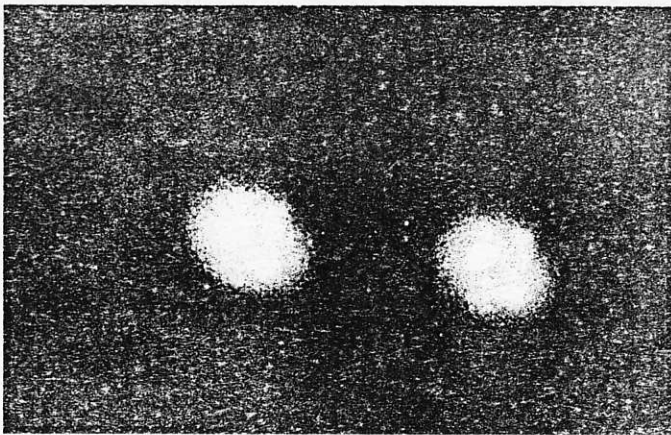


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# BUFORA BULLETIN

Journal Of The British UFO Research Association



## **In This Issue:**

**The Daventry Event.  
What happened at Leeds?  
A quick guide to IFOs.  
Sighting Statistics.**

**No. 9**

**MARCH 1999**

# BUFORA BULLETIN No. 9.

March 1999.

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# BUFORA SIGHTING STATISTICS; 1996.

## INTRODUCTION:

It has been quite a while since BUFORA has issued UFO report statistics. Indeed, it has become very rare for **any** contemporary UFO society to issue such figures! On an official level, both the USAF and the MoD issued yearly case statistics, relating to number of sightings per annum, their causes and the number of "unknowns". However, neither agency releases such detailed figures anymore, and have not done so for almost three decades!

Therefore, it falls on the shoulders of civilian researchers to collate such figures. Despite the lack of current interest in this aspect of ufology, it is nonetheless a very vital part of this subject. There **will always** be a need to know how many sightings were made in a year, and (more importantly) what caused the explicable ones. Furthermore, we obviously need to know how many "true UFO" events occurred per annum, and also the trends exhibited by these "unknowns".

A basic collation of such figures - at least in regards to ufology - can only be regarded as a "snapshot" of the dataset, for the time the various data-sets were assembled. Quite a few UFO reports are discovered retrospectively, and some get re-evaluated over time. Some UFO reports - especially "high strangeness" events - can take many years to investigate.

With that in mind, let us now look at one set of preliminary data covering the year 1996. BUFORA's Director of Investigations currently working on a more extensive set of data, which will be presented in the **BUFORA BULLETIN** later this year.

## Figures for 1996:

1: to date, **95** sightings have been registered to date;

**Breakdown:** - "Insuff"  
IFO's: **70% (66)** - **87%\***  
Insuff: **20% (19)** - **---**  
"Interesting": **10% (10)** - **13%\***

\* **Total Less "Insuff" reports: (i.e adjusted total of 76 reports).**

2: The vast majority of sightings are explicable in terms of natural phenomena; the figure arrived at (70% - adjusted to 87% when "insufficient Information" events removed) being very close to other past data-samples.

3: Main activity in this sample was during **Sep-Dec**, with an earlier peak in **March**.

4: Most events occurred at around 19:00 and 20:00 hrs

5: Aircraft were the **most** common cause of IFO events in 1996

6: Laser Light displays were the **2nd** most commonest cause of IFO events in 1996.

7: Astronomical bodies; stars, planets and meteors were the third and fourth most common cause of IFO events respectively (the second most common cause. When combined, Laser Displays then become the third most common case of IFO events.

8: A notable number of events (5 no.) involved "bedroom visitor" experiences; these are likely to be explicable in terms of hypnagogic/hypnapompic hallucinations.

9: Of the **10** reports deemed "interesting" **50%** were of "flying triangles". Discs & other traditional shapes are nonetheless

still being reported. Discs remain the most common "non triangle" form reported. At this stage it is difficult to determine if "flying triangles" have "displaced" other forms of UFOs, or are merely being seen in conjunction with them. The only thing that can be said is that more "triangle" shaped UFOs are now being seen.

**1996: Month of sightings:**

Jan: 2	Jul: 6
Feb: 4	Aug: 4
Mar: 9	Sep: 14
Apr: 2	Oct: 13
May: 1	Nov: 13
Jun: 6	Dec: 21

**1996: Time (24 hr clock) :-**

01	3	13	0
02	3	14	0
03	0	15	0
04	1	16	2
05	0	17	3
06	3	18	3
07	1	19	9
08	1	20	15
09	1	21	4
10	0	22	3
11	1	23	5
12	1	00	2

**61 reports had a listed time;**

Plus, two other time-specification groups;

**1: "night" 15 no.**  
**2: No time stated 19 no.**

**"Interesting" cases (Possible UFOs):**

No.	Shape	%
4 =	"Flying Triangles".*	40%
2 =	"Disc".	20%
2 =	"Unclear"	20%
2 =	"Globe"	20%
<b>10</b>		<b>100%</b>

*\*nb = a triangle is a common illusory shape for a/c lights, so some of these could be conventional aircraft!*

**1996 IFOs:**

Prob.		+Poss*	%
8	= Aircraft	(18)	27.27%
13	= Laser Lights	(14)	21.21%
6	= Star/Planets	(9)	13.64%
4	= Meteors	(7)	10.61%
1	= Balloons	(5)	7.57%
5	= Hallucinations**	(5)	7.57%
1	= Misc	(3)	4.54%
2	= Hoax/Subjective	2	3.03%
1	= Re-entry (?)	1?	1.52%
1	= Mixed	1	1.52%
1	= Airship	1	1.52%
		===	===
	<b>Total =</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100%</b>
		===	===

\*"Projected" explanations; full case examination needed, but most likely solution based on information to hand.

\*\*all "bedroom visitor" experiences.

**1996 "Interesting" Reports.**

The term "interesting" is used to show the "population" of **potentially** anomalous reports present within this sample. A fuller report on the **actual** status of these events will be presented in the **BUFORA BULLETIN** in due course. The events in question are summarised below;

**1996 "Interesting" reports:**

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	FORM
4 Jan	?	Clwyd, Wales	2 Gold discs
7 Mar	21 05	M5 Glos	FT-AC "near miss"
16 Mar	01 00	Kirkhaven, W. Yorks	Dark form+lights
21 Aug	?	Sudbury, Suffolk	rumbled/hovered
1 Nov	Night	Peterborough/Wisbech	Triangle
3 Nov	01 00	Hallbank, Cumbria	Green ball & "entity"
4 Dec	20 45	M54, Nr Wolverhampton	Triangle+"pillar"
13 Dec	21 17	Edinburgh, Scotlnd	Disc+lights erratic motion
16 Dec	20 10	A487, Aberystwyth	Triangle, "chased by" tornado a/cs
26 Dec	20 30	Burley Bypass, Tyne & Wear	Globe, ill-defined edge

## **Betty Cash Dies.**

**Betty Cash**, one of three people injured in a UFO close encounter near Huffman, Texas, on December 29, 1980, died on the 29th December, 1998 in Birmingham, Alabama, on the 18th anniversary of this event. She had been in poor health ever since the encounter.

Betty Cash, along with **Vickie Landrum** and grandson **Colby Landrum**, encountered a huge diamond-shaped UFO accompanied by military helicopters on a dark road in the east Texas Piney Woods. They were exposed to radiation from the object, which caused extreme medical problems such as burns, eye damage, hair loss, diarrhoea, and vomiting. Although they and others observed a large number of military helicopters along with the UFO, the U.S. Government refused to acknowledge the event or assist them in any way.

After the encounter, Betty Cash was hospitalised and treated for burns and the other maladies. The extent of the injuries was so great, she was forced to close her businesses and never worked again. Her life became a series of hospital stays, many of them in intensive care.

Eventually, she developed cancer, which was successfully treated. In November 1998, Mrs. Cash suffered a stroke. On December 29, during her recovery, an unusual turn of events claimed her life.

Mrs. Cash was a hero in the fight against government UFO cover-ups and brought hope to other victims of UFO incidents. She was devoted to family and friends and never allowed her illness to prevent her from helping others to cope with the trauma of UFO close encounters.

**MUTUAL UFO NETWORK  
December 30, 1998**

## **APRO MICROFILM LOCATED**

### **Jan Aldrich**

**PROJECT 1947** announced in December 1998 the recovery of a large portion of the microfilmed files of the Aerial Phenomena Research Organisation (APRO), the first world-wide civilian UFO group to be organised.

The APRO files have been inaccessible to researchers for over a decade since the demise of the organisation following the deaths of founders Coral Lorenzen in 1988 and Jim Lorenzen in 1986. The microfilm was located through the courtesy of Brad Sparks, long time UFO researcher and former APRO assistant director of research.

Founded in 1952 and already mentioned menacingly by the CIA Robertson Panel in January 1953, APRO collected UFO data from all over the world during its nearly four decades of existence.

APRO had an extensive UFO investigative network with representatives in more than 50 countries, especially in South America. In the 1970's with the aid of a small grant APRO began microfilming its UFO sighting files.

As many as three separate microfilm reels are thought to exist. The first microfilm roll contains reports from ancient times to December 1956. The second microfilm contains reports from December 1956 to 1962. The third microfilm (thought to exist by a number of people but yet to be confirmed) evidently covered 1962 to 1966.

The APRO material has very little overlap or duplication with the UFO files of the old National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP) and the Civilian Saucer Intelligence (CSI-New York), now incorporated with the files of the Centre for UFO Studies (CUFOS).

In regards to the microfilm, it contains more than 1,000 pages of reports from ordinary citizens, pilots, the military and others. Many of these reports were not published in the APRO Bulletin or the Lorenzens' books. Southwest Microfilms of El Paso, Texas, produced the APRO file microfilm and exercised great care to assure legibility of the material. A search for copies of the other microfilm reels continues. Several former APRO officials have been contacted in connection with the search.

This recovered APRO microfilm now joins a library of more than 400 microfilm rolls which contain official and private material on UFO's. Project 1947 are now zeroing in on the APRO microfilm files for 1957 to 1962. A long time UFO researcher has promised it to us if his efforts to locate it bear fruit.

**Project 1947 contact details:**  
<http://www.iufog.org/project1947>.  
P. O. Box 391, Canterbury, CT 06331, USA

**SPANISH ANOMALY  
FOUNDATION AWARDS  
HESSDALEN PROJECT.  
ANOMALY FOUNDATION, Spain.**

The Board of Directors of the Spanish **Anomaly Foundation** has granted **Mr. Erling Strand** (Norway), director of the Hessdalen Project, the 1998 International Zurich Prize, sponsored by Zurich insurance Company with 250,000 pesetas (US \$1,670). Mr. Strand heads a scientific research team that has developed high-tech equipment for the optical recording on real time and spectrographic analysis of unusual aerial phenomena occurring in the Norwegian region of Hessdalen.

The "**Ricardo Caruncho**" Prize of 100,000 pesetas has been granted to

engineer **Mr. Juan A. Fernández Peris** from Valencia (Spain) for his outstanding report solving the mystery of the November 11, 1979 UFO encounter over the Mediterranean sea. On that date, the crew of a commercial airplane flying en route from Majorca to Tenerife sighted two strange lights in the sky. This event provoked an emergency landing in the Manises airport, Valencia.

The "Universitas" Fellowship (150,000 pesetas or US \$ 1,000), which is partially sponsored by the Washington, D.C.-based **Fund for UFO Research**, went to **Mr. J.M. González** to compile and catalogue the massive, life-long letter exchange legacy from **Manuel Osuna**, pioneer Spanish ufologist.

The "**Cuadernos de Ufología**" Award was granted to **Mr. Pedro Redón**, president of Centro de Estudios Interplanetarios (Barcelona), in recognition for having devoted three decades to the serious study of unidentified flying objects.

The **Anomaly Foundation** is a not-for-profit organisation approved in 1997 by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture. It was established to promote mainstream scientific investigation of anomalous aerial phenomena or UFOs.

For 1999 (in addition to normal activities of the Foundation aimed at tracing and managing archives, publishing the influential journal *Cuadernos de Ufología*, books, etc), it has created a 100,000 pesetas Research Fund to provide aid to field investigations of UFO sightings. There will be 1999 editions for the international Zurich prize and the Universitas fellowship as well.

Amongst the research in progress presently promoted by the Foundation, it is worth noting the assignment to **Mr. Martí Fló**, from Barcelona University to develop a computer database applied to bibliography citations on UFO phenomena in the scientific literature.

# THE DAVENTRY EVENT: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

**Elsie Oakensen.**

## **Introduction.**

*The following is the personal account of **Elsie Oakensen**, relating her (now well-known) November 1978 "Close Encounter". Unlike most other UFO witnesses, **Elsie** has never been afraid to openly discuss her experience (either among Ufologists or the general public).*

*Elsie Oakensen had been a full-time teacher since 1948, and had lived in the Church Stowe, Northamptonshire area since 1973. At the time of her 1978 sighting her husband (John) was a Police Inspector. Mrs. Oakensen herself worked at a "Teacher's Centre", where she was responsible for arranging school courses. She was also involved in helping young unemployed people conduct research into educational subjects, as part of the (then) Government's Job Creation Scheme. **We join Elsie Oakensen on the 22nd November, 1978; the day of her encounter experience.***

## **THE ENCOUNTER - PRELUDE:**

On the morning of the **22nd November 1978** I wove my way through a group of parents standing outside the school gate. They were watching their children in the playground before the school day began and as I edged my way through to the Centre I was sure that all was well with the world. The weather was fine, the sky blue and on the way to work I had taken my car into the garage for a service. On arrival. I heard that one young man had been successful in obtaining a permanent post. What more could I want?

So completely unaware of what lay ahead, I suggested that at lunchtime we should have a Chinese meal to celebrate his good fortune. This was most enjoyable, but as we were preparing to leave the restaurant I

felt a tightening sensation around my head and thought I was going to faint. Now what was I to do? How embarrassing it would be if I did. Summing up the situation I thought that if this happened it would cause less fuss if it happened in the restaurant than if I fainted in the street. So I sat still wondering what had caused it and whether I had eaten something which had disagreed with me.

It was as if a band of material had been put across my forehead and around my head and was being pulled tighter and tighter. I'd had many types of headache before, I was used to them, but I had not experienced anything like this. It was certainly not a migraine, I knew that. This was all round my head and just above my eyes, a completely new type to me. I did wonder if anyone else was feeling as I did. I looked around but they were all enjoying their meal and the conversation going with it, so I did not ask. I was mainly worried for myself as I did not want to be an embarrassment to anyone there. Suddenly it stopped as surprisingly as it had started.

The pain which had lasted for only about a minute had disappeared completely and no one else seemed to have noticed my discomfort. During this time the young man had been in the cloakroom, so I paid the bill and said nothing to him. We returned to the Centre in a happy and relaxed frame of mind, talking about his new job and his prospects for the future - and the incident in the restaurant slipped completely from my mind. There was no way at that time that I could possibly have known that it was to have a relevance to something which would happen later that same day.

After the day's duties were complete I phoned my husband to tell him I was leaving. We had this system whereby if he were not

on duty that phone call indicated that it was time to put the vegetables on to cook as my journey would take about fifteen minutes. During the day my car had been delivered to me at the Centre and at 5.15 p.m. I was ready to leave. There were no in-service training courses for teachers that day so I gathered up my belongings and locked the premises, then walked to the car and checked the lights. The left hand front side-light was not functioning. It had been a lovely day and wispy grey clouds were just appearing in the blue sky so, driving on dipped headlights, I started my journey home.

### THE ENCOUNTER :

The section along the A45 from Daventry was quite uneventful and at the traffic lights at Weedon I turned right on the A5 to travel towards Towcester. Ahead of me I could see two very bright lights, one red and one green, immediately above the road along which I was to travel.

My immediate thought was that this must be a very low-flying aircraft which would soon zoom over my head. But there were buildings on each side of the road between it and me and it seemed low enough to crash into them and then land on top of the car. I told myself to put my foot down hard on the accelerator pedal. With a bit of luck I would get under it before it crashed and still be alive to tell the tale when I arrived home. But it was of no use. There was a lot of traffic on the A5 at that time of day and strangely it seemed as if everything had gone into slow motion. That crash seemed inevitable but for some inexplicable reason I knew I would be safe.

I was convinced the crash would happen behind me. (It was not until twelve years later that someone pointed out that the landing lights on an aircraft are in the opposite positions to those I could see, so that if it had been a plane it would actually have been travelling in the same direction as I was and I would have seen it fly over the crossroads as I reached the traffic lights.). Suddenly I realised that it was not moving at all. It seemed to be stationary and I travelled towards it with my nose practically pressed on

the windscreen.

I knew that in the time I had before I drove directly underneath it I would have to collect as much information as I could about it. After all, I reasoned with myself, I was married to a Police Inspector and they are never satisfied with only half the facts. I would have to give a very detailed description when I recounted this particular incident.

I looked hard at it. In the darkening sky I could see a form which I would describe as a dumb-bell shaped aerial object with a brilliant red light under the left sphere and an equally brilliant green light under the other. It was grey in colour, blending in well with the grey wispy clouds accumulating above it and it appeared to be made of a very smooth plastic-type material.

This 'thing' was considerably wider than the road, and was estimated later to have been about fifty feet in length and a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet above it. As I approached it I could see no windows or openings anywhere and I felt compelled to stop and find out more, but the A5 was (and still is) a very busy trunk road. I could hear nothing unusual at that particular time and drove immediately underneath it. Had those two lights been over a field to the right or left of the A5 I doubt if I would have taken any notice but they were directly above the road just before the lay-by at the bottom of Stowe Hill.

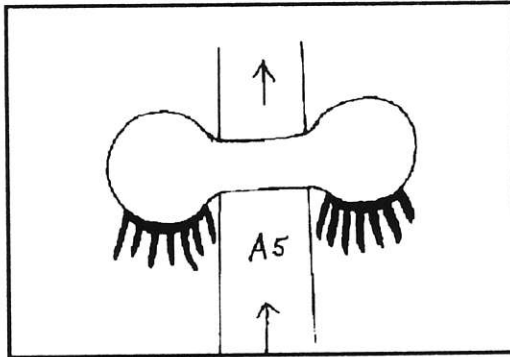
Now, coming up to that point there were speedy decisions to be made. Should I stop on that lay-by, get out of my car and look up leisurely at that thing? In the split second that I had to decide, I realised that if I did swerve suddenly out of the line of traffic and stop, other drivers (whom I felt certain must also have seen it and perhaps would be in a shocked state like myself) would then be additionally surprised at my sudden move and an accident might occur. So I decided to continue with the flow of traffic and stop in a much safer place at the top of the oncoming hill. I needed to collect every piece of information that I could. That did seem to be



very important at the time, but not important enough to cause an accident.

I drove past the lay-by and noticed that the traffic which I was meeting was not slowing down. I had expected it to do so because I thought that it would be impossible to travel along the road in that direction without noticing what was up there in the sky ahead of them. I looked into the inside mirror of the car but could see only traffic behind me. I passed the Clarke Bros. Garage and continued up the hill, but still could see nothing else whenever I looked back. I needed to know more and desperately hoped that I would soon be in a position to be able to do so.

To reach my home in Church Stowe I had to turn off the A5 at the top of the hill in this section of the road. By then I was completely intrigued by the sighting of such an extraordinary craft. After turning, the hill continues and there I was able to stop and look back.



Mrs. Oakensen's sketch of the "Davenport UFO"

Here it was safe to do so and I wanted to see whether it was still in the same position over the A5. I gave a sigh of relief. It was - and at that point I was about level with it, being rewarded with a side view then as well as the one I'd had from underneath. I stood for a moment marvelling at its structure and noticing again the smoothness of the outline. What was this strange craft? I knew what it *wasn't* but could in no way find a word in my vocabulary to describe what it was! Then, as if to further attract my attention, the green light started to flash. "**How strange**", I remember thinking as I started the engine of the car, "**Why did it do that?**"

Wonder disappeared into the

background and curiosity came into focus. Was it some kind of signal, and if so what was it signifying and to whom was it being sent? Was it for me? If so, why? Whatever would something like that want with me? "**Who am I?**" I asked myself but could only feel that I was nobody special, just an ordinary person on her way home from work, yet now my curiosity was really getting the better of me.

Had the "pilot" noticed that I was interested in it because I had stopped to get a better view? Was it now coming to satisfy my curiosity? I could not understand why but I really did need to have answers to those questions.

Perhaps if I had been more psychically aware at that time I could have understood why it seemed to hold such fascination for me but that was to come later.

Church Stowe is a very small village high on a hill and travelling along the country road towards it I was able to look back and observe those two lights which remained in the same position. In that half mile or so of road I looked back three times and each time the green light was flashing but the red one was not.

About half a mile from the A5 I turned right into the village and it was here that I turned, as usual, in second gear, but when I changed up to third gear something most unusual happened. My foot was hard on the accelerator pedal which was then flat on the floor of the car. There was no sound from the engine at all. The car was slowing down and had almost reached the point of stopping. At that moment the strange object which I had driven under on the A5 was the farthest thing

from my mind. My only thoughts at that time were far from polite and winging their way towards certain mechanics in a Daventry garage who had that day serviced my car.

If it had been serviced properly, nothing like that should have happened. The sensation of an accelerator pedal actually touching the floor of the car whilst it was moving was a new experience for me. I wasn't known for speeding. In fact I had often had my leg pulled for doing exactly the opposite thing, and this was an experience I could well have done without. I took my foot off the pedal and depressed it again. The same thing happened and the car was definitely in the process of stopping.

Now what was I to do? If it did come to a halt and would not restart I would have to push it on to the side of the road, walk home and ask John to look at it. He had been in the R.E.M.E. and worked as a mechanic before joining the Police. He would know what to do.

I thought of John and wondered what he would do in similar circumstances. Then I had what could only have been called an inspiration. I remembered how, when after Silverstone race days, he would always be asked what he did when he was on traffic duty and everything seemed to be coming towards him from all directions at the same time. His confident and unruffled answer was always the same; "*you don't panic*". You just stop everything, then beckon on the traffic from one direction at a time and eventually it all sorts itself out."

That attitude seemed appropriate for me at that very moment so I told myself not to panic but to start from scratch and see what happened. I did not switch on the engine (the red ignition lights were not on), I changed from third gear to first and depressed the accelerator. To my great surprise and relief the car started normally and I was able to continue on my way. I offered up a silent prayer of thanks. But how short-lived my gratitude was to be I did not realise. The car was behaving very well as I changed from first to second gear, then up to third gear

again and I travelled happily along the next 100 metres or so of road.

Here it was bordered on both sides by trees and the highest branches of these formed a canopy above the road, one which in autumn had been a blaze of colour but by then the leaves had fallen. Even so, the overhanging branches darkened the area and gave the impression of travelling through a tunnel.

Well! I remember reaching the end of the trees. Then the next thing I knew was that the car was stationary, the natural light had disappeared and everything was in absolute blackness. My engine had stopped. My lights were out. Everything was black, dark, velvety blackness. I knew I was sitting in the car, my hands were on the steering wheel but I could not see the car, the road, the buildings or the trees. I had no idea where I was at all. I wondered where all the lights had gone and how it could have happened so suddenly. I felt strangely calm and unafraid, then as I sat still I began to realise that some course of action would soon be necessary to remedy the situation, but what? I fumbled around for torch, but could not find one.

Then suddenly, at that very moment, as if someone, somewhere was reading my thoughts, a brilliant white circle of light about a yard in diameter shone on the road to the left of the car by the passenger door. It lit up the road and I could see that the car was stationary beside the farm gate about fifty yards further on from the tree-covered part of the road, and that I had also travelled round a right-angled bend in that section of the road. That light went off and I sat in darkness again. This sequence was then repeated in a semi-circle in the opposite direction, from right to left back to where they started.

I was absolutely fascinated and sat watching as each one shone, taking into my mind the completely circular shape of each light as it lit up the road, its whiteness and its brilliance. I could not recall ever having seen any light so pure, nor yet so circular in shape. Then they repeated the route from left to right

again and I began to realise that I was counting them too. The last one shone in the garden of the cottage to my right. It was then as if it was turned. It shone upwards from the garden to the roof on the front of the building and was switched off.

After the last light had gone out the whole area was in complete darkness. I have never seen Church Stowe in such darkness. It was absolutely black.

Again I could see neither the houses nor the road, not even the car I was sitting in. Then as I sat in the darkness, astounded by this phenomenon, I calmly decided to try to analyse it all.

I thought there had been fifteen light circles which had shone onto the road plus the one which shone on the garden. That one, for some reason, seemed to be more important than the others. I wondered why it had given me that impression? Was it showing me that there was something above the car at that point? I looked up again but could see nothing at all. So where had they come from?

My next thought was that perhaps someone was sitting on the roof of a building to my left and that he had a very powerful torch. Then I reasoned that if this were so then a beam of a yellowish colour would be visible from the torch, reaching down to a light on the road, which would be oval-shaped. But these lights had been completely circular and of a pure, brilliant white colour and there had been no beams at all to them. So, because of their shape they must have come from above, but how? And from what?

I was absolutely fascinated by all this and very curious. I looked upward through the car windscreen but saw only a blackness everywhere and expressing my surprise aloud, I said "Good Gracious." My car was stationary – but the very next moment, as if someone had pulled a switch, the enveloping darkness was replaced by natural daylight.

I could again see the village and I was driving my car normally about thirty yards further along the road from the farm gate, in third gear as I had been when I reached the end of the trees.



The "semi-circle of lights"  
(Artist's Impression).

I had not stopped my car by that farm gate in the village. I did not switch off my engine. I did not switch off my lights.

I was not even conscious of being in control of my car from the end of the trees and around that right-angled bend. Yet the car and I were there. I cannot dispute the fact. Those perfect circles of light flashing on the road in a semi-circle around the front of my stationary car proved that to me. Had I not sat still watching them'?

Then after they had gone out, I did not switch on my ignition. I did not put my car into gear. Nor did I depress my accelerator pedal and so start the car. I just found myself driving along normally. I can remember coming to the end of the tree-covered part of the road but I do not remember stopping. Yet I had stopped. I was stationary whilst the lights lashed around the front of me. After that I did not start my car, but I had travelled about 100 yards from the end of the tree-covered road, without being conscious of doing so. It had all happened as if by remote control. I

blinked my eyes and shook my head to make sure that I was not dreaming and to know that I really was in control of my car again. I changed down to second gear to negotiate the other right-angled bend in the village, this one by St. Michael's Church and I was conscious of a feeling of relief as I drove round it knowing that in a few minutes I would have completed my journey home.

I drove straight into the garage, got out of the car and, not stopping to close the doors, I hurried through the backdoor and went into the kitchen where John stood preparing the meal. As I passed the cooker, I glanced at the clock. The time was 5.45 p.m. I said, **"I'm just going to look out of the bedroom window, then I'll tell you something you won't believe."** I rushed up the stairs and looked out of the window to where I had seen the red and green lights.

I was expecting to see that strange craft in the sky but by then the clouds were thickening and all I saw was a yellow light flashing approximately where the others had been. Back in the kitchen I again noticed the clock and then realised that I was home later than I would normally expect to be. The journey had taken about fifteen minutes longer than it usually did.

The meal was served, whilst I related the details of my unusual journey home. John didn't say very much. I was disappointed. The police see many strange things on their travels and on that day I really did expect him to know all about it. He later described his reaction as 'stunned'. It was certainly in stunned silence that we ate our meal but then I wanted to talk. There were questions to which I needed answers, but he did not have any.

Fascination changed to frustration when suddenly, sometime after seven o'clock, I experienced another tightening sensation around my head exactly as I had done at lunch time. It also lasted for about a minute then stopped as suddenly as it had started. It was then I remembered the first one. Why had this happened twice today, I wondered? I

couldn't understand that at all. Could they be related? I had been trying to find an explanation for the other strange events that had occurred on that journey home, now here was another to add to them.

I had thought that having arrived safely home, albeit fifteen minutes later than expected, that would be the end of it. but now I was wondering if those two identical feelings in my head were related to the journey in some way. and whether the whole experience was one which lasted over a longer period than I had originally supposed. That one at lunch time could have been the beginning of it all and the one I had just had could (hopefully) have ended it.

There were so many things buzzing around in my head that evening, things which I could not understand. I was not frightened of anything that had happened. but very puzzled, and my way of dealing with a situation like that is to put everything into some kind of order and analyse each aspect logically. So I listed them all and was amazed when I realised how much help I would need to find a solution which would satisfy me.

Before the evening was through I had compiled the following catalogue of questions:

- Was there any connection between those two tightening sensations I'd had around my head that day? If so, the first one could not have had anything to do with that Chinese meal. So, were they linked to the sighting and that strange encounter'?
- What was that "thing"? Was there someone somewhere who could explain what it was and why it was there'?
- How could it have been suspended in the air like that? It was not a hot air balloon, an airship nor a helicopter.
- Had anyone else seen it, motorists on the road at the time, or local people? If not, was I selected in some way? How

could I find out'?

- Why had the green light started to flash as I looked back at it? Was it a signal? Was it telling me that it was aware of my curiosity towards it?
- Why did the electric's on my car fail? Was this anything to do with the "thing" or did the car have a mysterious electrical fault? It had been in the garage that day for a service and had functioned normally before and after the encounter. In fact the faulty side-light bulb was working properly afterwards.
- How did the car (and I) get from the end of the tree-covered part of the road to the farm gate? I was not in control of it and it had negotiated a right-angled bend in the road.
- Why had my car stopped? Was it under the control of that 'thing'? Were any other cars stopped?
- What caused the natural daylight to change to complete darkness where I could not even see the car in which I was sitting?
- Were those brilliant white flashing circles of light from above? If so, from where (or what) and why were there no beams'? Were they linked to the car stopping or the missing time'? If so, how and why'?
- Why was I not afraid during any of these strange happenings? Had I been conditioned in some way? And if so, when"?
- What was the yellow flashing light in the sky? Was it signalling 'Mission accomplished!'? If so, what was that mission?
- And the most intriguing question of all — What happened during the missing fifteen minutes — and why'?

In bed that night I tossed and turned. Sleep would not come. My mind turned over the possibilities and probabilities for the strange happenings of that day.

My hopes were high for a solution to it all but where to begin I did not know. I eventually fell asleep in a state of exhaustion, but before doing so I decided that I would have to tell as many people as possible about it to see if any of them could come up with a suggestion.

That at least would be a start and I could follow each step to see where it led. By no stretch of the imagination on that day could I possibly have realised what an interesting project it would turn out to be, and how from each suggestion would come a new experience which would open up a very different pathway along which I was to travel.

Each pathway at the start followed a different direction, then sometime later they would become entwined and I was to find that finally they culminated in a most wonderful experience.

### **Epilogue.**

A short time after her experience Mrs. Oakensen reported her sighting to BUFORA, who conducted a detailed investigation into this event.

In 1979 Mrs. Oakensen was hypnotically regressed, in order to determine what occurred during those missing 15 minutes. When hypnotised she recounted an encounter with greyish-silver "ghost-like shapes" which seemed to approach her. In the mid-1980's she developed an interest in Spiritual Healing and Spiritual Writing.

The text of this article is taken from Elsie Oakensen's book ;

### ***One Step Beyond.... A Personal UFO Abduction Experience.***

Regency Press 1995.

(reprinted with author's kind permission).

# LETTERS PAGE(S)..

*Elsie Oakensen's article "a letter to Ufology" (published in Issue 8 of the BUFORA BULLETIN) generated the following two replies;*

Sir,

Please let me respond to Elsie Oakensen's "Letter to Ufology". She claims that UFO researchers have not 'come up with a reason' for her sighting. This is not true. I came up with a reason, although no doubt she is unwilling to accept it. Apart from offering an explanation for the object she saw in the sky, I have also offered an explanation for the curious lights in darkness, albeit on a radio programme in which we both participated (she acknowledges this).

I claimed that the latter experience might be associated with the unusual headaches she experience that day (suggesting that she suffered a hallucination caused by some brain dysfunction); I did in fact mention both the pains she experienced beforehand and those afterwards and suggested that a medical examination might prove helpful. I note that the investigation has so far not concerned itself with medical hypotheses.

Elsie complains that my method of investigation is 'intimidating'. Yet we have neither met nor corresponded (I don't even know her address and she does not appear to know mine). I only had her own account, including that in her book, to go on. How can she be intimidated by comments made so remotely (I have not 'investigated' the case - it was not my responsibility)? Anyone who makes their UFO report public and even writes a book about it can hardly complain if someone offers an explanation in public.

Elsie asks to be put in touch with others world-wide who have 'approached such a 'mirage'...'. Is she sceptical that such sights

have not been seen by others? She only has to read any book on UFOs to see that she is not alone. And she only has to read my book to see that mirages can explain many of these reports. Whether or not my suggestion can actually explain her report remains to be seen. I have made a suggestion, but I still don't have enough detail to be sure.

Her book contained no illustrations: no maps, no diagrams, no pictures, not even an index! Perhaps the appointed investigators have this information. If so they have not published it. I look forward to you publishing it. The sketch of the object you have published is the first I have seen.

**Stuart Campbell,  
4 Dovecot Loan, Edinburgh EH14 2LT**

Sir,

Elsie Oakensen's 'A letter to Ufology' deserves a response as it appears that she is still disturbed over the events of 20 years ago, quite rightly.

Having read her detailed description of events and having myself a scientific and medical background with special knowledge of Chinese medicine I was alerted to her experience of 'tight bands' around her head. This is a classic sign of adrenaline surge, usually associated with an anxiety state as the 'fight or flight' system kicks in.

To the Chinese it is also often associated with a Chinese meal. In the west one hears it referred to as 'Chinese restaurant syndrome', when monosodium glutamate - a flavour-enhancer used as liberally by the Chinese over food as salt is in the west - and/or a high histamine' reaction due to highly seasoned foods induce similar effects to the adrenaline surge.

Within minutes of eating such foods one can begin to suffer symptoms as diverse as flushing, dizziness, light-headedness to syncope (fainting), feelings of unexplained anxiety with tight band which may become severe and lead to headache etc. Apart from an anxiety attack, the other well-known cause of such symptoms, suffered by thousands of women every day, is menopause.

I would suggest in Elise's case that the most obvious explanation for her strange experience after her Chinese meal is due to that combination; perhaps menopause complicated by the 'Chinese restaurant syndrome' effects which would have taken from 24 to 48 hours to gradually subside.

I accept that Elsie also believes she saw a strange object, lost time etc. and this may be the case, but to exclude the most obvious after-effects of a well-seasoned Chinese meal which tens of thousands of people experience every day does little justice to the overview of the events as she describes them.

Regards,

**John Heptonstall**

**Editors comment:** *I am sure Mrs. Oakensen has some very definite ideas concerning your suggested explanation, John, which I'm sure she will share with us in due course!!!*

Sir,

One of the main problems faced by Ufology is the media habit of tarring all Ufologists by the same brush, thus making all believers in little green men. I know this is a reason for much annoyance. But this is not helped when a Ufologist himself publicly does the same injustice to other fringe endeavours. Not all cults end new age ideals can be written off with 'Remember Jonestown.'

I take issue with your definition of Ufology as 'merely a mystery' prefixed by

anomalous aerial phenomena. Throughout history, human experience and science itself we are beginning to understand the role of consciousness on the outside world. Events - any event - is becoming to be understood in terms of an occurring phenomena only being ratified through virtue of human perception. This is not mere aerial Phenomena, but each phenomena merging with both psychology and sociology. throughout history phenomena has occurred and has led to a spiritual impulse.

As the UFO seems to offer insight onto this spiritual impulse it thus becomes a worthy area of study, not in a spiritual way (that is a belief), but in terms of how spirituality can be seen to emerge from the phenomenon. This is sociology, and if sociology could be a factor, then it must be taken into account.

I happen to agree with you over the fear of an out-of-control cult merging with some popular spiritual belief (whether UFOs or the Second coming) and attempting to bring about Armageddon by violent means. But the answer to this cannot be to ignore or marginalise all such cults and then cross our fingers.

Surely the answer is to try to understand the impulse so that we can perhaps take measures to educate so that the danger lessens. For instance, in the final analysis, Jonestown occurred because of the unsubtle and misguided interference of Leo Ryan; Waco happened because the Branch Davidian's were seen as ordinary terrorist-type threats. If these negotiators had known more about what was going on, tragedy could have been averted. And the same can be said for Aum Shinrikyo, Heaven's Gate and the Order of the Solar Temple.

Whether we like it or not, spirituality and its more ominous impulses exist. We cannot ignore it. Surely it is best to try to understand it?

best wishes,

**Anthony North.**

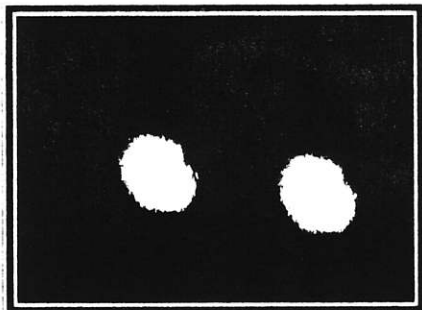
# INVESTIGATIONS DIARY SPECIAL

## THE LEEDS INCIDENT - Part 2 - JOHN P. HEPTONSALL

### Introduction.

*From 16.45 hrs to 18.30hrs on Monday, 2nd February 1998, a large number of widely dispersed independent observers from the West Yorkshire area observed 'two very bright soundless white lights moving very slowly West to East in close formation.*

*John Heptonstall concludes his detailed account of his investigation into this major sighting event (which commenced in Issue "8" of the BUFORA Bulletin).....*



were visible as a pair from the front and rear, but from the side or below each of the LITS could be seen to be "twinned", with one behind the other. Many heard a small/quiet "engine" sound as the lights passed overhead (described as "humming", or akin to a "turboprop" or "two-stroke" engine"). No-one saw any fixed body accompanying the lights;

the dark but clear sky meant it was virtually impossible to accurately deduce either their altitude or speed.

At least six witnesses associated a helicopter with the lights to the West of Leeds but not North or East. Several witnesses suggested that the lights hovered.

### Summary of known Facts Concerning the Leeds Incident:

The main points of this case can be summarised as follows:

1. Over 30 witnesses described very similar LITS (**Lights In The Sky**):

**a.** The majority of witnesses described observing unusually bright, white lights moving in careful formation, with the southernmost higher and behind the northernmost for much of the journey. These lights moved slowly at times - moving at perhaps between 30 and 60 knots - and were also seen "hovering" or turning slowly. They

**b.** One witness saw unusual lights as late as 30 minutes after the pair on video "left" the Leeds area travelling eastwards.

The witness said she saw them hovering over a school playing field in Middleton, moving at 'top speed' at intervals. These strobed/flushed, and disappeared rapidly unbeknown to the witness (who had turned away for a short time).

Another witness says they hovered over him in Leeds, with synchronous strobes turning to asynchronous as they slowly moved off northwards. An additional observer states they approached her position in Headingley from the south, moving on northwards where at least two other



witnesses followed their progress. This lady tells of the lights being a few hundred feet above her, dancing up and down in unison during their approach to her location. Finally, a male observer tells how the lights resembled a **twinned pair** as they crossed over his position to the North of the Headingley witness. These lights were heading Northwards and not due East, where "K.M.'s" video recorded the progress of the two LITS.

c. A lady in Baildon tells of seeing a brightly-lit single coloured object on the morning of the 2nd February 1998, by trees towards Thackley to the south of her location. Coincidentally, she was reminded of this strange sighting after seeing the 'Look North' programme on the "Leeds Lights". This form disappeared as she turned momentarily. This said, her account does **not** bear sufficient similarity to equate it with the main body of reports.

d. A lady and her partner were driving over the Pennines in the opposite direction to that of the West Yorkshire sightings at about 18.00 hrs when they saw a similar pair of lights on the moors. These appeared to follow them yet remained static in the sky, even as they drove along the descent towards Rochdale. Some 20 minutes later, a helicopter was seen to *cross* between the lights.

## Summary

We appear to have at least **two**, and possibly **three**, pairs of very bright LITS seen between the hours of 16.45 and 18.30 hrs in the West Yorkshire area which acted strangely. They do not seem to have been associated with a solid body of any description but apparently had some small engine facility for flight.

One pair followed the route which led them to be videoed by "K.M" and "D.D"; these lights were associated with a helicopter over Greetland, Cleckheaton, Morley and Gelderd Road near Leeds. A second pair may have moved from the south west of Leeds in a

northwards direction over Headingley and Moortown. This last pair moved from East to West over the Pennines, having been seen from Brighouse and then over the moors towards Rochdale (and were also associated with a helicopter).

***The lights moving West to East over Leeds appear to have held a high altitude, perhaps 5,000 to 8,000 feet - therefore above LBA inbound flight airway - crossing perpendicular to the inbound flight path. They crossed Leeds between about 17.30 to 17.50 hrs and were associated with a helicopter.***

***The lights moving from the South West seem to have hovered, may have moved at high speed and 'danced' along their path, and could have been as low as 200 to 600 feet in altitude. These crossed Leeds between 17.50 hrs and 18.15 hrs.***

***The lights seen moving Westwards over the Pennines crossed there at about 18.00 hrs and were associated with a helicopter.***

This summary depends on the reports from all witnesses being fairly accurate! I have excluded the morning sighting from Baildon as the description and number of lights is **not** consistent with all other descriptions and it is not possible to align this with the remainder. That is not to say that it may not have been some preview of the evenings display, merely that it cannot be directly linked at this stage.

It may be that the lights travelling from West to East, when arriving over City Square/ Quarry House (due to altitude ground-based witnesses may have seen them as being overhead in both cases) turned more northwards for a time.

When they were over the northern part of the Leeds Ring Road they again turned to a more Easterly route, taking them over towards York beyond "K.M.'s" location. This would fit in with various descriptions given by witnesses located in and around the Centre of Leeds and to the North of Leeds City

Centre. In this case only one pair of twinned lights would be required to fulfil the sighting data.

If we take the mean description and timings (and having video coverage of Leeds from Whinmoor from about 17.30 hrs-17.50 hrs), only one pair of LITS may have existed over Leeds at the times stated. The lady in Headingley did state timings from about 17.30 hrs, confirmed as possible by others along that route, so it is possible that video coverage was unable to capture these objects before they moved northwards out of view.

Also, the altitude is described as hundreds of feet rather than thousands and this may have been below the video camera mounting depression range. The lady in Middleton speaks of her lights exhibiting top speed/hover activity from about 17.50 hrs to 18.15 hrs and therefore outside of "K.M"'s video coverage. She did not see which direction they left. No-one confirms these times. The lights returning over the Pennines have no other confirmation other than the couple who state seeing them.

The possibility of **more than two pairs of similar LITS** is enhanced when one considers what was seen in Bloomington, Indiana, USA only a few hours earlier by Mr. "TL" and friend. They followed and observed, for several hours late at night, numerous balls of light interacting with jet aircraft over Bloomington. Several maintained "hover" positions over that populace for more than one hour the same evening. These LITS were described in much the same way as the Leeds LITS; some paired, twinkling like stars, close twinned, very bright white slow moving lights.

In a separate incident a private pilot flying over Dallas, USA, at 18.40 hrs on the 30th January, 1998 reported seeing two very bright, slow moving, lights from his aircraft which he was unable to explain. Being less than two days before the Leeds sighting, it would have been about 01.40 hrs in the UK on the 1st February at that time, and of vaguely similar description, lending some

additional thought to the whole matter. However it is very likely that this sighting is unrelated.

Did the U.K experience the same phenomenon, only a few hours before, which Bloomington, Indiana saw on the night of 2nd February 1998? They are about 6 hours behind us, give or take BST. Were the military of our two countries preparing (perhaps for Gulf deployment) some as yet-undefined exotic "kit" destined for the skies of Iraq?

In this case silence from government departments (and other bodies) would be quite likely.....

Coincidentally, the UK media recently announced that the Government have taken steps to protect us from possible introduction into the UK of anthrax or other biological warfare materials by covert Iraqi agents through our ports; are these not equally likely to be distributed by air?

Would it not increase public anxiety of such an occurrence if the Gulf situation deteriorated when our Government and Armed Services remain silent on the UFO event. Who go so far as to deny knowledge of any UFO activity, with inane suggestions that the explanation of 'aircraft preparing to land at LBA' should be considered, when clearly there is little evidence to support that view and much to discredit that explanation?

A simple response, i.e.; ***"we have investigated the phenomenon, and are aware of the explanation; the objects were under British control and further information is restricted in the name of National Security"*** (or words to that effect) would have been suffice to allay public fear and concern.

It would have illustrated that, not only were those tasked to protect us equal to their job, but that they also felt a responsibility to the public they serve to respond with integrity to areas of public concern. Without such a mature response the public are left with

speculation about E.T's, germ-warfare, inadequacy of national defence institutions and a feeling that arrogance and aloofness prevails in public service (the like of which has been demonstrated throughout the sorry BSE saga).

## Official Comments....

1. **RAF Fylingdales**, our early warning system supposed to defend us against all manner of airborne threats, especially ICBMs and the like, tells us that:

***"The enquiry probably describes an aircraft of some description, fixed wing or helicopter under visual flight rules due to lighting and not ATC control. Satellites are ruled out and the radar ignores all ground returns and objects flying 'slowly'-any aircraft which might appear above the radar's horizon would therefore be lost in the ground returns***

***Civilian ATC and military air radars would have been monitoring airspace over Leeds but would have ignored any aircraft not under positive control, unless it posed a possible impact hazard on any aircraft under positive control, then they would have turned their own aircraft away."***

2. **RAF Linton-on-Ouse** tells us that its radar coverage of the area and military flight schedules offer no explanation; their speculation is that what was seen was a civilian aircraft, possibly routing in LBA that had been positioning for landing when viewed by the witnesses. On being asked whether they had any Provosts or Tucanos out at that time with trainees the answer was affirmative, but that they are unlikely to have impinged on LBA airspace without prior warning.

3. **Andy Rackham, Airport Services Manager, LBA** tells us that;

***"They have not received any official report on the sighting. No aircraft or ATC staff reported anything out of the ordinary and their radar did not indicate any concerns; they are unable to assist any further"***.

4. **Manchester Airport** (via Steven Mera) tells us they had nothing to offer from radar returns. However, they had taken reports from the public, which were passed onto RAF Uxbridge as procedure demands.

5. **The Air Support Unit, West Yorkshire Police**, tells us that neither the West Yorks nor South Yorks Police helicopters were flying between 12.15 hrs and 19.45 hrs on the 2nd February 1998. They are aware that the military overfly Leeds air space to the North Sea decompression chambers at intervals and are not alerted to these; those flights can take place at below 1,000 feet.

6. A friend who has **long experience piloting private aircraft** viewed K.M's film and could not explain the light configuration in terms of aircraft. He based this assessment on the following;

(a) Navigation lights could not be seen.

(b) The brightness of the visible lights would possibly destroy a pilot's night vision - thus such bright lights would only be used for landing purposes.

(c) They looked like no craft he has experience of, and therefore could not be readily described as "aircraft lights".

I did not contact either **the MOD or West Drayton ATC** as I do not expect any more worthwhile response than those already mentioned above (especially from the MOD who are notoriously bland in response to such questions). I await responses from military units I feel could answer the questions posed.

## Identification of the LITS

There are a number of possible explanations for the Leeds LITS:-

**1. Light Aircraft.** This would have to be turboprop/propeller driven (according to the descriptions), but they neither hover silently, fly this slowly - probably stalling below about 70 knots - or avoid radar. Furthermore, the "UFO(s)" appeared to have no standard navigation lights, and the brightness of these lights are very likely to have seriously impaired a pilot's night vision. Only a possibility if it was a military aircraft with anti-radar, low engine noise capability.  
**Low probability.**

**2. Helicopters.** They can hover and have low noise capability if so specially constructed (i.e. the "Quiet One"). However, the configuration of the mystery lights were not normal in comparison to those normally borne by helicopters, being so bright as to probably interfere with a pilot's night vision. However, a helicopter **was** seen nearby the two LITS in some instances.

**Medium probability.**

(N.B. France has a *helicopter UAV* but I have no information on this at present).

**3. Airships.** They can hover and hold formation, but perhaps not so close and at same speed. The tight turn(s) exhibited by these lights - as well as their configuration and formation - are also **untypical** of airships.  
**Unlikely.**

**4. Microlights.** Their light powerplants emit humming/"small engine" sounds. Microlights can also **appear** to "hover", due to their comparative low speeds. They could also fly in close formation, but are unlikely to maintain this in the dark over such great distances.

If these LITS **were** Microlights, they should neither have crossed the Leeds flightpath, nor fly so high over a built-up area (especially at night). Both acts are illegal under current flight regulations. Furthermore, the pilots would have jeopardised their night vision -

and compromised themselves with the aviation authorities - with such bright lights.  
**Unlikely.**

**5. Celestial objects-** There were no celestial objects visible at the time likely to have generated the majority of sightings (which involved movements not possible by celestial objects). Jupiter was too low over the horizon and Sirius was also quite low in the southern sky. Saturn was higher in the southern sky and may have been the 'evening star' the lady in Hipperholm described as she watched the LITS track over Scammonden.  
**Highly unlikely.**

**6. Satellite/Space Station-** Only MIR with Kvant could almost rival the reported brightness of the LITS, but perhaps not - in actuality - the brightness most witnesses described, nor the movement or brightness both videos show with the accompanying strobe effect. More importantly, they were **not** available for viewing in our skies at that time! MIR was at about 4.5 degrees elevation in the South moving approximately eastwards, and therefore out of view at the times in question.  
**Not Possible.**

**7. RPV/UAV- remotely piloted and unmanned aerial craft** can hover via rotor systems, can sport light configurations which are unconventional, and are under military control and outside the remit of public ATCs. They can fly at night and require no "pilot(s)", hence the brightness of the lights would **not** compromise the night-vision of the operators. Furthermore, the bright lights would - theoretically - provide a test/follow/ tracking capability by the controlling vehicle/aircraft/ helicopter.

RPV's/UAV's are usually driven by "small engine" powerplants with propellers (which can be two-stroke). They can also move very slowly, can perform tight turns and perform fast motions as required. They can be computer-guided, and have infra-red and thermal imaging systems. They can climb to several thousands of feet, and are usually relatively small (and hence may not be resolved easily by a camera when flying at

at several thousand feet in dark skies). RPV's/UAV's can also be equipped with exotic radar and camera/visual avoidance systems.

The types of RPV's/UAV's considered in this instance are those believed to be used by the UK military; i.e. the "*Phoenix*", "*Sarab*", "*Raven*", "*Eagle Eye*", "*Spectre*", "*Cypher*" and the "*Freewing Scorpion*".

About 70 such systems are currently in use or under development throughout Europe.  
**Highly Likely.**

**8. Extra-terrestrial or other Exotic objects.** These cannot be ruled out. Any specification could be speculated on, but we need to rule out the terrestrial probabilities first! These have **not** been exhausted and none of the sighting-descriptions directly suggests such an exotic explanation. No "aliens" were seen, there were no paranormal dimensions to this event and no physical-law contravention's were noted. Indeed the LITS produced a sound comparable to a 'two stroke engine/turboprop'; in essence **very** terrestrial!

**Cannot be ruled out.**

***Of all these options, Category "7" best fits the descriptions given, and is hence most likely to have caused the various February 1998 Leeds sightings.***

In the light of this, let us look in more detail at the various RPV's which may have been responsible;

**The Phoenix** (made by GEC-Marconi) has been under Royal Artillery control for a couple of years and would make a good candidate for our 'UFOs'. It is an all-weather, day or night real-time surveillance and target acquisition system. It is datalinked to a ground station, which in-turn transmits gathered information direct to Artillery Command posts.

The Phoenix (made from kevlar, glass fibre, carbon reinforced plastic and Nomex

honeycomb) has a two stroke engine, and can be controlled in pairs from the same location. It works to a radius of about 50 Kms and can reach a maximum altitude of 9,000 feet. Wing-span is 5.5m, and max. launch weight is 177 Kgms. Although this kit cost a lot of money, it has been deemed virtually obsolete as it took far too long to develop. However, that may have been a good reason (without a better alternative) to haul them out of storage for impending 'Gulf use, to test them in an 'urban' setting.

Such a test would determine if they can be handled consistently, and also what kind of results are possible with them. The public reaction to seeing them would also allow the military to evaluate how an enemy populace may view them tracking silently across their skies at night. Were Leeds folk perhaps the unwitting pawns in this regards??

**The Freewing Scorpion** is currently involved in the USA flight test program; the results of the initial tests of smaller-scale versions of the "Scorpion" previously built and tested by Scaled are promising.

**The Eagle-Eye** is also another possible RPV candidate, as the two videos suggest a tilt on the twinned lights, which altered from "L.N"'s recording minutes before "K.M"'s (the former tilt being top right to bottom left and the latter top left to bottom right). Tilt-wing capacity could also explain this phenomenon, if twin lights were mounted on the central tilting fuselage. The rotors provide an easy conversion from small light-aircraft propulsion to a hovering heli-type of propulsion.

New generations of UAV are being developed by DERA and AVPRO designed to be operational in the next decade; these will supersede the already almost obsolete Phoenix.

***"K.M" and "L.N" may have inadvertently caught one pair on camera that evening.***

It is known that the RAF had an exercise ongoing; "**Tactical Leadership Training 1/98**" organised by the Tactical Division of

the Air Warfare Centre. This saw around 40 aircraft take part mostly operating from RAF Leuchars in Scotland, and involved night-flying over the UK during the first two weeks of February. DERA at Boscombe Down also provided aircraft. RAF Chinook and Puma helicopters were engaged to better simulate the modern battlefield, thus providing the reality of 'slow-movers' amongst the various (faster) jet activity.

On the evening of **2nd February 1998** two witnesses spent several hours observing numerous very bright white lights appearing over Bloomington and the surrounding area. These lights answered closely to the descriptions given by our UK witnesses throughout Yorkshire. Such a coincidence must give rise to some consideration that the lights may have had a similar origin. The USA witnesses were aware of several (probably military) jets in attendance with these lights.

## Conclusion

***The most obvious conclusion has to be that the February 2nd 1998 lights seen over Leeds (and the surrounding area) were some form of military hardware, requiring the attendance of jets or helicopters perhaps for tracking or manoeuvring. It also seems possible that military exercises, using similar apparatus, were taking place simultaneously in the UK and North America.***

Another, more "exotic" conclusion is that both countries experienced encounters with LITS of an unidentifiable nature which were under close scrutiny from both the USAF/ military establishments and our own similar groups.

Nonetheless, I feel it is most likely that the LITS seen were **at least one pair of well-lit RPV/UAV craft**; the lights providing tracking ability which was maintained by the unidentified helicopter/s (and, in the USA, by military jets).

I suspect that LBA Air Services Management know more than they are saying - or perhaps are unable to say - and may have been advised that evening to redirect one to three normal flights from the 32 or 28 inbound flight path to allow for the movement by these unusual objects across LBA airspace. It is possible that they were kept largely in the dark, especially if the military ATC was controlling a restricted operation or exercise which involved covert intrusion into the public arena in preparation for 'Gulf duties'.

The objects may have returned across the Pennines, perhaps traversing the Leeds area again without lights, only to switch them on once over the Pennines and under helicopter visual tracking. They may possibly have been collected on the Pennines from parachute or other mechanism. Alternatively, Church Fenton airfield was open that evening and may have provided a convenient destination for collection of the pair of objects by the Unit/s responsible.

I think that the speculation of ET involvement at such an early stage via the media was unwise. It may have led to unwarranted anxiety amongst the local populace, in that ET spaceships can invade UK and Leeds airspace with impunity.

Reactions from all contacted Government and Service centres expected to have some knowledge of illegal entries into British airspace have been disappointing. The inane suggestions made by some of those departments - despite much evidence having been collated by myself and others - do little to promote confidence in our National Defence Institutions.

One hopes that their response is tempered by National Security restrictions as opposed to incompetence. If the latter were the case, one hopes that Saddam Hussein and the like are not aware of the possible loopholes in our public defences!



# CASE CLOSED SPECIAL: A Guide To IFOs

## ROBERT MOORE.



### The Why And What of IFOs

It has long been accepted within Ufology that the vast majority of "UFO" reports are, in actuality, misperceptions of natural stimuli. However, many non-Ufologists find this concept difficult to accept. How can this be, when (in most cases) these reports are made by normal members of the public, with average - often above-average - levels of intelligence and education? What of sightings where witnesses state, adamantly, that **"they knew what they saw"**? What of sightings - evaluated as IFOs by UFO researchers - which involve "trained observers" such as pilots and policemen? And, anyhow, wasn't all this IFO stuff made up by the U.S.A.F in the 1950's, to "cover up" the existence of UFOs?

Many of these popular views regarding IFOs are themselves misconceptions! To begin with, the term "UFO" invokes in many the image of an exotic disc-shaped object, bedecked with a dome, aerials, portholes and running-lights. It is therefore unsurprising that many can only conceive of them having an extraordinary - even extraterrestrial - origin!

In reality, few witnesses claim observations of such exotic forms; with about 70% of unevaluated "UFO" reports relating only to nocturnal sightings of distant pin-points of light, blobs, squiggles and other vague luminous shapes. This in itself does not rule out an exotic origin for these sightings - but **does** increase the likelihood of such "UFO" events having an mundane cause.

It should also never be forgotten that the term "UFO" merely equates to "Unidentified Flying Object". It does **not** (in itself) guarantee an exotic origin for a given report, only that those who saw the "UFO" were unable to identify it.

A person more knowledgeable in the appearance of astronomical, aviatational or meteorological phenomena could very well easily recognise what was actually observed in that particular instance.

And, unfortunately, many such "UFO" reports **do** indeed have down-to-earth explanations. On detailed examination, viable rational solutions are found for approximately 85-95% of all reported "UFO" sightings. This high degree of misperception is factual - rather than mere official propaganda - as approximately the same IFO/UFO ratio appears both in official statistics and figures compiled by UFO researchers.

But why is this the case? Well, it is all **too** easy for an observer to be confronted with confusing perceptual information. Mundane objects can be observed at unfamiliar angles, or under unusual environmental conditions. Either (or both) of these situations can easily endow a mundane object with strange - but false- attributes.

Explainable "UFO" sightings are termed **I.F.O's (Identified Flying Objects)**. The number of mundane phenomena able to generate false UFO reports is vast. In the mid-1970's it was estimated that there were around 150 separate natural and man-made objects capable of generating spurious "UFO" events(1). However - fortunately for UFO researchers - around 65% of all IFO sightings are instigated by only **six** different kinds of natural stimuli. The remaining 35% (or so) are generated by a wide variety of other prosaic phenomena.

It should be noted that most IFO events relate to phenomena more clearly seen - or only visible - at night. The number of such natural stimuli are both great and diverse;

ranging from aircraft lights, satellites, bolide meteors to stars and planets. In addition to this, the nocturnal environment itself is more conducive to generating IFO effects. Under these conditions the human perceptual system has to process visual stimuli under less- than-perfect circumstances. With poor light and background environmental details obscured by the cloak of night, it is virtually inevitable that natural stimuli will be misconstrued under such visually-treacherous conditions!

Another important fact to remember is that there are - as far as UFO events are concerned - **no** "trained observers". In ufology the myth of the "infallible" trained observer is a long-entrenched one, often defended with zeal by UFO researchers. The fallacy of this concept can be objectively demonstrated by any collection of reliable IFO statistics. For example, the famous American UFO study conducted by Allan Hendry during the late 1970's discovered that 75% of all "UFO" reports made by Pilots were actually IFOs. This figure ran at 94% in regards to reports made by Law Enforcement officials. Compare this with the approximately 87-88% IFO reporting rate by Clerical and Manual workers in that same study (2).

Although - as the figures show - aircraft pilots **are** indeed more familiar than most to natural aerial manifestations, it is also equally clear that they **can** be mislead (and quite often) by IFO effects. Although an individual well versed in the appearance of (say) astronomical phenomena **will** be aware of the appearance of stars and planets, they will be **less** familiar with IFO effects involving aircraft and birds. The reverse goes for aircraft pilots! In regards to police officers, although they are trained to be **accurate** and meticulous observers, they are **not** trained to recognise astronomical and aviaional stimuli! Hence their high IFO recognition-"failure" rate; which is also attributable to them often being placed in situations which can easily "generate" a UFO report (i.e. working late at night, being called out to "deal" with a UFO sighting made by the public, and so on).

Let us now examine the most common forms of natural stimuli which appear time and again in countless IFO reports....

#### **Aircraft and Helicopters.**

A large percentage of "IFO" reports involve aeroplanes and helicopters. Of these, many relate to nocturnal sightings of an aircraft's running-lights. Depending on it's angle in relation to a witness, anything from one to four (or more) lights may be observed. Aircraft lighting follows strict rules laid down by the Civil Aviation Authority (C.A.A). By international regulation, an aircraft must bare a **white** light on it's **tail**, a **green** and **red** light on it's **left & right wings** respectively, and have two **red** flashing lights on it's **fuselage**. Alternatively, bright **white strobe lights** may be placed on the **wings** and **Tail**, in substitution of the above-mentioned lumination. All aircraft are also equipped with extremely bright forward-facing **white landing lights**. These may be switched on long before touchdown in misty, nocturnal conditions. In any event they can be seen from a considerable distance.

An observer's mind is inclined to play "dot-to-dot" with these various running-light configurations, resulting in a wide diversity of weird and wonderful (but illusory) forms.

Over the past decade **advertising airships** have become a fairly common sight in the skies of the United Kingdom. These can carry an array of computer-controlled lights attached to a metal grid, positioned on each side of the airship's gasbag. When activated, it acts like a luminated bill-board; the lights displaying a repeating sequence of advertising messages. If the airship is close to an observer (and the message is clearly visible) no phantom "UFO" sightings results. However, if viewed from an unusual angle it can present a confusing, chaotic pattern of lights to the unaware observer. If the advertising sign is suddenly turned off, it can create the illusion of a "UFO" which appears to mysteriously vanish. In any event, it is common for the airship's gasbag to be "floodlit"; a sight sufficiently "flying saucer"-like in itself to generate "UFO" reports! In the



light aircraft are commonly used for this activity. In UFO circles they became notorious due to the Hendry study, which ascertained they generated around 22% of all spurious "Nocturnal Light" type reports (3).

Another type of aircraft using non-standard lighting configurations are **military in-flight refuelling tankers**. They can utilise a variety of body illumination; from an array of many white lights located on their wings and fuselage, to a few extra non-standard lights on it's wings, body and around the refuelling "probe". Furthermore, the lights of any aircraft trailing behind the tanker can also look mysterious. This can either create the illusion of a gigantic dark-bodied "UFO" or of a group of "flying saucers" moving in formation. Air-to-air refuelling operations usually occur at high altitudes; the considerable distance involved effectively "muffling" any engine-noise.

Even aircraft observed in daylight can occasionally generate IFO events. If directly approaching an observer, a plane can assume the appearance of a "humped" disc or - if viewed sideways-on during a sunny day - a shiny disc/cigar (it's wings obscured by distance, angle and the sun's glare).

### Stars & Planets.

False UFO sightings based on very bright stars or planets are also very common; in fact one of the "top three" causes of IFO events! Planets tend to be mistaken more often as "UFO's" than stars because of their greater brilliance. The majority of astronomically-based sightings relate to stationary forms resembling a single pin-point of light (or a vague oval, disc or triangle), usually visible for ten minutes or more. **Venus** causes the majority of planetary-based IFOs, followed by **Mars**, **Jupiter** and **Saturn**. In the U.K, most star-related IFO events are generated by **Sirius**, with **Arcturus**, **Vega** & **Capella** mainly responsible for the remainder.

Stars and planets are subject to many adverse perceptual & atmospheric effects. Astronomical bodies - especially those near the horizon - may repeatedly and rapidly

"flash" a sequence of different spectral colours (usually red, green and blue). These stellar prismatic performances are induced by atmospheric turbulence.

Otherwise unnoticeable minor involuntary eyeball movements become starkly apparent on viewing a bright light against a dark, featureless background. This phenomena (termed the "**Autokenesis effect**") crops up in "UFO" reports, when a bright stellar body is viewed against a dark, virtually featureless expanse of night sky. This causes the body concerned to exhibit illusory - but nonetheless realistic-looking - erratic darting "motions" confined to a small area of sky.

An additional illusory effect (termed "**Lateral Motion**") can result if an observer views a stellar body while in a moving vehicle. Under these circumstances, the star or planet concerned will appear to travel in the same direction as the vehicle, stopping and starting whenever that vehicle does.

### Bolides & Satellite Re-Entries.

A sizeable number of IFO incidents relate to **Bolides**; exceptionally bright meteors usually observed at night. Bolides are often perceived possess a spherical shape, or resemble a "cigar" or "disc" with "window lights". The latter illusion - termed the "**Airship Effect**" - is caused by sections of the bolide fracturing off during "flight", which then follows the same trajectory as the originating "parent" mass. In any case, a bolide is normally associated with a long, incandescent trail. Bolides follow continuous straight or curved trajectories, and may change colour in flight (as it's body is heated by atmospheric friction). It's demise can be spectacular - often exploding violently with a loud bang. Bolides normally have a duration of 10 seconds or less, but may be visible for anything up to 30 seconds on some rare occasions .

Since 1957, an increasing number of events involve observations of man-made material from space (such as expended rocket-booster tanks or old satellites) re-

entering the atmosphere. Their appearance and attributes are identical to that of Bolides, although they move slower and are visible for around two minutes.

### Laser Light Displays

Following their entry into widespread use during the early 1980s, **laser-light displays** have now become a major source of false "UFO" reports. Those unaware of their actual nature describe observing a multitude of smoky white lights, performing swift, repeating rhythmic motions; i.e. circling, meeting at a single point and then shooting away, etc. Alternatively, they can be seen as a "dark spinning disc" with white lights "running around its edge", or simply a rotating "ring" composed of many lights. Laser-light displays can be seen from a considerable distance if the prevailing cloud-base is fairly high(4).

### Weather Balloons

The majority of incidents involving misperceived weather balloons occur during the day - being responsible for around almost half of all spurious daylight "UFO" events. Most of these incidents do not involve the small, relatively common "radiosonde", but very large balloons launched to accumulate upper atmospheric data. The radiosonde bursts within an hour or so of launch, but these larger research balloons can endure for many weeks, and may travel a great distance during that time.

Balloons usually manifest as a small, distant slow-moving object with a pin-point, spherical, tear drop, triangular or discoid form. Their colour is dependant on the prevalent lighting conditions; white or silvery on a sunny day, greyish when overcast. If seen at around sunset a balloon can be seen to slowly change colour, from white to red. This is due to the sun's light being shifted to the red end of the spectrum via refraction as it sets, which the balloon subsequently reflects. A balloon usually drifts with the wind, but if caught in a thermal (a rising updraft of air), it can shoot upwards or suddenly change direction. They can also move in a direction opposite to ground winds if at a sufficiently high altitude to "coast" on the jet-stream.

## Satellites

Orbiting hundreds of miles above our planet are a host of man-made satellites, used for tasks diverse as telecommunications, scientific experimentation and espionage! Satellites can be seen by earth-based observers due to sunlight reflected from their shiny bodies (which, because of their very high altitude, are luminated even at night). The brighter ones are quite conspicuous. They appear to the naked eye as a single, distant, whitish pin-point of light, traversing along a swift, continuous arch-like path. It may vanish suddenly near the horizon - caused by the satellite becoming eclipsed by the earth's shadow. They can also appear to follow a zigzag path, an illusion (again) induced by autokenesis. If almost or exactly overhead a satellite may appear to be stationary for a few seconds.

IFO reports generated by satellite observations have become rarer in recent times (possibly due to encroaching "light pollution" rendering satellites difficult to observe in an urban environment). This may well change due to the "belt" of **Iridium** satellites now in orbit around the earth, which are capable of emitting very bright flashes of light. Over the past two decades the MIR space-station has been a noticeable sight over British skies; the International Space-Station (currently under construction) will also inevitably attract the attention of witnesses during the 21st century.

The remaining percentage of IFO events are generated by a diverse collection of natural and man-made stimuli, hoaxes & hallucinations. I hope to cover these in a future edition of **Case Closed**.

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### References:

- (1): *UFO Investigation*. BUFORA 1979 (Appendix "11").
- (2): *The UFO Handbook* Hendry, Allan . Sphere 1980. (Pp. 102).
- (3): *Ibid.* (Pp. 31-34 & 91-92).
- (4): "Swirling rings in East Anglia"  
Robert Bull (BUFORA BULLETIN No. 4).

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The Postal Training Course (PTC) is compulsory for members requesting to become an investigator for BUFORA. Enquiries pertaining to the Postal Training Course should be addressed to :

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Phone (01782)-522620.  
Email: spibufora@aol.com.uk

## PRIMEBASE PROJECT.

Robert Moore.

The **Primebase Project** is an attempt by myself to catalogue all possible "true UFO" (or "prime") reports originating from the United Kingdom.

This ongoing project was instigated in September 1998. To date (February 1999) around 860 "prime" cases have been documented. The case-data it comprises of comes from a variety of sources; group-journals, magazines, books and detailed case-studies. The emphasis is on reports that are seeming inexplicable. It's aim is to attempt to present a filtered sample of "true UFO" UK sighting reports. All forms of "unknowns are featured, from UAP's to "exotics"

It is hoped that **PRIMEBASE** will give a concise picture of past British UFO activity. It will hopefully answer at least some of the questions which UFO researchers have asked for decades in regards to UK UFO reports. Fuller details on **PRIMEBASE** will be given in a future edition of **BUFORA BULLETIN**.

If anyone knows of any outstanding U.K UFO events which they feel should be included in **PRIMEBASE**, please contact me (via the **BUFORA BULLETIN** editorial address).

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**THE BUFORA WEBSITE**

can be accessed at;

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# BUFORA EVENTS CALENDAR:

All the following BUFORA events to be held at the University Of Westminster;  
35 Marylebone Road, Central London. NW1 5LS, (unless otherwise stated).

- 6th Feb 1999 Video Afternoon Robin Lindsey
- 6th Mar 1999 "The Motifs of Abduction" John Spencer
- 10th Apr 1999 Investigating UFOs Gloria Dixon
- 1st May 1999 Crop Circles Brian James

Admission price for BUFORA's lectures is £1.50 (members) or £3.50 (non-members). A fuller programme of BUFORA events for 1999-2000 will be submitted to our members in due course.

## AGM NOTICE

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BUFORA LTD; Sat. 10th April, 1999.

The TWENTY-FOURTH Annual General Meeting of BUFORA Ltd. will be held at the UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER, 35 MARYLEBONE ROAD, LONDON, NW1 in the LECTURE THEATRE at 2.00pm on SATURDAY 10th APRIL 1999 to receive the Chairman's Report, the Report of the Council of Management, the Accounts of the Treasurer, and to appoint the Auditor according to the Articles of the Association.

Signed on behalf of the Council of Management  
S.J.Gamble, Chairman. 28th November 1998.

#### NOTE:

Please note that a Member entitled to attend and vote at this meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy who need not be a member of the Company to attend and vote in his or her stead. Instruments of proxy must be lodged at the Company's registered address, 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 9ST, not less than forty-eight hours before the time appointed for the meeting.

Members wishing to nominate persons for election to the Council of Management shall give to the Secretary such nominations in writing at the registered address, signed by the person proposed, stating their willingness to be elected, not less than four, nor more than twenty-eight clear days before the time appointed for the meeting in accordance with Section 52 of the Articles of Association. Nominations must show clearly the name of both the proposer and seconder. Whilst visitors are welcome to attend the following lecture, only members of the Association in good standing and accredited proxies may attend and vote at the AGM! Only members in good standing may nominate or be nominated as members of the Council of Management or propose resolutions. Please bring membership cards as this will speed checking against the current membership list.