. In short, a bit passé. Next!

23 March 1974
Tavernes, Var, France



● Neon was all the rage in the Seventies. Like most things from that period, it is by far the loudest of our UFOs. For such an obvious spacecraft that wants to see and be seen, it's strange the occupants didn't show themselves.

Perhaps they felt their velvet loon spacesuits and stack heel moonboots would scare the natives. Expect to see more of this type of craft as the Seventies revival gathers pace. Verdict: Would look great over a cocktail bar.

Paul Villa Collection

UFO sighting captured on videotape?

PARIS (Reuters) - France's National Center for Space Studies (CNES) said Friday it was investigating a reported sighting of an unidentified flying object in the Alpine village of Voreppe after a witness videotaped the phenomenon.

The videotape shows "a dark form that looks like it is floating and then moves away in a curious way," CNES expert Jean-Jacques Velasco told Reuters after viewing the videotape and conducting initial interviews with witnesses.

He said four individuals in three different groups had reported seeing the object over a period of several minutes.

They said they initially sighted it perched on the top of a tree at dusk on September 8.

Two of the individuals were quite near the tree while a third, about 50 meters (yards) away, had the presence of mind to quickly run into his house, grab a video camera, and film the mysterious object as it flew off, he said.

Based on the videotape and preliminary witness accounts, Velasco said the object appeared to be "a round disc, four to five meters across, with a few protuberances coming out of it and a red ring around its base."

The space center said in a statement it was beginning its investigation by attempting to verify that the tape was genuine.

It was also trying to check out the witnesses and examine the tree where the object was said to have perched, whose leaves would be tested for signs of elevated levels of electromagnetic radiation.

Asked how many UFO probes opened by the CNES had been closed without an explanation, he responded, "You could count them on the fingers of one hand."

Archaeology

Volume 51 Number 6 November/December 1998

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

BY ANTHONY F. ANENI

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, Wise Men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have long seen His star in the East, and have come to worship Him.'"

No matter how many times Matthew's story is told, the question remains: What exactly was this star? There has been no shortage of explanations. According to one count, 250 major scholarly articles on the subject were published in the first three-quarters of this century alone. Here is a short list of nominations: It may simply have been a bright star, a supernova (an old star which, in a gravitational death spasm, blazes forth for a few months before gasping its last breath of nuclear energy), or a recurrent supernova (the same, except that several hundred years generally intervene between spasms). Some believe it was a constellation, more portentous than a single star, or a bright comet; Halley's has been mentioned. Others say the great luminary was really two comets, a meteor shower, or a fireball (a colossal meteor visible only in a small part of the world). A few have nominated the aurora borealis (northern lights). There are those who contend the star should have been called the Planet of Bethlehem--Venus hovering over the horizon or transiting the surface of the sun.

Combinations of sky phenomena have been suggested, including a conjunction of two or more planets, such as the triple conjunction (three close visual passes in a row) of Saturn and Jupiter in the constellation of Pisces in 7 B.C., a planetary conjunction plus a comet, or eclipses of Saturn and Jupiter by the moon, as well as the zodiacal light, a reflection of sunlight off interplanetary particles in the plane of the planets' orbits, has been cited, as have UFOs. A second category of explanation avoids the necessity of scientific accountability by positing a theophany, an aura of light surrounding God, a supernatural radiance. A third category raises the possibility that the star is neither chronological nor literal and that identifying it either naturally or supernaturally serves no purpose, that it is "just a story."

Which of these explanations one opts for depends on who is asking the question-- astronomer, theologian, or historian--and what constitutes meaning for each in the historical framework in which he or she makes the inquiry.

An oft-missing element in comprehending the story of the Star of Bethlehem is the vital role that astrology played in ancient beliefs about the natural world.

Even today, a 1997 poll found that 37% of Americans believe in astrology--up from 17% in 1976. The doctrine linking celestial events to earthly activities--"as above, so below"--influenced all levels of society, from nobility to peasantry, and all forms of activity, from politics and science to medicine and agriculture. Rome at the time of nascent Christianity was no exception.

12-7-98

Aliens, we can now take your call

BY MICHAEL HANLON
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE LINES are now open for any aliens trying to contact us. Scientists this week began scanning the stars for a message from any neighbours in space. They are using two giant radio telescopes to detect signals from other planets.

The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence is based at Jodrell Bank, Cheshire, and in Puerto Rico, Central America.

Dr Ian Morison, who is with the Cheshire team working on Project Phoenix, said it was unlikely the telescopes will pick up any readable "message".

Instead, aliens wishing to broadcast their existence would send a "beacon" signal, saying simply: "We are here".

Lights in sky leave Britain in grip of the 'Z Files'

By LEO SPALL

WEIRD "Z" shapes lighting up the sky over Britain sparked hundreds of calls in an X Files-type riddle yesterday.

People from Cornwall to Scotland reported the huge dazzling display.

One aircraft pilot called in to say he'd seen what appeared to be an explosion in the sky above the Isle of Man.

Teesside air traffic control tower, near Newcastle upon Tyne, also reported a sighting.

A Department Of Transport spokesman said: "We had sightings from the Clyde and west to Belfast and east to Leeds."

Belfast coastguard Rowston Williams watched for more than an hour when the sky lit up around midnight on Friday

He said: "I have never seen anything like it. When we first saw the object, it was not completely dark.

"Whatever it was, it appeared to be moving very slowly westwards.

"It seemed larger than the moon and higher than the clouds."

UFO researcher Ron Barrett said: "There have been numerous people who have seen these lights but not in these sort of shapes."

Defence officials at RAF Fylingdales, the Yorkshire-based early-warning station, reported no undue activity.

But a pilot flying from France, to the Midlands solved the mystery when he reported a meteorite.

A spokesman for the Coastguard Agency said: "It was very spectacular but can be explained.

"The lights that so many people saw were caused by a meteorite breaking up as it entered the Earth's atmosphere.

"The big 'Z' vapour trail was hanging there for a while. It was a mystery at the time - but it was not an alien craft."

The boulder disintegrated as it entered the Earth's atmosphere, leaving a bright trail of strange shapes.

E-TEASE OF SKY LETTERS

ALIEN contact was believed to have been made when thousands of people witnessed giant letters of light in the night sky.

Police all over Britain were swamped with calls from people who saw 'Z' and 'Q' and number '2'.

And fears of an ET invasion were fuelled when a large explosion was heard over the Isle of Man.

The mystery deepened when the Department of Transport reported the phenomena were not aircraft-related, adding: "Whatever it is comes from out there."

But it was solved when an airline pilot reported a large meteor hitting the atmosphere on Friday.

The pilot, landing at East Midlands Airport from France, said: "It began breaking up and left a long trail.

"Winds formed it into shapes which looked like letters."

Coastguard Bungy Williams, in Belfast, said: "I've never seen anything like it."

WHITEHAVEN NEWS

05 MAR 98

UFO spotted over Cleator

going about 80mph and made no noise whatsoever. They must have been alien space ships from another planet. They finally disappeared from my vision in about 15 seconds, and then the temperature dropped to its cold typical climate but the mist stayed and has done now for the past three or four days.

Well, I took three deep drags on my cigarette and went in to tell the wife what had just happened but she just laughed at me.

Well, I've been standing the back yard now for three or four days, waiting for their return, but not what the fog is lifting I wonder if they have already gone and were using the mist as a cover screen. I would like to know if anyone else saw these lights on Monday morning, or maybe saw these aliens returning later on in the week around the Cleator area in particular the Kiln Brow part as this is where I saw them.

HOWARD R HUGHES
Kiln Brow
Cleator

SIR - I would like to bring to the readers' attention a close encounter of the third kind that I was witness to on Sunday, February 8, well it was actually Monday around 1am.

At the time I was watching the Winter Olympics on TV which wasn't very interesting so I decided to have a cigarette to relieve my boredom. As usual I went to the back yard which overlooks the fells for a smoke, as the wife doesn't like me smoking indoors and rightly so.

Well, as I lit up my cigarette there became a sudden change in the atmosphere, it became uncomfortably warm and very misty. I have just recently moved to the Cleator area and so wasn't really too surprised in the sudden change in the weather, but then something even stranger happened. Within the newly arrived mist or dense fog appeared two round fairly fast moving lights in the sky, they were orange and blue, and were heading towards the fells. They couldn't have been aeroplanes as they were only

STAMFORD MERCURY

10 APR 98

Page 1

Report: David Ogden

A UFO expert is urging anyone who saw mysterious flashes light up the sky on Monday to come forward.

Justin Stubbs (23), of International UFO Research Network, was told by a witness from Bourne, who is too scared to be named, he saw the strange and mysterious signs when he was travelling home. The images appeared just north of Stamford, who lives in Stamford, thinks the phenomenon is likely to be a space ship.

And an RAF Wintering post expert confirmed the planes were flying at the time of the sightings. Justin said: "There were three repetitive flashes over a period of ten seconds which he saw when driving back home along the A1."

"I took the name of the signs. I think if it can't be explained, it's other suggestions, other any. Anyone who thinks they saw the lights, can contact Justin Stubbs at the Mercury."

Justin Stubbs at the Mercury.

Did you see the strange sight in the sky? Have you seen a UFO? Ring David Ogden on the Mercury's UFO hotline: (01780) 762255