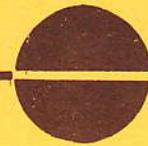


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BULLETIN

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British UFO Research Association

May 1986 No. 21

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THE BRITISH UFO RESEARCH ASSOCIATION BUFORA LTD (by guarantee)
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AIMS 1. To encourage, promote and conduct unbiased scientific research of unidentified flying objects (UFO) phenomena throughout the United Kingdom.
2. To collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to unidentified flying objects (UFOs).
3. To co-ordinate UFO research throughout the United Kingdom and to co-operate with others engaged in such research throughout the world.

MEMBERSHIP Membership is open to all who support the aims of the Association and whose application is approved by the Executive Committee. Application forms/information can be obtained from any Association officer.

MAY, 1986

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OBITUARY

Dr. J. ALLEN HYNEK
1910-1986

BUFORA's Council have learned with great regret of the death of Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the Founder and Scientific Director of CUFOS, the Centre for UFO Studies and, until March of this year Editor of the INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER. Dr. Hynek, who was a few days away from his 76th birthday was regarded as the leading authority in the field of ufology and was widely respected all over the world for his indefatigable work in writing and lecturing on the subject.

Allen Hynek, who was of Czechoslovakian descent was born in Chicago, Illinois on May 1st, 1910 and attended the University of Chicago where he received his BS in 1931 and his PhD in astrophysics four years later. In 1934 he became Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago Yerkes Observatory and over the next 30 years he held the following major posts: Instructor in Physics and Astronomy, Ohio State University, 1935-1941; Astronomer to Ohio State's Perkins Observatory, 1935 to 1956; Assistant Professor, Physics and Astronomy, Ohio State University, 1941-45; Supervisor of Technical Reports, Applied Physical Laboratory, Johns Hopkins University, 1942-1946; Associate Professor of Physics and Astronomy, Ohio State's University, 1946-1950, and Professor of Astronomy 1950-1953, Visiting Lecturer, Harvard University, 1956-1960; Chief of the Section of Upper Atmosphere Studies and Satellite Tracking and Associate Director of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, 1956-1960; and Chairman of the Department of Astronomy and Director of Dearborn Observatory, Northwestern University, Illinois 1960-1975.

His involvement with UFOs began in 1948 when he was appointed astronomical consultant to the USAF on their Blue Book Project an appointment which lasted until Blue Book was closed in 1968. Initially Dr Hynek was sceptical about UFOs, but in 1966, having issued his famous (or infamous) swamp gas explanation for two of a number of sightings in Michigan his views changed. The media misrepresented his findings in this case and made it appear that his 'solution' applied to all the sightings rather than a selected number. In the years which followed he became more interested in the ETH idea and came to the conclusion that a much greater effort should be made by scientists to examine the phenomenon in depth. After Blue Book was wound up he became very critical of the USAF's role in the project and its method of investigation. In 1973 he founded CUFOS and two years later became a full time ufologist. His belief was that the solution to the mystery would provide a vast, and totally unexpected quantum leap in human knowledge and understanding.

Dr Hynek was the first speaker to present testimony to the USA's House Science and Astronautics Committee Hearings during in 1968, and later became advisor on Steven Spielberg's film 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind.' In 1978 he spoke to a United Nations meeting on a proposed establishment of a department to conduct and co-ordinate research into UFOs and associated phenomena.

He was a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, a member of the American Astronomical Society, the International Astronomical Union and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

He wrote numerous technical papers on astrophysics and was the author of several textbooks on UFOs, including THE UFO EXPERIENCE: A SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY published in 1972 and THE HYNEK UFO REPORT, 1977.

Dr Hynek had many close links with BUFORA having attended its first International Conference in 1979 and the one held at High Wycombe in August, 1983, where he presented his paper "A MODERN ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION: AN OVERVIEW" in which he called for a fresh viewpoint to study the phenomenon.

Council extends its sympathy to Mrs Hynek and his family in their loss, one which the world of ufology shares with them.

JENNY RANGLES writes: Since August, 1985, when I first learned of Dr. Hynek's fatal illness, I have dreaded every call from the USA. Whilst realistically those of us who knew him realised that the end must be close we all hoped that some miracle would save him. Allen Hynek was so important to the world of ufology that life without him is hard to contemplate.

When Ray Boeche called me on April 30th to say that Allen had died peacefully on the night of 27th-28th I was only thankful that the end had come mercifully fast.

Anyone who met Allen would instantly recall his remarkable vivaciousness. It underscored everything, and made it very hard to accept that he was 75 years old. Even in his final year, just months before the brain tumour struck, he had visited Hessdalen, the scene of so much recent UFO activity in Norway. In conditions many young ufologists would run a mile from (temperature perpetually - 25°C!) he showed his continued passion to discover the truth. He was hungry for the facts about the UFO phenomenon - the subject which had come to dominate his life. Once he was told by a journalist that he would probably not be remembered as an astronomer (of which he was one of America's finest) but as the man who legitimised UFOs. This was something he never feared. He was our greatest advocate. Our most honoured researcher. But he was one of us. Those things say it all about the man.

I met him several times, in Britain and the USA and sampled the good old fashioned hospitality which he and his wife Mimi (herself a most perceptive and knowledgeable UFO researcher) offered as a matter of course. He was a friendly man, not afraid to admit that he still did not know what was happening in this complicated subject of ours. Yet he knew that something exciting was going on, and that was what mattered. There was no purpose in sitting on the fence. It was important to him that his scientific peers listened. Many of the physicists, astronomers and other scientists who populate the UFO field owe their interest to Allen. He stimulated and catalysed. He teased them into feelings of guilt because he was prepared to tell it like it was. Yet never did he overstep the boundaries of the scientific discipline. He was the mould from which today's ufologists have all been forged. We should never forget the debt that is due.

Sometimes he was criticised. Why did he act as official consultant to the USAF for so long? Why did he not speak out about the things that he saw being covered up? He answered these charges simply and effectively. If he had made a fuss he would have been kicked out. He needed access to the data so that he could accumulate the evidence and use that later to alert others. He silenced all his critics in two quite marvellous ways.

When he left the post of government consultant he immediately brought the 'invisible college' out into the open. This was a team of scientists (including Jacques Vallee) who he had wooed quietly for some years. From this springboard came CUFOG. It was the first UFO group set up on scientific lines. Many of us have followed its lead. BUFORA is what it is today because we have tried to emulate the standards he set.

Another thing he did was immediately to sit down and write his definitive book - explaining all the things he had discovered in his 20 years as government watchdog. THE UFO EXPERIENCE is still one of the few truly classic works in the genre. It was an epic and will remain the yardstick by which others are judged.

His typical modesty (even naivety) is shown by his dealings with Steven Spielberg. It was he who convinced Allen that the film would be a serious, fictional look at UFOs and so impressed was Allen that he threw his lot behind the film of which he was chief consultant. He allowed the title CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND to be based on the classification scheme he adopted in THE UFO EXPERIENCE. He even filmed scenes and appeared in some shots, most of which were edited out. He does appear for a few seconds towards the end of the film as he advances, face aglow, to meet the aliens.

Allen was sued by his publishers who accused him of having sold the film rights of THE UFO EXPERIENCE without permission. Of course he had done no such thing in his opinion. His interest lay in the thought that the film might transform the UFO subject. It did just that in a way that he could never have anticipated - it defused interest and led to the virtual death of UFO interest. This change can be traced almost directly to the release of the film.

It is perhaps ironic that Allen will be known for bringing a phrase into the language. How many men can claim that? Yet the phrase Close Encounter no longer applies to a form of UFO. It invades all aspects of our culture. Every day you hear something new termed 'a close encounter'. I doubt that some of them were in Allen's mind when he came up with the phrase.

And so Allen is no longer with us - but his deeds remain. Nobody did more to make UFOs respectable. That you and I are not laughed at in the streets is directly attributable to him. His passing rated not one mention in the British press. In the USA he received glowing tributes including several column inches and a photograph in the NEW YORK TIMES. He deserved every millimetre of that. It shows that those he left behind, and who grieve at the loss of husband, father, friend and colleague, that his life meant so much. His achievements will live on.

Somewhere, I suspect, Allen is having his own close encounter at this very moment. I am sure that he is enjoying both the fascination and the experience. Whilst we are forced to speculate, he may now know. The legacy that he has left is one we should hold very dear.

Allen taught us how to be brave in the face of ridicule. How to stand up for the truth, be it mundane or incredible. He showed us the way that ufology must go as we move towards the 21st century.

An interview with Dr. Hynek recorded by Lionel Beer and published in the April, 1971 issue of SPACELINK will be reproduced in the July issue of the BULLETIN in tribute to Dr. Hynek's life and work.

CYNTHIA HIND is MUFON's representative in Africa and is based in Zimbabwe. She has lectured to BUFORA members on a number of occasions and is the author of many articles on UFOs and ufology as well as "UFOs AFRICAN ENCOUNTERS" published in 1982.

On July 22nd, 1985 two BAE Hawk MK 60s were scrambled by the Zimbabwe Air Force from Thornhill Air Force Base, Gweru, to investigate a 'bright flying object' over Bulawayo Airport.

According to the report which appeared in THE HERALD newspaper on August 2nd, Commander of the Zimbabwe Air Force, Air Marshall Azim Daudpota said: 'This was no ordinary unidentified flying object. Even the two fighter pilots had visual contact with it over Bulawayo.'

The object, orange in colour in some reports, was sighted first over Beit Bridge (the border post between South Africa and Zimbabwe) then in Gwanda, West Nicholson and the Plumtree area, all within Zimbabwe, it was last seen from the Bulawayo Airport control tower.

Unfortunately, the radar at the Meteorological Office in Bulawayo had been dismantled for servicing and was not working, although according to Group Captain Sykes of the Zimbabwe Air Force, it was the fact that the object was picked up on radar that convinced the Air Force of the reality of the object.

'This immediately rules out that it could have been a balloon' said the Group Captain. 'Besides which', he added, 'checks were made with the meteorological office who confirmed that no weather balloons had been launched at that time.'

Subsequently, I spoke to Air Commodore Dave Thorne, also of the ZAF and he felt this was a genuine 'unidentified flying object.' The Air Commodore told me that the two jets were scrambled at 17.45 and were directed to the object which was hovering over Bulawayo at about 7,000ft. But as the aircraft approached the object shot up at a great rate of knots (approximately 2,300kph) to approximately 70,000ft Air traffic at Bulawayo Airport was delayed for several hours while the jets were investigated.

One of my investigators in South Africa, Giep Barnard, spoke to Mr van der Riet of CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) and he said: 'Supposing a stationary object is in a position of say, 10km altitude, the view to an observer in an aircraft approaching at a height of approximately 2km, would be that of an ascending object. Depending of course, on the actual altitudes of both object and observer, speed of observer, distances between observer and object, this theory could hold true and as such an illusion of a rapidly rising object would be created to the viewer.'

The jets levelled out at 31,000ft and then returned to their base at Thornhill AFB which is just outside Gweru in Zimbabwe. When they arrived there, they were surprised to see the object hovering above the Base. This was witnessed by several officers and men.

The two pilots involved were C. Cordy-Hedge and T.R. van Rooyen. Both men were 25 years of age. Cordy-Hedge has 1800 flight hours to his credit and T.R. van Rooyen, 1500 hours.

Cordy-Hedge wrote: 'The object was sighted on the 22nd July, 1985, at an altitude of 4500ft. The weather was dusk-davok.

It seemed to be (the object) approximately 15 miles south east of Bulawayo. The aircraft was in a steady climb. I could see the object through the cockpit window and had very good visibility. The object appeared to maintain its distance, but had very fast acceleration at a high altitude before disappearing. It was a bright orange in colour and appeared star-like in shape but was too far away to determine exactly. It moved off in an easterly direction at a very high speed.' Cordy-Hedge estimated that the object had moved from 15,000ft to 80-100,000ft.

I.R. van Rooyan gave a similar report; he too saw the object through his cockpit canopy and the visibility was good. He, together with Cordy-Hedge said the observation lasted for 50 minutes. The object appeared as a bright star, initially orange, but of an indefinable shape. It disappeared in an easterly direction at a high speed. He estimated the altitude of the object to go from 15,000ft to 100,000ft.

ACTION TAKEN

I flew down to Bulawayo, which is some 530km from Harare, and spoke to N.I. Bull who was the Meteorological Officer on duty at the time of the incident. He had written to me in reply to my queries regarding the UFO and I report some of the significant portions of his letter. He said that the previous day i.e. July 21st, he had picked up several reports of the object being seen over Beit Bridge, Plumtree etc. No-one seemed to know what it was but he took the precaution of alerting the Zimbabwe Air Force at Thornhill. He also heard that the South African Air Force had sent up two of their fighters to investigate but they thought the object was a high altitude research balloon and way above the ceiling of the aircraft.

On July 22nd, Bull had seen the object almost due south of the airfield at an elevation of 30°. Through binoculars it appeared spherical and was quite bright and could have been a balloon coated with some sort of metallic reflecting material. Referring to various reports he was able to calculate that the object was between 70,000 and 140,000ft up. He heard the Hawk jets pass overhead and a few minutes later the object seemed to disappear from view. All this happened at dusk and Zimbabwe being close to the equator, there is hardly any twilight. It is possible that the sun illuminated the object and when it sank below the horizon the object could no longer be seen.

There was no radar working at Bulawayo at the time as the Meteorological Officer radar was being serviced. The Office balloons are lost between 45,000 and 60,000ft and there were none up at the time. But the wind patterns at high levels up to this height were not descriptive of the motion of the object.

At this juncture, I had taken a UFO International Week Stand at the Harare Show and was approached by two young men from Falcon College (just outside Bulawayo). They had seen the object through a telescope and the one described it to me as disc-like at the top with a trailing object beneath. He thought it might be a weather balloon. At the same time, Maria Sullivan, one of my UFO group in Harare, told me that Mike Williams of Plumtree School had said that two of their teachers had spotted the object and described it as being 'like an inverted wine-glass.'

This description immediately rang a bell in my mind. On October 31st, 1983, there had been a UFO over Rio de Janeiro in

Brazil, with hundreds of witnesses. The Brazilian government eventually issued a statement saying that the UFO had been a South African weather balloon. Irene Granchi, a leading UFO investigator in Brazil, had asked me to look into the matter.

I was friendly with a South African Opposition Member of Parliament who was sympathetic to the UFO phenomenon and had, in fact, asked questions in the South African Parliament about the matter. I contacted him to find out if indeed this could be true. He came back shortly afterwards to tell me that the CSIR were involved with a French space agency - Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales - who were based just outside Pretoria in South Africa. I managed to obtain a comprehensive description of this balloon.

The balloons are of the infra-red, hot-air type. They can reach 30km altitude during the daytime and can drop as low as 18km at night. They drift in whatever currents are in the upper atmosphere and stratosphere. Flight duration is up to 50 days and a complete circumference of the southern hemisphere has been achieved. The size of these balloons is 36,000 cu. metres, about 40 metres in diameter and the hull consists to a large extent of aluminised plastic material. There are generally two gondolas with scientific equipment attached to them. Radio signals are emitted both to ground stations and to the NOAA satellite.

THE REPORTS

At this time I received several cuttings on UFO sightings. On Tuesday, July 9th, Mr and Mrs E.A. Lubbe of Steyn Street, Middelburg (Transvaal) saw a light in the sky at approximately 21.45. The light was very bright, stationary and silent. The area was illuminated for a few seconds and then the light began to fade, all in less than a minute. On the same night, Andre Allen of Kempton Park, near Johannesburg, also saw a strange light in the sky, between 18.30 and 19.00 hours. The Johannesburg Planetarium, while reluctant to commit themselves without more detailed reports, felt the object was a meteorite! By this time, the object had been seen in Reddersburg, Bethulie and the Hendrik Verwoerd Dam area (FIGURE 1).

On July 15th, farmers in the Underberg district (Natal) saw a 'mysterious shining object' moving towards Lesotho, Mr Peter Ferraz, former editor of THE FRIEND newspaper in Bloemfontein, said: 'It was extremely bright and moving slowly in a westerly direction. It shone like metal in the sun.' There were other witnesses: Ken and Merrill MacLeod, who run the Underberg Meteorite Office; Jose Campos, who is head of the viewing section of the South African Astronomical Society in Natal, said that the object was not a conventional astronomical object. On July 28th THE NATAL MERCURY (Natal) stated that a bright 'star' hovering above Natal, had mystified many people. But a weather office spokesman at Louis Botha Airport (Durban) had said it was a French 'weather' balloon sending signals to a satellite. It was also seen on this date from Durban North, Hammarsdale and Margate. On July 15th, the object was identified as a test balloon launched by the French from a site near Pretoria. Mr Petrus Erasmus of Milneford made a sketch of the object which hovered over Bloemfontein. He observed the object through a powerful telescope at his home. (FIGURE 2).

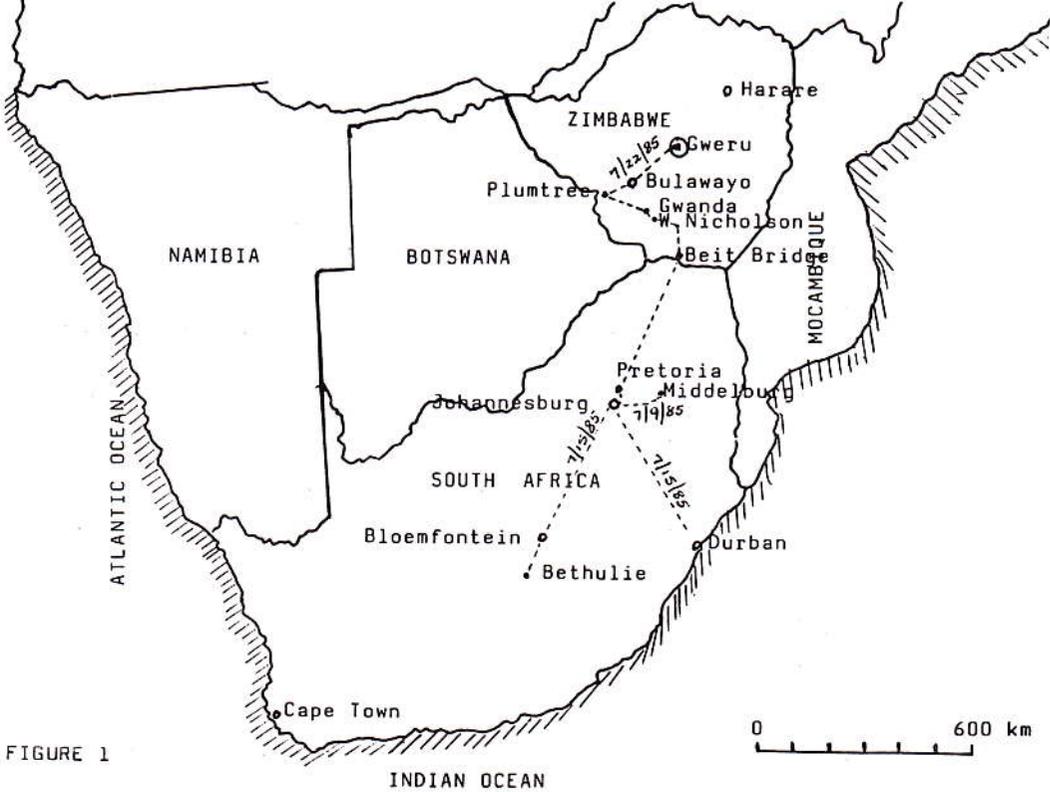


FIGURE 1

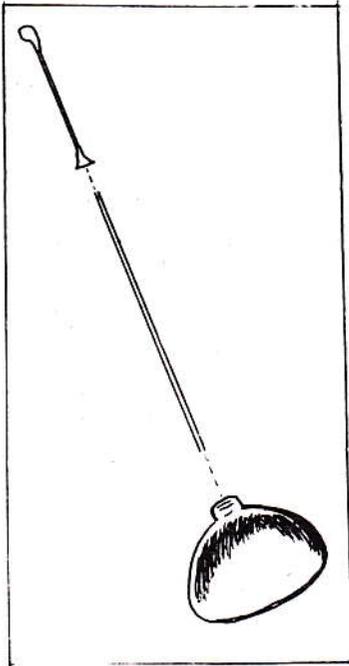


FIGURE 2. Copy of a drawing made by Petrus Erasmus of the object 'hovering' above Bloemfontein on 15th July, 1985.

Although I was now pretty sure that this is what the Zimbabwean pilots had pursued, I was still not 100 per cent certain. But the matter was further resolved when I received a letter from my contact in Johannesburg, Giep Barnard, whom I had asked to check the matter out with the CSIR. He said: 'I have not been able to speak to the person in charge as he is presently on leave. However, I was fortunate to contact his Deputy, Mr van der Riet.' And yes, they had been releasing these high altitude balloons from early in July (probably the 8th-9th), the 16th July and on the 22nd July.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt in my mind that the majority of the spate of sightings referred to the space balloon, including those chased by the two Zimbabwean pilots.

Nevertheless, there are several imponderables which must be taken into account. Mr N.I. Bull, the Meteorological Officer from Bulawayo, did mention that although he accepts that it was the balloon from Pretoria, he could not understand the drift to the north east from Bulawayo (it was seen over Thornhill AFB) later in the evening, as the winds were in a south-easterly direction. Also, there seems no logical explanation for the 'hovering' in one position for such a long time. I had other individual reports (not mentioned here) which also reported this long, hovering stage.

There was also very rapid movement from the Northern part of South Africa (FIGURE 1) to its movement to Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. And what happened to it after the last sighting at Thornhill? Why was it not seen or reported again?

And the reporting on 28th July: what could that have been? There were no more balloons released after July 22nd - certainly not in that month, so what did the witnesses in Durban North, Hammarsdale and Margate see?

I am still trying to trace or waiting replies from some of the witnesses, but I cannot see that there is much else I can do. Walt Andrus gently reprimanded me for not reporting back to MUFOW about this incident more rapidly that I did, but one has to be a little more patient in dealing with Third World countries than with speedy Americans. It all takes time, and in Africa, a little more so.

COUNCIL RESIGNATION

NORMAN OLIVER who was due to take over the post of BUFORA's Membership Secretary in mid-April has had to withdraw from the post owing to unforeseen domestic and job commitments.

Mr Oliver has also resigned his seat on Council to which he was elected last December.

Miss Pam Kennedy will retain the post of Membership Secretary pro-tem until a new appointment can be made. After that has been done Miss Kennedy will become the Association's Information Officer, dealing with enquiries and media publicity.

YOUR NEW SECRETARY

Leslie Sallis was appointed BUFORA's new Secretary at the Council meeting on April 5th, 1986. He succeeds Miss Diane Rollison who has had to retire due to domestic problems.

Leslie is very much a committed ufologist as this article from the HULL DAILY MAIL of January 21st, 1986 demonstrates.

Les is the man to bust the ghosts

LES SALLIS plans to use his retirement to become Humberside's first ghostbuster.

The former Ministry of Defence worker has been interested in things that go bump since his childhood.

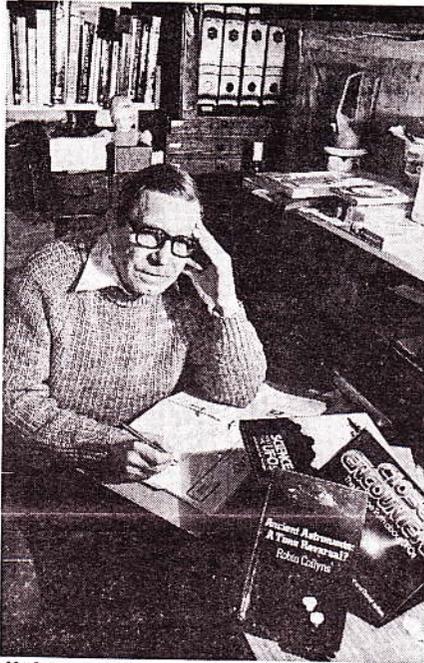
Now, after retirement, he's turning his Bransholme residence into the country's first research centre for ghosts and UFOs.

And he wants anyone with stories of the supernatural to contact him day or night on 826080.

Les is a member of the British UFO Investigation Society and the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena.

They won't officially recognise him as an investigator until he's prepared a report for them, so he's anxious to hear about local sightings.

He's sceptical about extra-terrestrial beings and ghosts of Elizabethan ladies. Once he spent two nights in the "haunted hall" at Burton Agnes, but left without seeing anything. But he promises he'll assess any report given to him



Mr Sallis at work.

strictly on its merits.

His wife doesn't share his interest. Les thinks she's "too practical." That won't stop him turning his hobby into a fulltime occupation

though — if he can find enough cases to study.

Sightings needn't be current. He's interested in any examples as long as the memories are first-hand.

BUFORA has registered as a data user/bureau under the 1986 DATA PROTECTION ACT.

All membership records will be transferred to computer within the next few months and, hopefully, the job will be completed by the early autumn.

In July, 1985 I was off on one of my whistle-stop tours, care of a publisher during which the object seemed to be to 'do' as many television, radio and newspaper interviews as far apart as possible and in as short a timeslot as could be arranged! But the most exciting of all these things, done superficially to promote my book (with Peter Warrington) SCIENCE AND THE UFOs (Basil Blackwell Publications) was the offer by LBC (London) to join in debate that master of scepticism Ian Ridpath.

Ian and I are old adversaries. We have battled in other arenas before; including television and Birmingham University (for what I still regard as one of the most worthwhile things I have ever taken part in). Recent events over the Rendlesham Forest saga have made my blood boil. Frankly I think Ian is making a real ass of himself over the case; and he is the man responsible (almost single-handed) for so many people getting the silly notion that radioactive rabbits and the Orford Ness lighthouse can explain the mystery. It cannot. Although, for my own part, I am still not very sure that I know what can!

Much as I would have relished confronting Ian over Rendlesham I purposely chose not to do so across the airwaves. It would have been a sidetrack because I remain far from sure the case is a UFO case. Our only comment about it (off air) was when I suggested to Ian that he would one day realise he had made a big mistake about it.

"You are the one with more to lose" he told me.

"Why so?" I enquired. "It seems to me that I am keeping my options open. I freely admit that I don't know what happened. But you are convinced it was the lighthouse. You've stuck your neck out on a single explanation."

Ian shook his head, obviously still sure that he knows what he is doing. Or, at least, he thinks he does.

LBC is a third force in London radio broadcasting. It is not the IBA channel or the BBC system. Unique anywhere in Britain it is news, business and financially orientated. My (perhaps erroneous) impression beforehand was that it would have a higher class of listener. That the promised calls made to the programme would be a cut above the usual "I saw a light in Maida Vale." We actually might get some worthy witnesses.

The allotted spot was one hour (or more like 50 minutes as it turned out) between 3 and 4pm with Gill Pyrah. I had learnt about the idea about 20 hours before and was told: "It's a debate. You have to prepare a three minute piece supporting the premise and then Ian Ridpath does the same, denouncing it. Then listeners call in and comment." That was all that I knew on Tuesday night, as I hastily prepared for the confrontation on Wednesday, July 17th.

Ian Ridpath, who would oppose the motion, is a space writer and media presenter who (with his CSICGP colleagues in the USA) has taken a vigilante approach to the UFO phenomenon. Whilst (pre-Rendlesham) he has always struck me as reasonably fair, he has even admitted in the past that there are things which he cannot explain. So I was quite happy to deal with him on reasonable grounds. I told LBC this and they asked me (Tuesday evening!) to come up with, first, the debate motion and then produce my opening statement. They then suggested to me "Alien spaceships have landed on earth." I quickly told them what to do with that motion!

Eventually my proposed amendment ("Conventional Science cannot explain the UFO phenomenon") was accepted (a little reluctantly I was told) and I set to work. "Be at the studio at 2.45, so we can pre-

pare" I was told. In order to achieve this I noted that my twin train leeway for the 200 mile journey was too narrow. So I took special pains to go very early and arrive at the LBC studios behind Fleet Street at 2.15 - where I waited, and waited and waited!

No Ian Ridpath had shown up. Twice I passed my presence through, signed visitor books, took a telephone call from the DAILY EXPRESS (who were interested in those wretched circles which are back yet again!) and listened in to a conversation between the receptionist and an American psychiatrist (over to promote his book). This seemed to follow the line that the best way to happiness was to get divorced!

At 2.58 Gill Pyrah finally arrived and led me to the studio with the words, "It's a bit of a rush, I'm afraid." I was then advised that Ian had been there for some time, because he had a pass to allow him right through into the bowels of LBC (he, apparently, being some sort of space correspondent for them). Shirking off such favouritism Ian and I said polite 'Hello's" before being whisked into the studio. We had time for a brief word, where Ian muttered something about how he preferred a different topic (the alien spaceships one) with a certain ufologist (whom I shall not name) because (so I gathered) Ian felt confident he could whip him. "He's the only supporter of alien UFOs I would appear in the same studio with" he added.

Inside the studio the news was just ending (with the ominous note that Lancashire was being clobbered at cricket) and suddenly Gill Pyrah was staring at me and I was staring at her, dumbstruck, until I figured out this was when I was supposed to give my three minute talk. Nobody had said anything. I had no clue what would happen next. Nor was I sure if I would be cut off after 180 seconds. So I just bloughed on as quickly as I could. Here is what I said, verbatim:-

"UFOs are not to be confused with alien craft or vehicles for little green men. UFOs are unidentified flying objects. They exist. The question is: are any of them unidentifiable to conventional science. I am certain that they are.

"Ninety per cent of all incoming reports are IFOs, not UFOs. We can identify the unidentified. Sometimes easily (e.g. as stars or aircraft lights under strange conditions). Sometimes less easily, with help from sceptics like Ian.

"Hoaxes and hallucinations do happen. But they are very rare. All studies (even by sceptics) have agreed with that.

"Okay - so only 10 per cent of the cases are left. But in the UK alone in any one year that's still a few dozen reported cases (and a lot of them are not reported). Worldwide, over four decades, that is tens (or hundreds) of thousands of real UFO sightings.

"Why can't these remaining 10 per cent become IFOs, if enough work is done on them? Some, no doubt, will be. A few will be. A few cases where there are freak answers. But not tens of thousands.

"Some - those we might call the Exotic UFOs (or the alien contacts) - seem to involve a trigger factor which makes psychologically stable people turn a mundane stimulus into a bizarre event. Such cases have clearly defined parameters, are being studied by psychologists and sociologists, and do involve a distinct state of consciousness (typified by a set of symptoms I call the Oz Factor).

"The solution to such things is not known to conventional science, according to many working scientists in the appropriate fields. American psychiatrist, Dr. Amrodite Clamar, tested witnesses and gave the test results to other psychologists who did not know the test results came from UFO witnesses. The psycho-

logists pronounced the subjects normal. When they learnt what they claimed to have happened the psychologists were astonished.

"Austrian psychiatrist Dr. Alex Keul, from Salzburg University, has carried out a battery of tests with BUFORA, trying to prove that witnesses have psychopathic disorders. He failed.

"Other less exotic UFO sightings we call UAPs (Unidentified Atmospheric Phenomena). There is no prima facie reason to pre-sume they are craft, or even objects. They are energetic anomalies, probably in, or just beyond, the province of atmospheric physics or electricity, or geology. Some may involve novel energy sources.

"Certainly they have parameters not known to conventional science. They disturb animals (who don't make up things after watching STAR WARS on television). They cause physical illness and damage to witnesses. They cause electrical impedance on cars and motor vehicles. All this they do consistently and regularly throughout the world. A real force of some kind is involved.

"A team of space scientists and physical scientists employed by the French government from 1978 to date, have studied full time. They have probed hundreds of the best cases in that country. They found that the better the calibre and expertise of the witness the more likely the case was to remain unexplained.

"This, plus thousands of hours of government funded research, has persuaded them to say, and I quote: 'The study of the cause of these phenomena is potentially capable of bringing forth new knowledge.'

"I agree!"

THREE MAIN POINTS

I purposely built my argument very carefully within limits; knowing that the best way to convince an initially sceptical audience is to be sceptical to a point yourself. My motto in public tends to be, go for it when you know you can prove it, but when you aren't sure yourself, then forget it.

In his response I waited eagerly for the devastating disproof of UFOs (on my fairly tepid definition of them) from Ian. He had three main points: (1) In 40 years UFO researchers have not produced one new fact or proven one new theory: (2) Most scientists are decidedly unimpressed with the evidence: and (3) Allen Hendry, a once pro-UFO investigator, investigated over 1000 cases for his book THE UFO HANDBOOK and concluded that UFOs were just the same as IFOs without the work carried out to satisfactorily explain them.

I did not get the opportunity to answer these points there and then as Gill Pyrah launched straight into 'phone calls and the rest of the time was spent in us answering them. I stored up bits to say in what I presumed would be a summing-up statement we would each be asked to make at the end. Sadly, at five to four, for some unexplained reason, Gill said "that's it - thanks very much" and bundled us out of the studio. I had only the chance to make one or two rejoinders. Others I made outside in the corridor.

I did point out (on air) that Ian's argument that scientists are not impressed is nonsense. There are a growing number of scientists in a wide range of fields who are deeply intrigued. It would be quite easy to reel off 50 names, a good sign of improvement. And the American Association for the Advancement of Science has twice debated since the was supposedly dismissed by the scandal of the Condon Report in 1969. In any case, most scientists never even look at the UFO data, so how can they be impressed or unimpressed? What they may (quite rightly) be

unimpressed with is the pathetic media presentation of the subject. The biggest single factor in lack of progress.

As for UFO researchers making no discoveries. That is not true. There have been significant new research programmes (e.g. the earth-lights work). But the real problem is that UFO researchers are not scientists. We don't have the money. We cannot hope to make breakthroughs (except when we have particularly vivid imaginations or delusions of self importance). We are data collectors, no more. We are preserving the evidence for posterity when somebody with more money and higher IQs will do what Ian Ridpath seems to demand of we poor amateur sleuths.

As for Allan Hendry's book - anyone who has read it, or spoken to Hendry, will know that Ian's comments grossly misrepresent his true opinions. I put that to Ian and he admitted he had never spoken to the astronomer, but added: "If you don't write what you believe clearly enough in your books then it's your fault, not mine."

At the start of the show a computer viewscreen on the wall (recording incoming calls and the percentage vote share for and against) read 83 per cent in favour of my motion! However, that was based on my motion! However, that was based on six calls! Ian slipped me a note through which read: "I bet they were all from the Aertherius Society!"

TELEPHONE CALLS

The first telephone caller was a man named George. He rambled on and on about his telepathic contacts with an alien called "Sterling Silver" (shades of Sapphire and Steel!) Ian was rolling about on his chair. I was desperately trying to maintain my composure, as I watched the 'for' vote plummet with each new word he spoke. The radio producer was giving hand signals to Gill to "get him off" but Gill was loving his prophecies of a Biblical invasion in the new future, care of the UFOs. I was trying to suggest she get him off, but to no avail. So I asked him quickly: "Look - what makes you so sure these messages are from an alien?" To which I got some waffle about "Well they must be," and he babbled on. So I decided to try and put a stop to this and said tongue in cheek, "Tell me - has this alien got a brother called twenty-four carat gold, by any chance?" George chuckled something about "probably - these aliens do have a sense of humour" and he was shunted off the air (at last!) As we plunged into a much needed commercial breake, Ian, still smiling broadly, beamed over at Gill Pyrah, saying: "Thanks - how did you set that one up for me?"

He knew what he was talking about. The 'for' vote was now down to 37 per cent. Ian was well on the way to victory.

Doubtless there will be those inclined to think that George was a man from the MoD who decided to sabotage this programme. Maybe. I would be inclined to go along with that all the way, under the circumstances, if I did not know how many loonies the UFO phenomenon throws up anyway. Not that I am suggesting our friend George (should he be reading this) is a looney. I just wish he had called Terry Wogan's show instead!

The remainder of the calls were less exciting. John in Edgware had seen a silvery ball in June, 1984. An American pilot (Richard) wanted to know why there had been a cover-up over a 1970 encounter he had had in Honolulu, when nine bright objects were tracked on radar and he saw them visually. "Then there was not another word about them" he added. Ian admitted he could not think of a solution, but suggested "There may not have been another word because there was nothing to it." The man replied that there was because he saw them! And I got Ian to

admit he had no explanation. The scores began to rise again.

The fifth and final caller was London RIC Mike Wootten, who brought a breath salvation to the show by asking Ian "How many UFO cases have you investigated yourself to the calibre of BUFORA reports?" Ian, a bit rattled, was looking at me mouthing "Mike - who?" But he was pressured into answering, just a handful. Because, he explained, he was not really that interested in them.

In which case, one might ask, what was he doing on the programme arguing that UFOs are not of importance to science?

Off air, Gill Pyrah made some comment to us both about how we were confusing the callers. Despite my continual repetition (as I had decided to) of the theme that UFOs are, literally, unidentified and phenomena, not alien spaceships, caller after caller kept harping on the idea "Well, if we can get into space - why can't they come here?" Ian rejoindered by saying, "I believe there is life in space. I've written several books about it." I kept answering, that it did not matter one way or the other because I was not pretending UFOs were alien - just unexplained by conventional science. "And" I reminded people, "if you agree with that, then the motion must be won."

Of course, this reversal of roles, must have been hard for the listener to comprehend!

At 3.56 the scores read precisely 50 per cent for, and 50 per cent against, the motion (which, in view of the start, I perceive as a moral victory). Seventy-two callers had voted.

Ian left the scene fairly quickly as I continued the debate with him about the Battelle Memorial Institute study of UFOs (which is discussed in detail in SCIENCE AND THE UFOs - a book Ian held in front of him during the show, flipping through searching for things to quote against me!) This parameter for parameter UFO versus IFO study of over 2000 of the best cases was a full-time, several months project by paid scientists; easily the most comprehensive scientific evaluation yet. What did they find? Aside from almost a quarter of the cases to be 'unknown' they produced staggering statistics of one billion to one against the UFOs being simply IFOs not yet explained. The UFOs were a unique phenomenon.

When challenged on this Ian admitted he had never studied it.

"Why not?" I enquired.

"It's discredited. Nobody takes it seriously, do they?"

"Why not?" I pressed again.

"Well" and there was no well. As with many of our critics they are part time sceptics a long way from being familiar with the facts. But in a subject like UFOs that is the one absolute essential. It is far too complicated otherwise.

I left LBC and strolled over to the offices of the DAILY EXPRESS to argue about the Sussex circles 'hoax' (again) and UFOs in general, right from the start. The journalist, naturally, assumed UFO = spaceship. The terms were synonymous. An hour later I had a distinct feeling of deja vu.

As Bob Dylan might say....."When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?"

It has lately become apparent to me that very many UFO reports are caused by people failing to recognise that the object they are looking at is a star. This is especially so when the star is seen low on the horizon. Observation of stars is subject to several distortions, either subjective or objective.

SUBJECTIVE DISTORTION OF LIGHT FROM STARS

Astronomers were the first to describe a phenomenon which psychologists now call the autokinetic illusion. A star or any bright light source in complete or near darkness will appear to wander about in a curious erratic manner over a range of several degrees of arc, sometimes oscillating backwards and forwards. The cause of this illusion has been in dispute but it is now thought to be due to conflicting messages from the eye muscles to the brain. This illusion will be seen for all the stars but especially for a bright star in isolation.

Another illusion comes into play when the star is seen on or near the horizon. The phenomenon of size-constancy is a means by which the brain attempts to perceive all known objects at a constant size independent of their distance. It shrinks close objects and enlarges distant ones. A low star is perceived as a distant luminous object, but no more distant than the horizon. Making a guess about the object's size, the brain enlarges the image as if the object were closer. The same star seen higher in the sky will not appear magnified because of the lack of any clues about distance.

Low altitude stars may also appear to approach or recede, due to changes in brightness. Stars will exhibit translational movement when seen through thin fast-moving clouds. There may be other subjective distortions.

OBJECTIVE DISTORTIONS OF LIGHT FROM STARS

The light from all stars exhibits scintillation ('twinkling'); this is a rapid fluctuation in the level of light intensity due to turbulence in the Earth's atmosphere. The degree of scintillation is inversely proportional to altitude, thus it is more marked for stars low on the horizon (and more noticeable for red stars than white ones). Such stars can appear to flash on and off as if signalling. Vega was once reported to me as a possible distress beacon!

The light from a low altitude star is also subject to refraction. Because the star's light traverses the atmosphere at a shallow angle, and because the density of the atmosphere decreases with height, the light is bent downwards (so that the position in which we see the star is slightly higher than its true position). But the light of the star consists of many different frequencies and different frequencies are refracted to different extents (as in a prism). Red light is refracted less easily than blue light. Consequently a low altitude star will display various colours, notably red and blue, the spectral extremes. On average the blue image should be on top, with the red image underneath.

Stars also appear to emit rays, sometimes beams in one direction, due to distortion within the eye. Stars observed through a hand-held optical instrument will appear to jump about due to the impossibility of holding the hands perfectly still.

STARS AND THEIR IDENTIFICATION

Only the brightest stars are likely to cause UFO reports under the conditions I have described. The 22 brightest stars are listed in Table 1, but not all are visible from Britain (Canopus, Alpha and Beta Centauri, Achernar, Alpha and Beta Crucis are only visible from more southern latitudes. Table 1 also shows the papparent magnitude of each star; the lower the magnitude the brighter the star.

Table 1

LIST OF FIRST MAGNITUDE STARS

name	apparent magnitude	position in 1950.0	
		R.A. h m	o Dec. °
Sirius	-1.47	06 42.9	-16 39
Canopus	-0.71	06 22.8	-52 40
Alpha Centauri	-0.1	14 36.2	-60 38
Arcturus	-0.06	14 13.2	+19 26
Vega	0.03	18 35.2	+38 44
Rigel	0.08	05 12.2	-08 15
Capella (binary)	0.09	05 13.0	+45 57
Procyon	0.34	07 36.7	+05 21
Achernar	0.49	01 35.9	-57 29
Beta Centauri	0.61	14 00.3	-60 08
Altair	0.75	19 48.3	+08 44
Aldebaran	0.78	04 33.0	+16 25
Alpha Crucis	0.80	12 23.8	-62 49
Betelgeuse	0.85 (mean)	05 52.5	+07 24
Antares	0.92	16 26.4	-26 19
Spica	0.98	13 22.6	-10 54
Pollux	1.15	07 42.3	+28 09
Formalhaut	1.16	22 54.9	-29 53
Deneb	1.26	20 39.7	+45 06
Beta Crucis	1.28	12 44.8	-59 25
Regulus	1.33	10 05.7	+12 14
Adhara	1.42	06 56.7	-28 54

These are 'first magnitude' stars because their mean magnitude is 1.00. Since the magnitude system is logarithmic there is a much greater difference in brightness between the stars than the magnitude would indicate. The difference in magnitude between Sirius and Adhara (2.89) represents a difference in brightness of 14.32!

The simplest way to determine whether or not a UFO report is due to such a star is by the use of an adjustable star chart such as Philip's 'Planisphere' (Figure 1). Rotation of the chart so that the relevant date and time of day coincide shows the sky and the positions of the main stars at that instant (check that the chart is calibrated for a latitude close to that where the witness was located). No UFO investigator should be without this simple and useful device.

Once a particular star is a suspect, an accurate 'fix' on its position at a known date and time can be obtained from tables or (lately) from programs for home computers. Apart from giving other useful astronomical data, such as the positions of the Moon and planets, these programs will give altitude and azimuth for any posi-

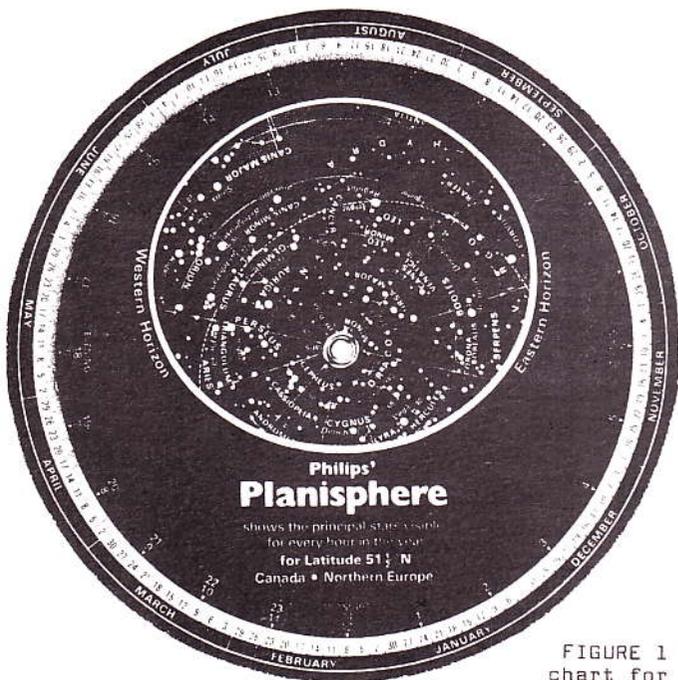


FIGURE 1 Philip's adjustable star chart for the latitude of London.

tion in the sky given the celestial co-ordinates of the position in a known year. The celestial co-ordinates of the brightest stars given in Table 1 are for 1950; the programs will have a sub-routine that can update these co-ordinates. By feeding in the celestial co-ordinates for the star in question, and updating the co-ordinates if necessary, an accurate determination of its azimuth and altitude at any date and time can be obtained. This will certainly show whether or not the star was the UFO (provided one has already made an accurate assessment of the expected azimuth and altitude). If it is shown that a bright star was almost exactly where the witness saw the UFO (and assuming a reasonably clear sky) it should be assumed that the UFO was the star even though the witness is certain that it could not be.

Looking back through BUFORA Journal/Bulletin one can see reports that appear to have been due to misperception of stars. An example is one I relayed (see Report 80-113, April, 1983, page 7). The object lay on an azimuth of about 150° and at an altitude of about $5-6^\circ$ (determined from the mountains over which it was viewed), almost exactly where the witnesses should have seen Antares, a star with a reddish colour. The object was described as round, orange at the bottom and flashing white on top (there would have been a shortage of blue light due to the colour of the star). Although the witnesses had the idea that the object moved over them, had inset orange panels, a revolving strip of white light, and finally that it shot away in a flash, I am certain that all they saw was Antares. More recently a light which a witness reported moving on the Pentland Hills (near Edinburgh) was identified as Vega. As another example I suggest that Ken Phillips should re-examine case 82-001 (BULLETIN 005 on 7-8); the cross-shaped array he illustrates is similar to the Northern Cross of stars in the constellation Cygnus, which

lay in the north-west at the time.

In an astronomical light one can consider some recent case reports. In Case Report 79-275 (BULLETIN 18, pp 2-3) we are told of an object 'hovering a few feet above ... (a) roof' (estimates of size are probably exaggerated). It had a red light 'at the bottom.' Without the exact date or the exact bearing I cannot say that this was a star, but it seems very likely that it was. However, it is surprising that this possibility was not eliminated. In the same issue of the BULLETIN the Biggin Hill case described by Eric Morris might have an astronomical explanation, but without altitude and azimuth one cannot be sure. It is amazing to find these vital data missing from so many reports. I predict that competent analysis will show that very many of BUFORA's collected reports were due to stars.

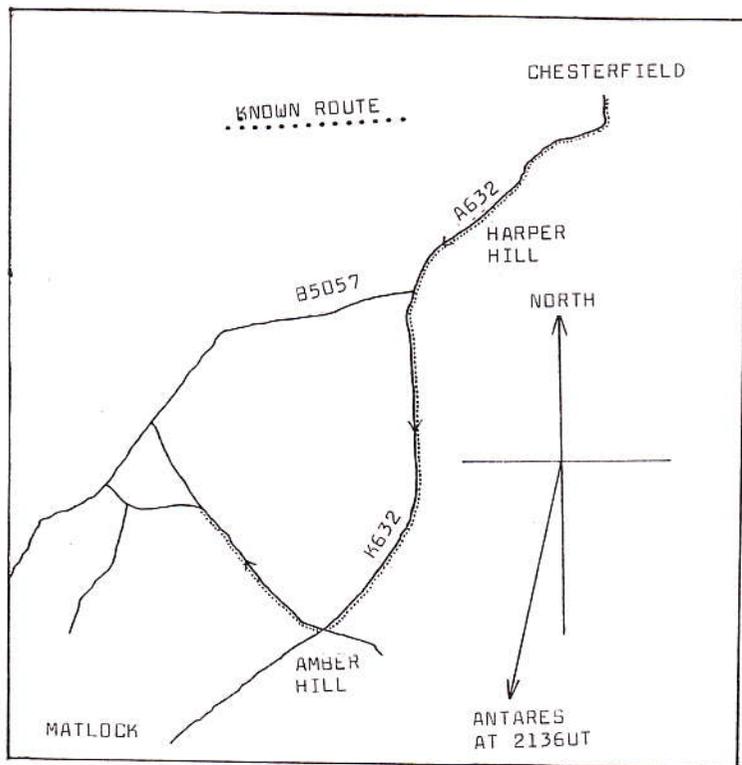
Several stars contributed to the Rendlesham incident (on which I have commented elsewhere) and stars appear to be the cause of several other incidents related in SKY CRASH. The 'two strange lights' seen 'hovering over the coast to the east' at 0115 UT on September 14th, 1980 by a family at Hopton appear to have been the bright stars Betelgeuse and Rigel in the constellation of Orion, then just rising. The 'glowing green light heading straight for' Gordon Levett of Sudbourne, low down out of the east about 2100 UT one night in the week after Christmas 1980, was surely Sirius (then at only 11° altitude on an azimuth of 133°). Even the incident near Huffman in Texas was caused by a star; Canopus, the second brightest star in the sky was seen just on the horizon along a road that runs for four miles in a straight line! (Hendry has briefly discussed these UFOs in his THE UFO HANDBOOK pp 24-31).

The 'Planisphere' is produced by George Philip and Son Ltd., 12-14 Long Acre, London WC2E 9LP.

THE UNINVITED STAR

My attention has been drawn to a paperback book* which purports to describe what appear to be CE2-3 events (with MID overtones) in Derbyshire in 1981. As far as I know this case has not been investigated by BUFORA. According to the author, the frightened family involved in the incidents want to remain anonymous (although they desperately wanted an explanation). Nevertheless sufficient information is given to identify the cause of the reports of an UFO.

It all began with sight of a brilliant object on a car journey from Chesterfield to Matlock, initially on A632 and later on a minor road (see map). The date was July 22nd, 1981, about 2136UT, when the sky was absolutely clear of cloud and it was very warm. They were puzzled by an object seen low down on the horizon to the south south west and which seemed to be keeping pace with the car. It was yellow and egg-shaped, and seemed to get lower in the sky before it disappeared behind a range of hills. The husband told his family that it was 'probably a star' but he thought that it was too big to be one. As they drove towards it, it seemed to be getting closer!



After its disappearance, what they thought was the same object appeared behind them, but now more white than yellow. Now they were sure it was chasing them and the husband drove as fast as he could to get away from it. After calling at a farm, the husband and the farmer walked to the top of a hill, where they saw the object again. It was hovering 'slightly above' some trees, rising gradually until it suddenly disappeared.

Subsequent events centre around further alleged sightings of this same object from their home and a number of apparently related mysterious events. It is apparent that the family were aware of the UFO myth and believed that they had been singled out for attention. It is difficult to tell how much of the story is true but it is alleged that the local police were called several times, and that one policeman saw the/a UFO.

It is easy to identify the object as the first-magnitude star Antares (actually red in colour, although refraction could have produced a yellow) which was only 9° above the unobstructed horizon on an azimuth of 194° (see map). As they drove southwards between Harper Hill and Amber Hill, Antares was in front of them (apparently stationary while they were on the 2km straight). Then, after they had turned right at Amber Hill, it seemed to be behind them, following.

Antares frightened them again as they continued their journey late in the evening of July 22nd and it appears to have been the object chased by a policeman late the following night. Antares did not set until 0100, although obstructions could have caused it to set (locally) earlier. According to the book, the police were called four times to investigate UFO reports. To confirm this I wrote to Matlock Police Station, but I received no reply.

The book tells us that this deluded family became so terrified that they had to move to another part of the country. If this is true it is sad that ignorance of astronomical phenomena and uncritical acceptance of the UFO myth has caused so much turmoil. Although they did turn to a local UFO buff ('Roy Campbell' sic) he was no help to them. One would like to think that BUFORA could have explained the events and saved a great deal of trouble. But then Frank Taylor (who he?) would not have got such a good story!

" The Uninvited 11: The Visitation." Frank Taylor (Star, 1984)

STAR BOOKS - IS THERE A CASE TO ANSWER

JENNY RANGLES

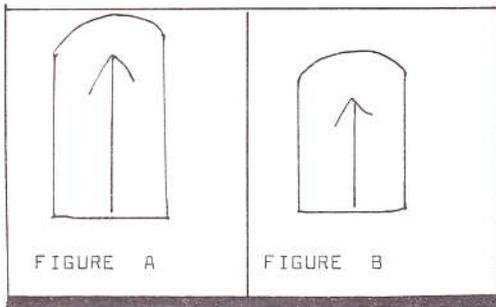
This case, and in particular Frank Taylor's book has been looked at very closely by BUFORA's Director of Investigations, Jenny Randles. The following article is taken from the November/December, 1985 issue of Miss Randles magazine NORTHERN UFO NEWS.

In 1977 Steven Spielberg's movie CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND made a major impact on society. It was fiction based on fact, but has this opened the door to all kinds of fiction, whether based on fact or not?

The questions springs to mind thanks to a letter I recently received from NLUFOIG member Geoff Grundill. He asked me if I had read the book THE UNINVITED 3 - THE ABDUCTION by Frank Taylor? This concerns a policeman abducted in Buckinghamshire and the markings he saw on the UFO. The markings, shown in Figure A will be remarkably familiar to knowledgeable UFO researchers because of its similarity (identical in nature) to the one in Figure B, assalleged by police officer Lonnie Zamora in New Mexico in 1964. Based on this, Geoff Grundill asks: "Are we dealing with the same craft or UFO?" This query makes me duty bound to discuss what I know about THE UNINVITED books. It is a sorry story.

Readers will recall that THE UNINVITED 1 was peened by journalist Clive Harold in 1978 and published by Star paperbacks (W.H. Allen). It is based on the experiences of the Coombes family in South Wales at Ripperstone Farm. Two other books on the same theme also emerged from the 1977 wave in South Wales, although neither were anything like as successful as Harold's - doubtless because they were written by UFO researchers not writers!

THE UNINVITED has sold more copies than any other UFO book published in the UK in the past a quarter of a century, and it remains in print. Harold has netted something liked £20,000 in UK royalties alone which any UFO writer will tell you is 'big bucks' compared with the £2000 or so most books bring in. The fact that the Coombes family tale is ufologically suspect (as Hilary Evans has shown by re-investigation) is neither here nor there. Whilst Harold told his tale like a novel (hence its success) it was undoubtedly based on a real case involving real witnesses.



At the 1979 BUFORA Conference Harold (who attended) said he was penning a sequel. It has never appeared. For a while I wondered why. Then, in 1984, Star brought out THE UNINVITED -2 - THE VISITATION. It was not by Harold, but unknown journalist Frank Taylor. I reviewed it in NUN at the time and expressed a degree of disquiet. The case was set in Derbyshire with clearly ripped off bits from the Pennine UFO mystery (per se - if not my book of that title. NUFOW even gets a mention in it! However, the case was

totally unheard of by any Ufologist. The witnesses names were all changed, so it could not be checked and it seemed rather convenient that this should be so. I dismissed the book as unworthy in NUN, but of course it has sold very well indeed.

In early 1985 I decided to test out Star books by offering them a real blockbuster case (viz the Rendlesham Forest saga) written as a novel etc. The editor was very excited and seemed keen. Then he backed off. I got the distinct impression that when he had checked me out and found I was a bona-fide UFO researcher he was suspicious. In the end he claimed they had a regular contract with the author of their UNINVITED series (implying that Taylor was Harold) and these were all they intended to publish. My feeling was that they could be perpetrating a hoax and did not wish this to be seen through by involving a real ufologist!

Now - this autumn - becomes UNINVITED - 3 (again by Frank Taylor) and the most disturbingly suspicious of the lot. The case has very clear hallmarks of a rewritten combination of cases like Soccoro, New Mexico and the Alan Godfrey abduction. Again no real names are used. Again we are asked to believe that Taylor just happens to have chanced upon this major CE4 case which no British investigator has ever heard of. Again the legend that this case is true is plastered over the book, where as Star (unashamedly) market it on the occult fiction bookshelves in bookshops, alongside works by Stephen King et al.

So what - you might say? Good marketing technique. True, bookshops are buying these 'real' non-fiction volumes instead of serious UFO works. But that is tough, since the public are getting what they want.

Indeed, but here is the rub. Some weeks ago I met the editor who bought Harold's book for Star. He now works with another company. He told me that Star had tried to get Harold to bring out UNINVITED 2 - 3 etc written as fact but totally made up to look like real cases. Harold (to his credit) said no. But hack Taylor seems to have less scruples. Hence the two sequels and the others ready to stream out of his typewriter as fast as he can conjure them up.

Is this true? Since it accords well with my own feelings, which I did not express before these things were offered to me then I suspect it might be. But what do we do about it? What can we do? I do challenge Star to prove their 'true' stories are true, if indeed they can. And in the meantime I urge every UFO researcher everywhere to take nothing Star books publish seriously. Certainly as evidential data they are clearly about as valid as this year's Rupert Bear annual. Unless I see evidence to the contrary I rest my case, with some concern.

Dr ALEXANDER KEUL and KEN PHILLIPS

INTRODUCTION

After a 1980 pilot study around Vienna, Austria, the authors studied more than 50 Austrian and British UFO witnesses from 1981 up to date. As ASSAP decided to support this research idea by issuing our new version of the UFO WITNESS ANAMNESIS (a compendium of human science questions for UFO field investigations), ASSAP NEWS is the right forum for a short report on first results after five pretty complicated years of study. This brief article is, therefore, reproduced from ASSAP NEWS

ANAMNESIS RESULTS

Twenty-one Austrian witnesses of unidentified phenomena (eight close encounters, 13 distant events) with a full physical investigation and 26 British witnesses (10 Close Encounters, 16 distant) gave demographic and biographical details according to the first (experimental versions of our UFO WITNESS ANAMNESIS. The main question was whether there were any significant differences of certain psychosocial details (e.g. unemployment) between encounters in Austria/Britain and the general population. Results would answer the old question about "UFO sighters - average citizens or not?" Fourteen items yielded sufficient data for statistical comparisons between the reporter groups. Eight of the items could be checked against general population data - sex, age, profession, marital status, siblings, ESP, myopia and unemployment. Statistically significant differences (Chi square, Fisher-Yates) were only found in the age and ESP category. There was a prevalence of old people reporting distant events in Austria compared to the average age distribution. And, British UFO witnesses reported significantly more ESP occurrences in their anamneses than people in a general population survey at Bristol by Blackmore, 1981 (JSPR, February, 1984). Most ESP events had happened before the UFO sighting. Witnesses of distant events reported pre-cognition, apparitions and telepathy, close encounter witnesses gave the double amount of phenomena - precognition, PK, telepathy, DBEs, healing, apparitions, automatic writing - and all but one had had these phenomena repeatedly. Thus, CE witnesses seem to have a higher "ESP potential" than distant event reporters.

RORSCHACH RESULTS

With 33 British and 26 Austrian UFO sighters as well as 25 Austrian non-UFO-sighters a projective (depth psychological) personality test was taken - the Rorschach. Diffuse inkblot tables are presented to the examinee who tells what he/she sees. The replies are evaluated as symbols of conscious and unconscious processes. We confined our first analysis of 1777 Rorschach replies to UFO-related symbols - space vehicles, astronomy and science fiction themes, UFOs and UFO-nauts. Witnesses were not asked to give such answers which makes the appearance of UFO material in the Rorschach an indicator for its emotional (unconscious) importance. Our hypothesis was that UFO sighters would "see" more UFO symbols in the test than non-sighters. This was not the case! The rate of UFO symbol replies versus total replies was 1:13 for the British witness group, but 1:73 for Austrian sighters and 1:33 for Austrian non-sighters. Thus, the Austrian non-sighters were more similar to the British sighters in that respect

than the Austrian witness group! The difference between Austrian and British UFO sighters were highly significant (Chi square 1% level). Also, the number of UFO-related replies in all three groups significantly (Kendall's tau) correlated with fear symbols in the Rorschach. Analysis is continuing.

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS.

ESP seems to be the most promising psychic variable out of our old UFO WITNESS ANAMNESIS for further studies. A tendency "the more intense the ESP potential, the more intense the (later) UFO case" seems likely. Unconscious prevalence of symbolic UFO material is no discriminator at all between sighters and non-sighters.

DRAW WHAT YOU SEE - A SIMULATED UFO SIGHTING

INTRODUCTION

'Seeing is believing' - one of many sayings signalling the high immediate credibility factor attributed to the human sense of sight. Although perceptual illusions and errors are nothing new to the well-educated UFO observer and investigator, an unconscious feeling of safety 'I saw it - and so it was' still remains, especially in single witness cases, where no perceptual variance can be detected. Therefore, simple multiple person experiments are a good opportunity to illustrate distortion processes in human vision and its recall. LOFTUS (1) and others have published interesting results of forensic witness simulations. HAINES (2) has shown that there are no significant structural differences between drawings by 'real' and 'imaginary' UFO observers. But what about a simulated short UFO sighting?

MATERIAL AND METHOD

A diastide depicting the nighttime view of a luminous, structured 'UFO' with bottom and top portion details visible was displayed via slide projector to the auditorium for a fixed time span under one minute. Exact descriptions of display material and duration are not published to enable us to repeat the experiment - even with readers of this report - in the future.

The experimenter Ken Phillips (former BUFORA and new ASSAP National Investigations Co-ordinator) asked the voluntary participants to observe closely and, after switch-off, sketch what they had seen and give a duration estimate.

The test was conducted three times in England with a total of 61 experimental witnesses - first at a Crawley, Sussex Astronomical Society meeting (April 19th, 1985), at a Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, Astronomical Society meeting (October 4th, 1985) and, finally, during a BUFORA meeting at the London Business School, Regent's Park, London, (October 5th, 1985). Thus, 32 participants were more astronomy-related, whereas 29 were more UFO-interested.

Drawings were collected and sent to Austria for statistical evaluation. The idea of showing a 'UFO diastide' and asking the viewers for sketches had its European premiere at Zistelalm, Salzburg, Austria, in July, 1982 involving 14 (mostly expert) participants of the International UPIAR Colloquium on Human Sciences and UFO Phenomena and Alexander Keul as experimenter(3)

RESULTS

Evaluation of the sketches and duration estimates were done by clinical psychologist Dr. Alexander Keul and showed the following structures:

- (1) Duration: If a ± 5 seconds interval around the true exposition time is defined as 'average fit', then one third to half of the watchers gave estimates falling into this category. About one sixth to one third of all viewers reached a 'good fit' (± 2 seconds deviation from true time). About one third estimated a shorter than 'average fit' duration, one seventh to one third over-estimated it. The roughly one third, one third, one third distribution of under- average and over-estimations is no safe base at all for assessing the quality of single 'witness' estimates 'blindfold' (without knowledge of the true duration).
- (2) One third to half of the 'witnesses drew almost exact shape outlining of the whole object seen, about half drew distorted images, one sixth and less depicted completely dissimilar shapes.
- (3) The main bottom structure of the 'UFO' was drawn up one third to half of the sighters and omitted by half to two thirds in their sketches.
- (4) Bottom secondary structures were correctly sketched by one sixth to one third of the participants, one third to half of the audience gave wrong shapes and the same number of people drew none or fuzzy shapes there.
- (5) Top main structures were correctly depicted by one third to half of the 'witnesses', one fifth to one third drew wrong shapes and the same number of participants sketched none or fuzzy shapes.
- (6) Half to nine tenths of the sketchers gave the correct orientation of the 'UFO' in space, one tenth to one fourth sketched a rim perspective, about the same number gave the object a completely different spatial orientation and roughly the same number again drew an uncertain or no spatial orientation at all.
- (7) Confabulations, i.e. non-existent details entering perception or recall through the mind of the observer (e.g. from UFO or Science Fiction literature read before the experiment) were found in about one fourth of the sketches produced by amateur astronomers' meeting participants, but in almost half of the drawings by ufologists' meeting participants. This difference is marked, but not statistically significant (CHI-squared test). Most of the non-existent details could be identified as parts of a 'classical UFO shape' similar to the experimental structure used, i.e. an unconscious completion tendency was shown by people who had read the respective literature - mostly ufologists not amateur astronomers.
- (8) A general scoring attempt to look for good and bad observers - one point each for average duration fit, correct shape outline, main and secondary structures correctly drawn, right perspective and no confabulations - showed no difference at all between the arithmetic mean of recalls

by amateur astronomer meeting participants and UFO meeting members - both \bar{x} were 3, 8, but a somewhat greater variance (i.e. more good and bad observers) for the UFO meeting visitors (standard deviation for amateur astronomers 1, 58, for ufologists 1, 97).

The overall results obtained with a sample of English 'experimental UFO witnesses' indicate that:

observation duration (exposition time under a minute) is equally correctly estimated, over- or under-estimated.

major structures of the UFO stimulus are correctly reproduced by a maximum of 50 to 60 per cent of the 'witnesses' and distorted or forgotten by the rest.

spatial orientation of the stimulus is remembered best by 50 to 90 per cent of the viewers.

confabulated (non-existent) details enter nearly every second drawing, when UFO literature has been studied previous to the simulated observation.

UFO interested persons showed the same average structure recall as amateur astronomy interested one, but a somewhat greater variance.

DISCUSSION

Our study is only a first attempt to bring the UFO experience 'into the lab' and experimental conditions (exposition time under one minute, diastide, no film used, emotional disposition different from 'real sighting') are certainly limits to generalisations, but we think we have positively shown that an observer's eyes are no camera and 'ufological bias' is a factor to be considered in a critical assessment of perception recall material.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The authors would like to know whether other, similar experimental studies have been made (and not published) by British or other researchers. Communications may be sent to: Dr. Alexander Keul, Plainstr. 62/122, A5020, Salzburg, Austria or Ken Phillips, 16 Wedgewood Walk, Lynton Road, West Hampstead, London, N.W.6.

REFERENCES

- (1) Elizabeth F. Loftus Eyewitness Testimony. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts - London, England, 1981.
- (2) Richard F. Haines. What Do UFO Drawings by Alienated Eyewitnesses and Non-Eyewitnesses Have in Common? In: Richard F. Haines (Ed). UFO Phenomena and the Behavioral Scientist. The Scarecrow Press. Metuchen, N.J. - London 1979 353-95.
- (3) Alexander G. Keul. What Could Be This? In: Roberto Farabone (Ed) Proc.Int. UPIAR Collq. on Human Sciences and UFO Phenomena, Salzburg, July 26-29, 1982. UPIAR Milano, Italy 1983, 18-20.

Observation of a metallic saucer shaped object by multi-witnesses
at Hinckley, Leicestershire.

CASE 84-22 Investigation by CLIVE POTTER (LUFOIC, BUFORA,
ASSAP)

JULY, 1984 Time 21.45 BST. North-west Hinckley,
Leicestershire (SP 423 942)

DEFINITION: MEDIUM

INTRODUCTION

This case was passed on to the author direct from one of the witnesses, Mr Graham Hall, shortly after the sighting occurred and an on-the-spot investigation was therefore able to proceed rapidly.

The principal witness, Mr Graham Hall, is a ufologist and co-founder of the now defunct Midlands network - UFO Research Midlands. He is therefore an excellent witness, being able to note down the salient points, obtain Sighting Report Questionnaires and get them filled in soon after the event, and to assess the situation in a reasonably objective manner.

The main obstacle that was encountered was the continual failure of Mr Hall's wife, Pauline, to complete a Sighting Report Questionnaire, although she is regarded as a good witness and appears open-minded about the subject of UFOs. Despite persistent calls and visits no form was produced although Mr Hall continually said that one would be. The author is prepared to credit this failure on both of their parts as being more due to laziness and a desire not to put into words her experience rather than an ulterior motive. Mr Hall has said that she (Mrs Hall) felt that her comments are not necessary and would not be worthwhile. Although the author is prepared to accept this he feels that Mr Hall has been inadequate in his attempts as a ufologist in obtaining confirmation from his wife for this fellow ufologist who has been investigating the case.

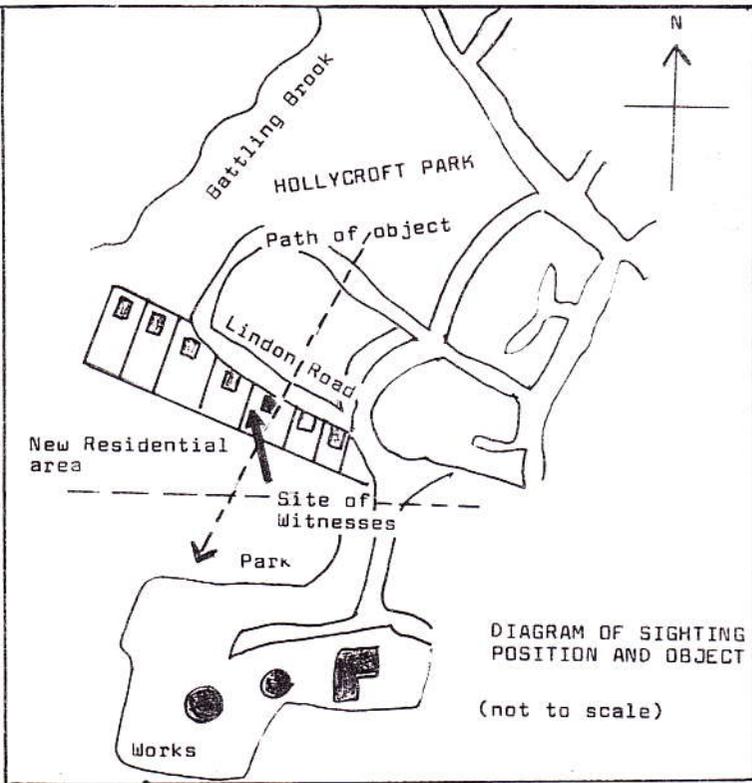
Obviously, due to Mr Hall's involvement in ufology it was not felt proper for him to investigate it and therefore I was charged with the conduct of the investigation.

THE EVENTS

The event took place at the residence of the Hall family in Hinckley and all the family (Mr and Mrs Hall and their three children) were at home when the object was sighted at 21.45 hrs BST.

The first witness to observe the object was Mr Hall's eldest son David (12), who was outside playing in the garden that faces south-west. He suddenly "noticed a thing in the sky. I first thought it was a balloon, or a parachute. It was moving in a strange manner. Then it moved above me." David then went in to call his mother and father, and the rest of the family went out to see what the matter was. David then said that: "It stopped over the other side. It hovered. We watched it for a long time. It was silver with a turquoise light."

His brother Michael (10) was inside playing at the time and went outside immediately when David said that there was a UFO. Michael stated that outside was a "strange shape like a tyre." It seemed to turn slowly and he watched it hover low in the distance and then disappear.

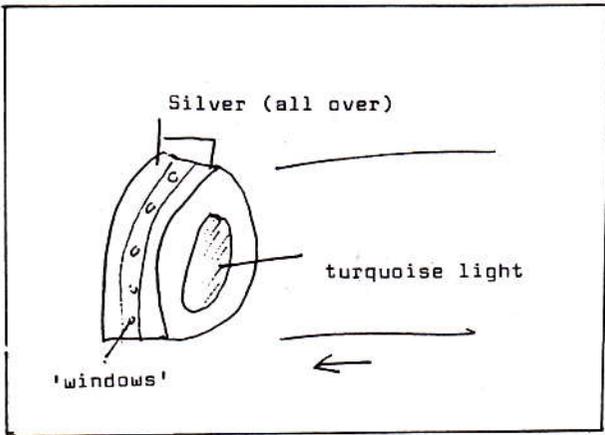


Mr Graham Hall was upstairs at the time when his son David shouted to him to "come and see this UFO." He stated that: "I remember running downstairs rather fast because of the way in which he was trying to gain my attention, his manner was one of great urgency, obviously something had startled him into such action. On reaching the back door of our house, I ran outside and looked into the sky whereupon I saw a large object moving at a fast rate of speed over our back garden and then over neighbouring rooftops of houses in Milton Close. I watched the object for a few seconds only from this vantage point and then I ran back indoors

and upstairs to first fetch my binoculars and secondly to go to the rear bedroom window in order that I could perhaps observe the object (which I presumed to be the same object as before) further, On reaching the window I could still see an object speeding further away from our location. I then focussed my binoculars on the object and, as I did so, the object stopped and began to circle around in the sky in a somewhat strange manner, unlike anything I have ever seen before. Through the binoculars I could see the object clearly. It was shaped similar to a car wheel and appeared metallic. The sides were blue, the rim silver and reflecting the setting sunlight. The object circled in the same unusual manner for approximately one minute. It then dropped behind a tree and was finally lost from view. I scanned the same area of sky with the aid of my binoculars for about ten minutes afterwards, but nothing more was seen of the object."

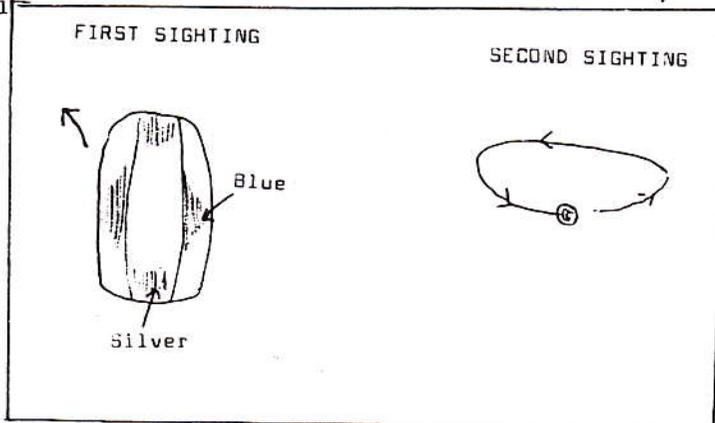
Although no Sighting Report Questionnaire was compiled by Mrs Pauline Hall it was ascertained from Mr Hall that she saw exactly the same object undergoing the same behaviour.

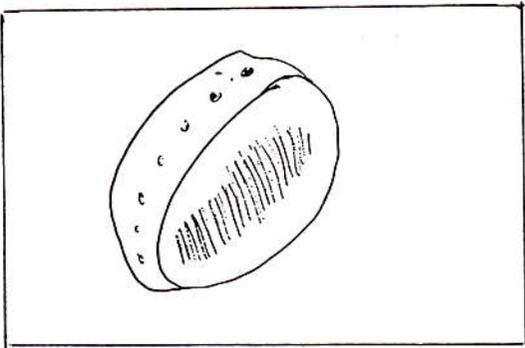
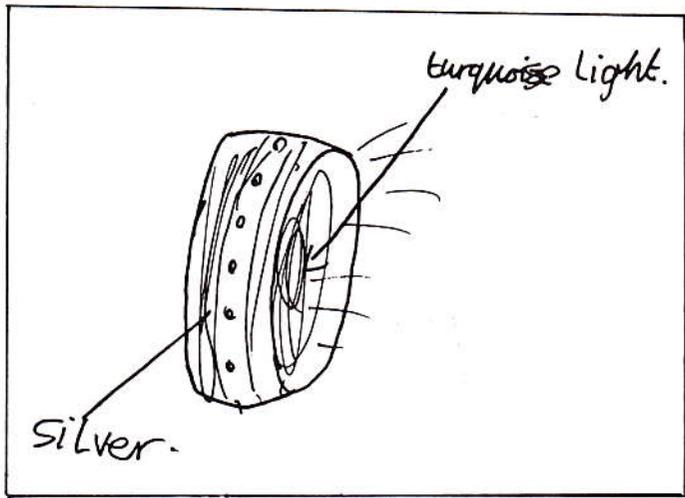
It may be pertinent to add at this stage that at the time of the sighting Mr Hall was upstairs reading a book on the subject of UFOs.



Sketch of object as originally drawn by David Hall

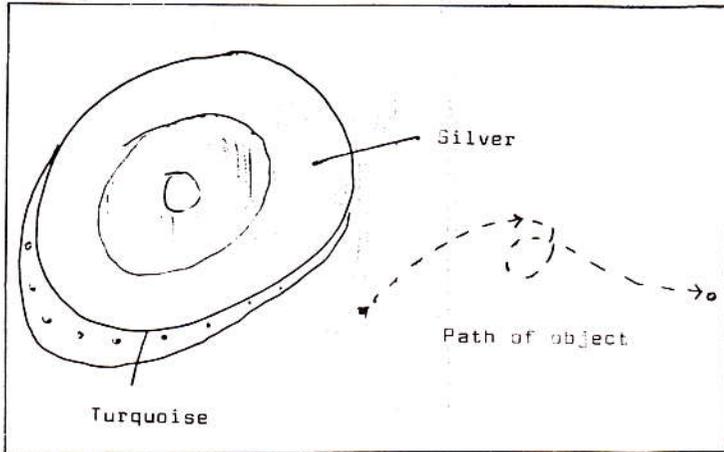
Sketches of object as originally drawn by Graham Hall





Sketch of object originally drawn by Mr Graham Hall as seen through 8 x 30 binoculars

Sketch of object as originally drawn by Michael Hall



Soon after Mr Hall reported the sighting to the author arrangements were made to interview the witnesses at the site of the observations. Sighting Report Questionnaires had already been completed by the witnesses under the supervision of Mr Hall, and sketches of the subject had also been drawn.

The author visited the witnesses with free-lance photographer, Mr Gordon McDonagh, who took several photographs of the site and the sky in which the object had been witnessed.

All of the witnesses were interviewed on-the-site independently of the others, and all accounts were similar not only relating to the written statements but to each others as well. Certain leading questions were asked but this did not affect their accounts as did trick questions.

Measurements were also taken from the sighting points and these were collated with a map of the area.

An article was featured in the local newspaper but this did not bring in any further reports, and neither did a letter to Leicester and Hinckley police stations.

Meteorological information was kindly supplied by a local meteorologist, Mr David Mutton of Cosby.

THE WITNESSES

The author has known Mr Graham Hall for two years prior to this incident and can therefore make a reasonable good assessment of him as a witness. The author can state that Mr Hall is a rational intelligent and sensible person who would not hoax such a report deliberately contrive it in such a manner likely to give a wrong impression of a sighting of an unidentified object.

His standing as a local ufologist serves to give him credibility as a witness, particularly as he has an open-minded and rational scientific approach to ufology. He has participated on many investigations and can therefore assess a witness's account on the basis of this experience and knowledge. He has knowledge of the objects and phenomena commonly misidentified by witnesses and is therefore in a position to view the events on that basis. The fact that, as an ufologist, the object was a strange event to him and he could not rationally explain it strongly suggests that it did not represent a normal phenomenon.

His wife, Pauline, also appears level-headed and rational and tends to disassociate herself from such matters, particularly as she is perplexed by the object she saw.

The children, although raised on science fiction, all appear reasonably sensible as children go, and did not exaggerate or distort their accounts. They are all aware of their father's interest in ufology but he has schooled them to report what they see and not what they think they saw if they should report an unusual event.

THE ENVIRONMENT

The sighting spot, 23 Linden Road, lies towards the central west of Hinckley in south west Leicestershire. It is a residential area with a recreational area to the south south west of the spot, the direction in which the object was seen to travel.

The object, coming as it did from the north north east would have had to travel over a large residential part of north Hinckley, and over a recreational ground to the south south west, where it was in fact seen to hover for a short period of time. It was travelling to the east of Nuneaton and the course that it was taking would have brought it to Coventry. Before being spotted by the Halls it would have travelled to the west of Leicester, over a rural area of villages and hamlets.

The Nuneaton-Hinckley area has been the source of many UFO reports in recent years, and Hinckley itself contains the minor "window areas" - Burbage Common to the east of Hinckley, and Sketchley Hill to the south. The association with faults and anomalous light phenomena does not appear to be relevant here since what was observed was a definite physical object of metallic construction and of apparent artificial manufacture.

EVALUATION

The total duration of the sighting as estimated by Mr Hall was about two minutes using his watch after the event, but reconstruction produced a time of around 105 seconds, about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes.

The colour of the object has been evaluated on the basis of all the account to have been silver on the outside and turquoise in the centre. David Hall did notice a series of small black marks around the rim that were stationary.

All of the witnesses confirm that the object was not spinning. The size of the object, at arm's length, was likened to that of a one pence piece.

A slight wobbling of the object was noticed by all of the witnesses but it kept a steady path from north north east to south south west.

From the rear bedroom Mr Hall estimated the object to have been about 20-25 degrees at angular height.

Mr Hall viewed the object through a pair of 8 x 30 binoculars and noticed that looked at endways the central part of the object appeared raised, like a hump. This was coloured turquoise, although Michael said that it looked black, and it did not reflect light, only the silver rim was shining. In the distance, over the recreational ground, the object appeared to exhibit a rocking motion and hovered, apparently almost dropping to the ground. It then disappeared into the distance, where Mr Hall believes that he may have caught sight of it.

David Hall first caught sight of it as it approached from behind the front of the house and estimates that a 10 pence piece would cover it up at that moment.

The object was considered strange in that its motion was unusual, the fact that it stopped and circled after having sped rapidly across the sky seconds before; its speed across the sky although the witnesses say that there was no wind that day; the object had no wings or fins; the lack of sound and exhaust fumes; its unusual shape; and its low height.

CONCLUSION

All the possible explanations were looked into to try and account for the phenomenon observed by the Hall family. The important facts of the case are that a metallic and manufactured object was observed by multi-witnesses, one of whom was a ufologist of many years standing, who all agreed as to its nature and behaviour. No air traffic was in the vicinity at the time that could possibly have accounted for the phenomenon observed. What is unusual was that no other witnesses came forward to report it although it would appear likely that there are strong reasons for supposing that other people would have seen it, particularly so as it was over a recreational park. However, it was also travelling quite rapidly and, at the time in question, there might not have been that many people around and, as is generally known, people do not tend to look up at the sky.

The most likely explanation that can be found is that a model balloon was responsible since the more recent models are metallic and often brightly coloured and shaped in a variety of ways. However all of the witnesses agree that it was not a balloon and Mr Hall is adamant in stating that it did not look or behave like one. In fact, the object was moving quite rapidly and straight, an odd occurrence when one considers that there was hardly any wind, the maximum speed being about one mph, and the direction quite variable after 18.00 hours and very light. The day had been sunny and hot with a top temperature of 27.8°C, with the temperature at 22.00 hrs BST of 22.2°C. The fact also that the object stopped, hovered and circled over the recreation park is also strange and suggests that the object was intelligently controlled.

The only conclusion that the author can give is that it must be classed as unidentified and UFO, probable IFO.

APPENDIX

The size of the object can be estimated roughly from the equation: $y = \frac{l \times s}{a}$ where s = size of the comparison object l =

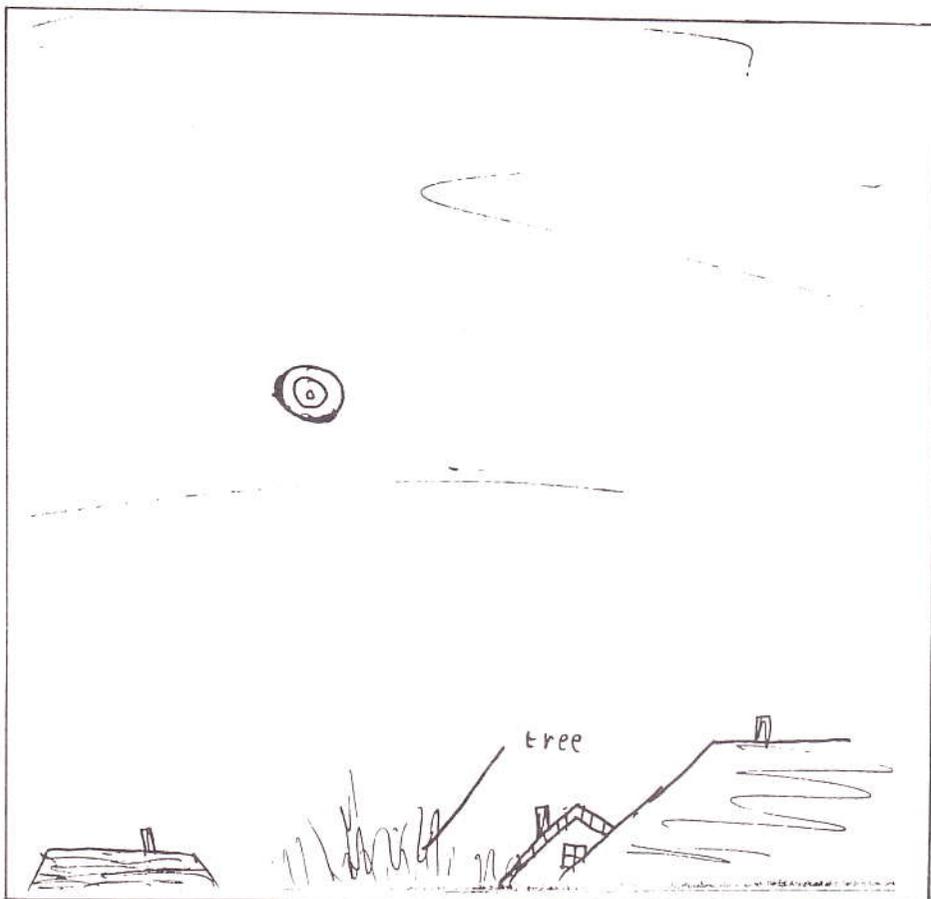
distance of the object and a = arm's length. Since the distance must be gauged very inaccurately from a map and the comparison object may in itself be inaccurate the final answer will be only a guide. From Mr Hall's estimate we can ascertain from a map that the maximum distance at which the object was gauged would have been approximately 400 metres. Since the length of the arms is about 560mm and the size of the comparison object is a 10 pence piece, then the equation produces the result of 12 metres. If the distance was 300 metres the equation would have been 9.10 metres, and if it had been 200 metres then the size would be 6 metres. David Hall estimated the object as being the size of a 10 pence piece at arm's length when overhead so the equation is:

$l = \frac{a \times y}{s}$ so the height would have been approximately 268 metres

height, if the estimation by Mr Hall of 400 metres is taken. If the distance of 300 metres is taken then the equation produces the height of 201 metres, and if 200 metres then the height would be 134 metres. But all these estimations are dependent on Mr Hall's estimation of the distance and comparative size so we can assume a maximum estimate of size as about six metres. If the object was really at a height of twice the house then the object's size would be 0.8 metres., about the size of a metallic model balloon.

The speed of the object appears to have been rapid, unlike the behaviour of a balloon especially when the weather conditions were not conducive to such behaviour. The angular velocity taken by the object is computed as 0.42 degrees per second, although this includes the time taken whilst the object was circling over the park in the distance.

One can speculate as to whether the object could have been a metallic model balloon made of thin plastic aluminium laminate, sometimes with coloured metallic patches on the object. The average size of these balloons is about 0.45 metres, and this would conform to some of the characteristics of the object, even the size if we are to assume that Mr Hall's estimate is wrong and that the object was quite low. The speed of the object was computed to have been about 16kms per hour, that is about 9 mph which seems to negate against a balloon because there was



little, if any, wind that day.

Therefore, the case must be described as a "Problematic UFO", where the report has fundamental difficulties that make it uncertain in ascribing it to the IFD category, but at the same time questions its value as UFO data.

HELP WANTED

NIGEL MORTIMER, 33 Green Lane, Addingham, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 0JH is undertaking some research into UFO case sightings from November, 1980.

He would be most grateful to hear from any BUFORA members who can provide him with any information. Please write to Mr Mortimer at the address above.

Letters to the Editor

From: J. Danby (M).
Preston, Lancashire.

The Last Straw

Sir - Incredible as it may seem I have refrained from writing to you until now on the matter of the Campbell/Randles syndrome. The latest (March) issue of the Bulletin was the last straw, hence this letter.

I have observed the developing acrimony between Randles and Campbell, in parallel with the mounting indications of paranoia shown by Gordon Creighton, with steadily increasing dismay, my least concern being that these individuals, all published authors of one form or another, have a direct outlet to the public, and I fear that the (interested) public must inevitably come to the conclusion that these persons are typical of 'ufologists' and represent the 'expert' view. Other matters I find disquieting are the increasingly fantastic theories of Jenny Randles and the astonishing statements promulgated by Stuart Campbell. Leave Gordon Creighton I leave for a moment.

Before I comment on these matters, let me state the position from which I do so. First of all I will say that there is no person whom one could describe as an 'expert' on 'UFDs'. As Mr Spock (he of the pointed ears, not the childish D Doctor) would say: "Insufficient data, Captain." In other words there is insufficient material or data available for study and analysis which would allow anyone to become an 'expert'. Unless of course those unconfirmed accounts of 'flying saucers' and occupants locked away in American bases are true! In which case, the 'experts' are keeping their heads down! It follows as a logical conclusion of this lack of firm data that I do not subscribe to any theory which has been put forward, nor do I attempt any explanation myself. In the words of the song: "Nothing's impossible I have found", so I merely note the 'evidence' and the theories, however 'way-out' and

leave the explanations until, I hope, sufficient evidence becomes available to allow conclusions to be drawn. It may never happen, but you never know!

I now turn to Stuart Campbell, our RIC for Scotland. Whilst I would defend an individual's right to hold and express their opinions on any subject, I find it incredible that an official of the Association, and an RIC, should express such a dogmatic and wholly biased view on our subject, especially when the Aims of the Association are clearly stated in such a way as to avoid bias and prejudice. Aim 1 of the Association, if I may remind readers, states that the policy of the Association is "to encourage, promote, and conduct unbiased scientific research of unidentified flying objects (UFO) phenomena throughout the United Kingdom." Campbell's position, that UFOs do not exist and that all unexplained cases could be explained in a conventional manner given that sufficient data were to be available, seems to me to be indicative of a biased and closed mind on the subject, and certainly at variance with the aims and objects of the Association.

Jenny Randles, I fear, seems to spend a large proportion of her time inventing new words, or rather, devising strange and fantastic pseudo-scientific applications for existing words. I was beginning to think that Jenny had come to believe that the entire manifestation of unexplained phenomena was 'all in the mind,' but re-reading some of Jenny's writings has reassured me that she still has a place for a 'nuts and bolts' approach, as well as other more exotic and fanciful theories. Surely the English language has a surfeit of terms which could be used in their correct and established sense to describe any aspect of the subject? By coining evermore exotic and fanciful pseudo-scientific terminology, Jenny, to her discredit, may come to be thought of as part of the 'lunatic fringe'. A more rational vocabulary would surely render her theories more acceptable to her

readers?

Gordon Creighton, a man for whom I have a great deal of respect, seems to me to be showing increasing signs of paranoia, at least that is the impression he is creating in my mind with his more recent editorials. I do not dispute the accusations of 'cover-up' and 'manipulation' and so on which are implicit in Mr. Creighton's heavily obscured writings; I am not in a position to do so. Nor am I able to support them. But I would urge Mr Creighton to be more explicit. He should come out in the open and state quite clearly what it is he is trying to say. And, having done that, he should give evidence. He may then begin to be believed rather than being in danger of categorisation as just another rather harmless eccentric. I have subscribed to FLYING SAUCER REVIEW for many years, and I shall continue to do so, but I must confess that I have certain misgivings about the impression given by the last few issues of FSR.

From: Manfred Cassirer.
London, NW6.

Campbell's Oversimplification

Sir - Stewart C Campbell in his article on THE UFO MYTH (March BULLETIN) oversimplifies a very involved problem in stating categorically that 'ghosts' are to be counted among those (unrelated) 'entities' that are mere 'figments of the human imagination'; though no doubt some are. Stewart typically confuses the issue (a la 'Sceptical Inquirer') by lumping everything together; tactics one rather tires of sometimes. Of course, one may well agree that they are not necessarily or at all "revenants" as believed in the Middle Ages(1). There are, however 'veridical' crisis apparitions that can by no means be laughed off.

As to UFOs they are indeed closely related (in part) to this phenomenon, and people often see humanoid figures corresponding

basically to apparitions in that they are not 'real' (whatever that may mean!) I do not embrace the ET hypothesis, and find the UFO syndrome quite fascinating enough in itself without it, and prefer to study the UFO phenomenon.

In his eagerness to confuse, Stewart's own 'failure to define terms' causes him to fall into the trap of mixing up two disparate questions:

- (1) Are UFOs from outer space?
- (2) Are there unexplained sightings?

The answer to (1) is 'No'; to (2) 'Yes.'

Reference:

- (1) Boyer in The Folklore of Ghosts. ed. Davidson and Russell. Brewer, Cambridge, 1981.

From: Nigel Mortimer. Ilkley,
West Yorkshire.

BUFORA Computer Files

Sir -

I would like to echo Paul Fuller's comment regarding Mike Wootten's article concerning the BUFORA Computerised Data System, (BULLETIN, January, 1986).

I not only congratulate Mike, but also admire his 'new' approach to ufological research. I can say little more than Paul Fuller has already said, about the great benefits of the work that Mike had put forward, but to say that I know only too well how much effort is required in achieving a practical system that works well for everyone.

Mike knows that I too operate a similar computerised filing system, which is based in Yorkshire. It holds many sightings that are not on the BUFORA files, some that can be termed very important cases. It goes without saying that BUFORA and Mike can have any access to these for inclusion in the BUFORA system. It may be possible to work together in future

and so achieve a more complete understanding of the phenomenon in all parts of the country. If this becomes possible, then I am sure Mike will readily agree that we shall at last have at last achieved a useful and valuable liaison.

From: Steuart Campbell,
Edinburgh, Scotland.

Not Guilty

Sir -

I resent Mike Wootten's implication that I am guilty of 'investigations malpractice' (if he was not implying that, why did he mention it?)! Quite frankly there is never enough information to be 100 per cent sure of an evaluation (just as science can never be absolutely sure of anything) and most evaluations are basically hypotheses which can explain the report. In the absence of relevant or believable hypotheses a report must be 'unexplained', which means only that the report could not be explained (at the time). It does not mean, as Mike seems to think, that a 'UFO' was seen. In this connection I object to Mike's entering unexplained cases as a report of a 'UFO' in the database.

BUFDRA's Investigation Handbook (paragraph 8.89) specifically prohibits any case being explained as a 'UFO', and I do not believe that I have ever done so. Nor is Mike justified in presuming that because a report is unexplained the investigator has done his job thoroughly. Explanations depend on the knowledge and experience of the investigator and on how much data he has been able to collect about the circumstances of the incident. But none of us are perfect or omniscient. I am particularly conscious that my knowledge is incomplete and I find that new hypotheses to explain old reports, arise from time to time.

Mike has sent me a print-out of all 24 cases, and I have advised him of my re-evaluations. None of the cases remain 'unidentified', although there were two reports which I could not identify.

Because I disparage the database it does not follow that I do not realise that a great deal of time has been spent on its compilation. I only wish that so much time had not been wasted. Mike should note that I do not live in an 'ivory tower' and that my hands are 'dirty' with investigation of UFO reports most of the time.

In answer to Jenny Randles' question (put in public but never in private) as to why, if UFOs don't exist, I am still 'investigating them', I must (once again) point out that none of us investigates UFOs; we investigate UFO reports. UFOs may not exist but UFO reports certainly do exist. I seem to be having trouble putting this important distinction across. I investigate UFO reports because few other people do so (at least with any hope of finding the correct explanations) and because they interest me. What people think they see in the sky and the phenomena they see are matters of interest to science. I also continue to investigate UFO reports in the hope that my rational explanations will relieve people of unnecessary superstitious beliefs and prevent the spread of the UFO myth. There is also the possibility of teaching science through UFO investigation. Perhaps Jenny will now stop asking silly questions.

From: Steuart Campbell,
Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Peter Day Film

Sir -

Jenny Randles has difficulty accepting SCUFORI's conclusion that the object in Peter Day's film was the F-111 which crashed shortly afterwards. Clearly the object in the film is not an aircraft, but it can have been the glow of its exhaust, particularly if the engine was operating on reheat

(if the plane was in difficulty it could have been on reheat to try to obtain more power). This would explain why the film does not show the plane crashing.

Although on the film, the orange glow moves from left to right, it is obvious that (if it is the exhaust) the plane was actually flying away from Day in cloud such that only the exhaust glow could be seen. Indeed, Jenny's sketch, although it has the crash site too far south, does show such a course. The exhaust glow would have become progressively invisible, perhaps intermittently towards the end, when the amount of cloud between the plane and Day became thick enough to obscure it. Such disappearance is visible on the film. From the angular speed of the glow and the known speed of an F-111, the approximate angle of the plane's course to Day's line of sight can be calculated. I predict that it will point in the general direction of the site of the crash.

SCUFORI's conclusion is entirely justified and Jenny's continued scepticism is not.

NEWS

JUNE 1986 LECTURE

Lionel Beer will give the evening lecture on June 7th, 1986 at the LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL, NW1. He will take as his theme the recent Marian phenomena at Ballinspittle.

Lionel's book THE MOVING STATUE OF BALLINSPITTLE AND RELATED PHENOMENA has now been published. Copies are available from Lionel at 15 Freshwater Court, Crawford Street, London W1H 1HS.

Copies will be available at the lecture and the book will be reviewed in the next issue of the BULLETIN.

The book is priced at £2 (glossy cover) £1.75 (non glossy).

O B I T U A R Y

Council have learned with very deep regret of the death, on March 6th, 1986 of Miss Betty Wood, the Association's Secretary for over 18 years.

A tribute to Betty and her untiring work for BUFORA will appear in the next issue of the BULLETIN.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

BUFORA has registered as a data user/bureau under the terms of the DATA PROTECTION ACT which came into force on May 11th, 1986.

All membership records will be transferred to computer within the next few months and, hopefully, the job will be completed by the early autumn.

BUFORA BOOK - 40th Anniversary

BUFORA is planning to publish in the summer of 1987 a book to mark the 40th anniversary of Kenneth Arnold's Mount Rainier sighting. Many UK and overseas contributors have been lined up and most aspects of the subject will be covered.

However the editors, HILARY EVANS and JOHN BARRETT are still looking for serious scientific papers for publication. If you have something you would like to offer please let us know.