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**YORKSHIRE UFO SOCIETY**

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## PROJECT RED BOOK

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(Vol 3 #3, September 1999)



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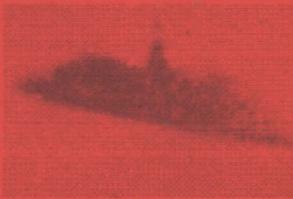
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH JEROME CLARK

1967 SHEFFIELD SAUCERS

THE PETER CONTROVERSEY- THE RIGHT TO REPLY

And much more...

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### Subscriptions:

£12:00 - 12 issues ( 1 year)

£7:00 - 6 issues ( 6 months )

sample issue - £1:50

Project Red Book is published each month by the Yorkshire UFO Society.

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To re-print articles in this magazine please enquire at the above address- that means me, Dave. I'm sure to say "yes", but it is nice to ask first, y'know?

The articles and views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, YUFOS members, Nick Pope, Mark Martin, Jenny Randles, Dave Clarke, Eileen Fletcher, Jonathan Slater or Andy Roberts. *Especially* Andy Roberts.

Right. That covers *me* then.

"Hey now!"

## AN INTERVIEW WITH JEROME CLARK

Jerome Clark, one of the leading authorities on the UFO phenomenon in the USA, has been following the subject for more than forty years. He was a long-time contributor, reviewer and editor (first associate, later senior) of the long-running *FATE* magazine. Since 1985 he has edited the acclaimed *International UFO Reporter*, the quarterly magazine of the Centre for UFO Studies. His work has appeared in numerous magazines, including *FATE* and *Fortean Times*, and he is the author of such books as *Creatures of the Outer Edge* with Loren Coleman, *Unexplained!* and an award winning three volume *UFO Encyclopaedia*, re-edited, abridged, and available in this country as *The UFO Book*. (A revised second edition of *The UFO Encyclopedia* was published in two volumes in 1998.) He has appeared on TV shows such as *SIGHTINGS* and NBC's two-hour documentary *Confrontations* (aired in February 1999) and is a regular and vocal contributor to the Internet discussion group UFO-Updates. He lives in Minnesota. For two decades he has written songs with Robin and Linda Williams, and some of these have been covered by the likes of Emmylou Harris, Mary Chapin Carpenter, and other country, folk, pop, and bluegrass artists.

Although he is busy with many projects, Jerry took the time to answer questions I posed to him through the miracle of e-mail.

**DB:** Jerry, tell us a little about how you became involved in ufology.

**JEROME CLARK :** In October 1957, when I was 10 and about to be 11 years old, I joined the Science Fiction Book Club. The introductory offer let new members get three books for practically nothing, and on a whim I ordered something titled "*The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*", by somebody named Edward J. Ruppelt. I'm not even sure why I did it. I'd never really given UFOs any particular thought till then, though I do remember hearing my parents talk about them when *Life* ran its famous April 1952 "Have We Visitors from Space?" article. Ruppelt's book enthralled me, and of course it changed my life. I began reading everything I could get my hands on. One of the first books I read in the wake of Ruppelt was *The Books of Charles Fort*, and with that I became not just a young ufologist but a young Fortean. Philosophically, I remain a Fortean -- not true of most ufologists, in my observation.

I have recently come across your book "*Creatures From The Outer Edge*" which you co-authored with Loren Coleman in 1978. Have your perceptions and opinions on the paranormal and ufology changed in any way from your initial years?

Oh my, yes. A whole lot. For one thing, I do not consider myself a "paranormalist." In August 1999 Loren Coleman and I returned to

the subject matter of *Creatures from the Outer Edge*, in a book titled "*Cryptozoology A to Z*", published by Simon and Schuster. If you read those books one after another, you'll see how intellectually I -- as well as Loren, of course -- have evolved over the years. We're far more conservative, cautious, and scientifically grounded, and there is nothing of the paranormal in the new book.

Apart from your work editing the IUR, what are you working on at the moment?

I'm putting together proposals for two books to give to my agent. One is an overview of the notion of otherworldly beings, which will give me a chance to put together my mature thoughts on the nature of anomalous experience. The other deals with what is probably my major esthetic/artistic passion in life: folk and roots music.

Some researchers claim that many of the accepted 'classic' unexplained cases can now be proved to have rational, down-to-earth explanations. They cite Roswell, Rendlesham, the Kenneth Arnold sighting and now, it appears, even Socorro. Do you agree? Did Arnold see Pelicans, for instance?

No, Arnold did not see pelicans. That theory has been shot to pieces, and no rational person could possibly entertain it. As Mark Cashman,

Bruce Maccabee, Brad Sparks, David Rudiak, and others have shown, it is not only logically unlikely but physically impossible. It is not a serious hypothesis.

From everything I can tell, Rendlesham and Socorro -- I know rather more about the latter than about the former-- remain as puzzling now as they seemed at the time. The best UFO cases remain stubbornly unexplained over time -- not what you would expect if, as debunkers (or, as I like to call them, pelicanists) were right, they all arise from prosaic causes. Roswell, on the other hand, may be a hopeless case. Not in the sense that the Mogul explanation is certainly correct, but in the sense that so much time has passed, there was a such curtain of secrecy over it for decades, and so many witnesses have died in the interim, that the debate may well be stalemated, possibly forever. Roswell is not a case I think a lot about these days, though some -- especially Mogul believers seem oddly obsessed with it.

There's a great deal of emotion invested in Roswell. I am basically an agnostic about it, but even that sort of fence-sitting grossly offends some Roswellphobes. Even the mildest dissent from the anti-Roswell line, as I can testify from a fair amount of strange experience, opens one to abusive letters and e-mails. I've been around ufology a long time, and I've never experienced the like. Why the emotion? Why no tolerance for differing opinion? In the end, it seems to me, none of us really knows what happened at Roswell. It all depends on whose testimony you find credible.

What can we make today of such UFO waves as the French Landings of 1954, or the Levelland, Texas, wave of November 1957?

They tell us that UFOs appear to be technological, to affect the operation of motor vehicles, and to carry humanoid occupants. In short, to be something very, very significant on a whole lot of levels.

You have documented and investigated thousands of cases, from simple Nocturnal Lights to abductions. Which is the strangest yet most convincing case you can remember?

Generally, the high-strangeness cases tend not to be the most evidential. In fact, I am

reasonably certain that many are not UFO experiences at all, but contemporary manifestations of the sort of visionary experience long a part of human history. I'm not sure, in other words, that Men in Black and daylight discs are part of the same continuum.

The best UFO cases tend to be those involving instrumented observation. The 1957 RB-47 case, for example, or the Delphos or Trans-en-Provence CE2. The Socorro, New Mexico, incident -- which is both a CE2 and a CE3 -- combines physical evidence with independent observation of a UFO.

There is so much misconception, exaggeration and pure garbage in ufology today, but what do you find is the biggest myth that plagues the subject?

A definitive answer to that question would fill a book. Obviously, credulity and paranoia have always played a big, unfortunate role in the history of UFO interest. They're still there and will be as long as anybody can call him- or herself a ufologist.

There also is a trend toward a kind of smug neoskepticism. Pelicanism. Of course, it's good to be critical-minded, and anybody who's made a contribution to our subject has used good sense, caution, and skepticism when the occasion called for it, as if often does. There are bogus reports and foolish ideas aplenty out there, God knows. Unfortunately, we're getting a lot of pelicanism: inadequate explanations for puzzling cases, coupled with rhetorical gas about how anybody who isn't convinced is some kind of naive true believer. Not only is that particular approach unhelpful, it is precisely the sort of thing ufology came into existence to combat. To the extent that pelicanism prevails, ufology becomes an exercise in irrelevance.

Have you ever had to change your stance radically over a case, a researcher, or a hypothesis, either pro or con?

Well, I don't know about "had to." I like to think my ideas have changed organically, as I've gotten older, smarter, better informed. But I do remember when I ended up debunking a favorite case of mine -- the alleged 1897 calf-napping at LeRoy, Kansas -- and feeling a bit disappointed. On the other hand, I felt

better about having the truth. Only a fool wants to be fooled.

Do you think there is any link between seemingly disparate areas of the paranormal, such as ESP, 'monster' sightings and UFO encounters?

I am not a paranormalist and have little interest in the subject. I don't even have an opinion on the existence or non-existence of ESP. My non-UFO anomalist interests are in the Fortean arena: cryptozoology, falls from the sky, and the like. And no, I don't think these are linked with UFOs phenomenologically, though -- from the purely human, subjective aspect -- we do tend to respond socially and psychologically in the same ways to these disparate phenomena.

In your 40+ years in this 'business', you have met and worked with many of the main movers and shakers in the field of ufology. Who did/do you admire the most?

I have met a lot of very good people, people of courage and commitment with a determination to make something scientifically sensible of the UFO phenomenon. People such as -- I know I'm not going to remember everybody, but ... -- Dick Hall, Walt Webb, Jenny Randles, Mark Rodeghier, Mike Swords, Eddie Bullard, Bill Chalker, Keith Basterfield, Jennie Zeidman, Ted Phillips, Wendy Connors, Jan Aldrich, Ted Bloecher, Isabel Davis, Bill Weitzel. There are people whose decency and bravery I respect even if I don't agree with all of their conclusions, people such as Budd Hopkins and Dave Jacobs, probably the two most unfairly maligned living ufologists. He and I disagree about most things, but I have the highest respect for Hilary Evans, whose books are -- in my judgment -- thoroughly wrong-headed, but fascinatingly and thought-provokingly so. I always learn something reading him.

Ufology's two greatest heroes, however, are both gone from our midst: Allen Hynek and James McDonald. The two could not have been less alike, and on a personal level they detested each other. Each thought the other to be dangerously misguided or ineffective. But each had his own strengths, and to this day all of us who labor to make ufology sober and disciplined work in their shadows.

Jerry, you are a regular visitor to the internet discussion group UFO Updates, and have held some long-running and frequently heated 'debates' with researchers such as Ed Stewart, John Rimmer, Peter Brookesmith and Andy Roberts, among others. On your part are these exchanges tongue in cheek, or is there any real venom in there? In other words, do you actually like your regular sparring partners?

I have never understood why a difference of opinion -- which is inevitable in a matter so aggravatingly complex as the UFO phenomenon -- should be synonymous with personal conflict. Nearly all the time my responses in internet discussions to individuals I'm debating are written in good humor; often enough, I'm laughing maniacally as I'm typing. John Rimmer in particular has always understood this, since John and I have "known" each other -- I put "known" in scare quotes since we've met in person only once -- since the mid-1970s. John's a good guy, and *Magonia* always makes for great reading, even if many of its articles don't seem to be describing events on a planet with which I'm familiar. I don't know Andy Roberts well, but he's recently contributed a solid, well-researched piece to IUR, and we get along fine. We also share non-UFO musical interests.

Of the people I've interacted with in Internet debates, only a very few have struck me as extraordinarily nasty. In those instances, I've chosen to discontinue the exchange. I won't name names. Doing so would only make these angry souls even madder. "Madder" in both senses of the adjective.

You certainly stand up for your beliefs, Jerry. What makes you so passionate about this subject?

Born and raised that way, I guess. My parents and relatives always had, and have, strong views which they don't hesitate to express. I grew up in a deeply political family -- what they call here in America "yellow-dog Democrats" (as in "I'd vote for a little yellow dog if he was a Democrat") -- where debate was a natural part of conversation and discourse. That's why I can argue vigorously with somebody and not for a second dislike that person for holding a view that I don't share ... well, I mean within reason. I guess I would hold somebody's racism, fascism, Stalinism, or love of Kenny G's music against

him. Fortunately, very few ufologists answer to those descriptions.

From your internet discussions, it seems that a particular bugbear of yours is the Psychosocial Hypothesis, or PSH. Can you explain what the PSH is, and why you disagree with certain aspects of it?

It's not science. It's just literary criticism, words strung together (sometimes, admittedly, in elegant ways) devoid of empirical justification. It's not even good psychology or good sociology. It has nothing interesting to say about the sorts of cases that caused ufology to come into being in the first place, namely those cases that strongly suggest a physical, technological dimension to the UFO phenomenon. When you start discussing George Adamski and Betty Hill in the same breath, you've simply removed yourself from serious consideration.

I've written at length on the problems with the PSH. I'd refer anybody who's interested to see the entry "Psychosocial Hypothesis" in my *UFO Encyclopedia*. An abridged version appears in my trade paperback *The UFO Book*. Essentially, the PSH as one of current ufology's enduring articles of faith is a waste of time. Of course there are psychological and sociological dimensions to ufology, and they deserve attention, and in fact they interest me quite a lot. Where the PSH turns to gibberish, though, is where it claims extraordinary causative powers -- powers that can't be demonstrated except by the waving of a *Magonia* contributor's hands.

Basically, the PSH exists to domesticate the UFO phenomenon, in other words to ease the unease the phenomenon always generates consciously or unconsciously. Of course that's a psychosocial reading, and I've learned that if you want to drive a PSHer bats, turn the tables and suggest that the PSH is itself a psychosocial response to the phenomenon.

Okay, okay, maybe I'm contradicting myself, after all those nice things I've said about Hilary Evans, who was one of the inventors of the PSH. All I can say is that Hilary has a good humor and a resistance to dogmatic insistence on his utter rightness (and righteousness) that I find appealing. Besides, the guy's smart, and a damn good writer. And, God help me, he's probably right once in a while.

What do you think of the ETH (Extraterrestrial Hypothesis) as a *possible* explanation for *some* UFO reports?

It remains, after all this time, the only scientific and logical explanation following from the premise that the most puzzling UFO reports are evidence of an advanced technology which is not ours. I have no time for, or interest in, occultish speculations of the sort John Keel, Jacques Vallee, and others have trafficked in. That sort of thing is just tautology.

Although it is arguable whether *any* case can be considered to *prove* then ETH, which cases do you think are the strongest indication that there is something truly anomalous at the heart of the UFO phenomenon?

Patterns in the data and a fairly good number of individual cases. My encyclopedia goes into some of the latter in considerable detail, including new or heretofore obscure information. Probably the single most evidential case in UFO history is the RB-47 incident, which Brad Sparks has documented dazzlingly (see pp. 761- 90 of *The UFO Encyclopedia*, 2nd Ed.). I'm also fond of the Nash-Fortenberry sighting, the Portage County, Ohio, case, and Socorro. I'm referring here just to those that come immediately to mind. There are plenty of others, and I'm sure all informed ufologists have their favorites.

A question I have asked British ufologists is what they consider to be the difference, if any, between ufology in Britain and in America. What is your take as a researcher from 'over the pond'?

I'm not sure if I can really answer that one, except to say that I notice that some British ufologists seem to use "American ufology" as a kind of epithet. These generally are the PSHers and pelicanists who just can't accept that most American ufologists aren't buying what they're selling. So we end up getting called "provincials" (this, by the way, from a prominent PSHer who I happen to know has never been out of the UK) and worse.

I hate to generalize, just as I hate to be the victim of somebody else's generalizations. My experience of British ufology has been mostly with the PSH types: John Rimmer, Peter Rogerson, Hilary Evans, Peter Brookesmith (who may be more a classic debunker in the Klass mode than a PSHer, in

any event, though in his more lucid moments Peter is far more interesting than Klass could ever be). I'm also an old friend of Bob Rickard, who's one of my favorite people in the world, though *Fortean Times* – not necessarily Bob himself -- seems to have an oddly sour view of UFOs and those who reject neoskeptical readings of them.

I know there's another British ufology, but my exposure to it has been limited to a single conference sponsored by Mark and Graham Birdsall in Leeds in 1996. My impression -- of course I could be wrong -- is that British ufology lacks a place for centrists like me and the people I cited earlier in this interview. There is, for example, no British equivalent of Dick Hall or Mark Rodeghier or Walt Webb. My impression is that American ufology, at least at its best, is more process-driven than theory-driven. Pragmatic as opposed to ideological, you might say.

I am the proud owner of a much-thumbed copy of your *UFO Book*, which I consider indispensable in my work and in my writing. Even Andy Roberts chose it as one of his 'top 5'! But which 5 books in your library do you recommend?

First, thanks for the kind words.

Second, good question. Not necessarily in this order:

Ruppelt's *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*

David Jacobs's *The UFO Controversy in America*

Bullard's *UFO Abductions: The Measure of a Mystery*

Gillmor and Condon's *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*

Hynek's *The UFO Experience*

Do you think that the American Government is hiding what it knows about UFOs? (No matter what 'real' UFOs actually are)

I don't know. My view depends on which side of the bed I happened to roll out of on the particular morning I'm forced to answer

questions like this one. You can make a case for either cover-up or foul-up.

I don't have a strong opinion about this. I just follow all developments with interest.

Okay, time for a few sound-bites. I'll throw a few names and subjects at you, and you give us your take on them...

## Philip Klass

A self-righteous bore, the debunking equivalent of a true believer, and therefore of no use to anybody who is trying in an honest way to figure out what UFOs may or may not be. On the other hand, if you think ufology may be tantamount to Communism (a view Klass once expressed in what he meant to be a private communication), he's your man.

## Travis Walton

One of the real victims of the UFO age. Not a shred of evidence backs up the hoax charges Klass has been leveling for years; yet it's depressing how many people who, while not willing to go all the way with Klass, figure, "Where there's smoke, there's fire." Believe me, there's no smoke here. Not, of course, that there could never be smoke, or fire either for that matter. But after 20 years of concentrated effort to prove that Walton and his coworkers cooked up a hoax, zero evidence to that effect has surfaced. Unless it does, it's well past time to cease assassinating Walton's character.

I've known Walton casually for a number of years. He comes across as one of the most impressive UFO witnesses you're ever going to meet. Decent, thoughtful, strikingly bright. A good family man. If I knew him better, I'd be proud to call him my friend.

## Project Blue Book

Except for the Ruppelt years, an outrage. The very thought of Blue Book makes me see red.

## Billy Meier

A preposterous, though evidently quite lucrative and successful, hoax.

## 'Man Made' UFOs

What used to be called the "secret-weapon theory" was a joke for a long time, but I think it's evident that by now aviation technology has advanced to the degree that "man-made UFOs" are out there and are getting reported all the time.

## The Kelly-Hopkinsville 'Goblin' CE3

One of the classics. A great case, and well investigated by one of ufology's most impressive (though, sadly, nearly forgotten) figures: the late Isabel Davis.

## Budd Hopkins

Budd Hopkins is as good as they come. I love Budd because he is an extraordinarily decent man. He's also smart and funny, and we share a whole lot of cultural and intellectual interests that have nothing to do with UFOs. It's a treat to be with him and his wife Carol Rainey. People are always slagging him for imagined crimes. Most of them aren't fit to shine his shoes.

He may or may not be right about the meaning of the abduction phenomenon, but however this whole controversy turns out, I admire him for the immense courage he possesses. I also admire because he'd rather listen to abductees than tell them what they did -- or did not -- experience. We all owe him a profound debt of gratitude for opening up to us a dimension of human experience (whatever its causes ultimately prove to be) of which we had been largely ignorant.

## The Trent photograph at McMinnville, Oregon

If it's authentic -- and nearly 50 years later there's still every reason to think it is -- its implications are, perhaps in the most literal sense, of cosmic significance.

And...The Sheffield Incident / Howden Moor Incident much discussed on Updates. Clarke or Burns?

IUR is publishing David Clarke's account of his investigation, which is to every appearance solid and thorough, the sort of work of which all of us could use a lot more. His conclusions strike me as well-reasoned and persuasive.

Jerry, who do you think is doing the most important work in ufology today?

I don't think there's an answer to that. Presumably, we'll know that only in retrospect, after we know what UFOs are and what work got us to that knowledge. In the meantime, because of my own interests I find the unparalleled historical research going on these days to be most heartening. Jan Aldrich's Project 1947 is a terrific idea and practice, and now there's a formal organization, the Sign Historical Group, formed at a meeting in Chicago at the end of May 1999, to correlate all the fine efforts being made internationally to fill in all the gaps in the record.

Do you think the emergence of ufology into a more mainstream audience is a good or bad thing...I'm thinking that for every *UFO Book*, there is a "*Day After Roswell*"!

I guess, as Theodore Sturgeon famously said, 95% of everything is garbage. Nearly all pop-culture treatments of the UFO phenomenon are dumb at best. At worst it's crass exploitation of public credulity. I find that I have too many other interests, and too little time to waste, to spend my evenings watching saucer junk on television.

In too many ways the emergence of flying saucers as yet another commercial commodity has served only to trivialize the subject, and to make our task somewhere between harder and hopeless. And it doesn't even seem to have lessened the ridicule witnesses suffer when they dare to speak out.

In closing, Jerry, what has you the most excited, for whatever reason, in your work today?

The thought that at the end of the work day, a cold beer and a CD full of good Mississippi blues await.

Jerry, thanks for taking the time, take care and good luck with your future projects. And have a beer for me!

## A CENTURY OF SHEFFIELD SAUCERS

### Part 4: The flap of 1967

By Dr David Clarke

A Sheffield post office engineer called Harry Dodgson, who lived on Stothard Road at Crookes saw something odd in the sky in February 1966. Mr Dodgson was walking on the Bole Hills and looking towards the Rivelin Valley one night when he saw what he told the Star was "the most marvellous sight in my life."

This was a brilliant, luminous object with "a tremendous white tail, just like a comet in the picture books" which shot across the sky from north to south. "It was about 8pm and I was on my way with my wife to the club," he said. "It's a good job I saw it before and not afterwards as nobody would have believed me.

"It travelled across the sky like a satellite but this appeared to be much lower and very bright with an immense glowing tail. The sight was fantastic. It was so wonderful that we stood in awe. My wife and I realised that we had seen something really out of the ordinary."

Mr Dodgson was not the only one who saw something 'out of the ordinary' in the sky during 1966. That year marked the beginning of a world-wide wave of UFO sightings which enveloped the world and continued into 1967, with widespread sightings in the United States and elsewhere. The highlight of the this period in Britain at least were the wave of sightings of what was described as "the flying cross" which began in southern England early in the morning of 24 October 1967 and spread to other part of the country.

According to Nick Redfern, the peak year for UFO reports logged by the British MOD in the 60s had been 1966 with 95 reports, but the following year produced a staggering 362 incidents, with more than 150 reported in the first six months.

Many of these sightings clearly had prosaic explanations. Experts at the Royal Greenwich Observatory, for instance, suggested that Mr Dodgson had seen a shooting star or part of one of the United States' giant Echo satellites

burning up on re-entry into the atmosphere. From the description he gave it sounds more likely he observed a rare and spectacular example of a bolide meteor.

#### The Stephen Pratt photo case

But other cases reported during those two strange years remain a mystery, including the still unexplained photo taken by teenager Stephen Pratt near his home in the pit town of Conisborough, near Doncaster. Like many other photographic cases, the Pratt photo has since gone on to become a "classic" which has managed to retain its mystique because it has never been subjected to an analysis by the latest techniques available to UFOlogy.

Stephen was a 15-year-old schoolboy when he saw what he described as "a strange orange glow" in the sky as he returned from a visit to the local chip shop with his mum Theresa.

She sent Stephen back to their home on Leslie Avenue to fetch brothers Kevin and Gary, and dad Walter, to see the burning orange object dancing through the sky.

Using his brother Malcolm's Kodak Instamatic 50 the youngster managed to take one picture of the UFO before it disappeared towards Rotherham. The film was later taken to the local chemist for developing, who decided the negative in question was not worth printing, and it had to be taken back a second time before a print was eventually made.

When it was finally developed, the family were astonished to find no trace of the orange ball of light, but instead found three black saucer-shaped craft silhouetted against the overcast sky, flying in apparent formation towards the camera.

Even to a non-expert eye, suspicions are immediately raised by the fact that the "saucers" on the Pratt photo are out of focus while the chimney pots of the terraced houses and the prominent lamp-post are sharply in focus. In the case of many well-known hoaxes, this effect is usually produced

as a result of the "UFO" being actually nearer the camera than may be claimed by the photographer - suggesting the "objects" are really cut-outs pasted or painted onto a sheet of glass or window through which the photo was taken.

Despite these suspicions, claims have been made that Kodak experts had pronounced the photograph "genuine and untouched." Shortly after it appeared in the local and national press in November 1966, Dr Geoffrey Doel, then chairman of BUFORA, announced that a "thorough examination" of both the negative and Stephen's story had convinced them the claim was genuine. Doel described it as "an excellent picture and one of the best we have seen."

Such a conclusive endorsement was enough for Stephen. He said: "That's a big relief. I'm fed up with having my leg pulled by people asking me if I've seen anymore flying saucers. Now the laugh is on them."

Two years ago, on the 50th anniversary of the UFO mystery, I was able to speak to Stephen Pratt and his brother Kevin, who both continue to maintain that the photo was genuine. It has since appeared in books and magazines across the world, but Kevin claimed it had brought Stephen and other members of the family nothing but misery.

Stephen had moved from the area because of the harassment he had received, it was claimed.

"People have had a go at us in the street and it reached the point where it came to blows," said Kevin. "On top of that people have said that Stephen admitted it was a hoax and that we stuck cardboard shapes on to glass to fake it. But it was a genuine sighting with more than five witnesses and I was there when the photo was taken."

The obvious flaw in Kevin's argument is that the "orange lights" observed by the five Pratt family members bore no resemblance to the UFOs which actually appeared upon the photo. The two could have been completely separate incidents, which eliminates the suggestion that all five witnesses could not be mistaken. Without definitive evidence as to when the photo was actually taken, and whether it coincided with the sighting of the orange light or was actually produced later, it is impossible to reach any

definitive conclusion about this case until Stephen decides to tell us more.

But perhaps a most significant clue was that in 1998 when Kevin came forward to defend the photo, he claimed the brothers were happy to submit the original negative to the most advanced computer analysis techniques to authenticate it once and for all.

"Stephen and I are convinced it will pass any test," he told me. However, after arranging for two experts -one based at Manchester University and the second at the British Journal of Photography - to analyse the picture, nothing more was heard from the Pratt brothers.

Readers can draw their own conclusions from this fact.

## The 1967 flap

In January 1967 the *Sheffield Star* carried an unprecedented appeal from the Ministry of Defence, who it said wanted "information from anyone who may have seen a mystery object in the sky" over the city.

Reports of any "unidentified flying object" would be treated with the utmost seriousness, a spokesman told the paper. This followed a number of sightings in the city and surrounding areas including one by a 19-year-old student, Nicholas Slater, who spotted red and green lights in the sky. He said he saw the UFO from his home in Whirlow Park Road, Ecclesall, and watched it for a while through binoculars as it hovered at an estimated height of 2,000 feet in the sky around midnight.

After Nicholas' sighting was published, three other people came forward with similar stories. These included a lumberjack from Silkstone, near Barnsley, who said he saw a revolving object moving slowly across the sky, changing colour from red to yellow and blue. A school caretaker from Maltby said he saw red and green lights in a circle the same night, while a woman and her son in Norfolk Park, Sheffield, saw "a red orange coloured thing moving silently across the sky."

More sightings poured into the Star offices in October, 1967, as a result of national publicity following the sightings by two police officers on Dartmoor, who reported chasing what they described as an object like a "star spangled

flying cross" at speeds of up to 90mph along country lanes. Later it was joined by a second, similar object.

This was followed by reports of "cigar-shaped" objects over Brighton, saucer-shaped objects over Colchester and dozens of other mysterious "sightings" which sparked questions in Parliament. Astronomers suggested the brilliant planet Venus had caused some of the sightings, while the MOD later pinned the blame on a re-fuelling exercise by nine F-100 US aircraft over southern England. The USAF later contradicted this theory when they stated that the exercise did not begin until AFTER the police sightings.

However, one report logged by the police remained "unidentified" according to the authorities. This was a sighting by two policemen in Stalybridge, Cheshire, who claimed they saw a bright cross-shaped object moving from side to side in the night sky at 1,000 feet over the Pennines. Fifteen minutes later a similar UFO was also reported by others in nearby Mottram and Glossop, Derbyshire, and we know this report was passed to the MOD in London by Cheshire police.

Another report which must have been logged by the MOD came from a Sheffield housewife who reported her early morning sighting to the police. Eileen Scott, of Holme Lane, Malin Bridge, also told the *Star* what she saw on October 24, 1967:

"It was 8.10 am when I heard a loud droning noise. I went out of the house and saw this dark object high in the sky. The noise was very loud - not like an engine. Then it disappeared into a cloud.

"It was a long, oval-shaped, dark coloured thing, moving across the sky. I thought it was a Rag Week stunt at first but then I realised it couldn't be, It was too high and not at all like an aeroplane. I have no idea what it was."

This claim was nothing compared to the story which appeared in *The Star* a couple of nights later.

"Two Sheffield children lay terrified in their beds last night when they saw four unidentified flying objects in the sky," read the report. "William Bamforth, 11, watched in fear as the UFOs flew past his bedroom window. His nine-year-old sister Jackie hid under the bedclothes petrified by the strange sight." The schoolboy, speaking from his home in

Hackenthorpe, told the paper: "They were round and bright, with fire shooting out at the back. They couldn't have been shooting stars because I have never seen a star that moved and shot fire out."

It was near midnight when the children claimed they first saw the UFO. It moved slowly towards Mosborough, they said, "going higher and lower in loops" and then vanished.

Their mother Audrey said by the time she had debated with her husband who was going to see the children, the UFOs had gone. But five minutes later, three more appeared. "These went very fast," said William. "But there was never anymore than one in the sky at once."

Early the following morning William's mum heard on the news about the police sighting of the flying cross and she said her son's description "was almost exactly the same as the only I heard on the radio." She concluded: "At first I thought they were imagining things, but now I believe my son."

Perhaps when MOD files on the 1967 flap recently declassified under the 30-year-rule are studied thoroughly the true explanation for any number of these puzzling sightings may be found. Few UFOs were reported from Sheffield in the final years of the 60s, but police in Stocksbridge did receive a flurry of sightings in June 1968 which were the prelude to a long history of puzzling observations in the moorland areas to the northwest of the city in future years. These included a report from a steelworker in Deepcar who saw a low-flying silvery object moving over a works at Oughtibridge, travelling in the direction of Manchester. Two other witnesses reported seeing blue flashing lights converging and pulling away from each other, significantly "as if a re-fuelling exercise was being carried out." In typical laconic style, a police spokesman told *The Star*: "These reports were made in all seriousness, but when officers arrived at the scene whatever was sighted had disappeared."

(\*Part 5 of this series will summarise some of the more important sightings of the 1970s in Sheffield and South Yorkshire)

## THE 'PETER' CONTROVERSY- THE RIGHT TO REPLY

In last month's issue of *Project Red Book*, we featured Mark P. Martin's review of Nick Pope's book "*The Uninvited*." As is always the case, Mark sent a copy of his review to Nick, along with the previous month's *PRB*, which featured my interview with Jenny Randles.

Nick Pope appears to have taken offence at a statement made by Jenny during the interview, concerning the so-called Florida Toll-booth incident. This prompted Mark to pen a small article, "*Nick Pope and the Peter Controversy*". After reading Jenny's interview, Nick asked Mark to pass on a letter for printing which made his feelings known. Knowing that Jenny and other ufologists he did not name but who are known to me read *PRB* I printed the letter, and invited those ufologists to respond.

It was perhaps the line in italics - "*From his book 'The Uninvited' in which it later transpired may relate to Nick himself.*" which upset Nick and set all of this debacle in motion. These words were not said by Jenny. and I apologise if it appeared that she had said them. These were in fact my own editorial notes added to fill in anyone who had not read of the Peter saga either on the Internet (for it was ablaze), or in the *Sunday Times*. For most people, the 'Peter' saga was by no means a secret anymore anyway.

Mere days after the last issue of *PRB* was posted, Jenny, Andy Roberts and Dr. Dave Clarke e-mailed the following comments.

All comments are printed un-edited. First of all, I received this from Jenny Randles:

Hi,  
Obviously I had to respond to YUFOS magazine (Aug 99) pp 16 - 18 ref Nick Pope, the Uninvited and the Florida Toll Booth fiasco. I trust Andy (Roberts) & Dave (Clarke) will comment too, in case they have not seen it, hence the copy of this e mail to them.

Firstly, my general comments on Nick as cited. I stand by them. He is a nice man, but his views on UFOlogy tend towards the naive - as I have seen several times first hand (eg in the platform debate at the X Files Conference, when he, several NARO members and myself did an audience Q & A on various UFO topics). This is not his fault and merely my view about him, of course. He's still a youngster in UFO terms and may not yet have figured out how he has to unlearn 90% of what he's

read on the subject in media sources. We all face that challenge and you do not learn the home truths of UFOlogy overnight. There have been flashes of maturity in recent years and 'The Uninvited' is by far the best thing he has written. Five or ten years on he may well begin to see the true complexities of the UFO field. I feel exactly the same about John Mack, by the way.

But, of course, that's just my opinion. And it won't stop for one second Nick getting massive exposure and selling many books. And good luck to him if that's his heart's desire. As Britain's 'Fox Mulder' he is being cleverly promoted - although that tag has only partial truth. I think most of you would find episodes of 'The X Files' pretty boring if each week an alien spaceship landed in rural Virginia and Mulder did not rush there by the first jet but instead called up the local police station on the phone, then checked to see what weather balloons were on the loose, then wrote a memo and got back to compiling budget stats. So Nick's job, whilst technically a sort of Fox Mulder, more properly involved what I have just described and was not a full time occupation. He devoted more interest, good sense and skill towards it than all his predecessors because he was clearly interested by the subject.

Between 1991 and 1994 when he was at Air Staff 2A I was BUFORA Director of Investigation. Our paths crossed. It was obvious from his letters to me, his involvement in cases and phone calls to the AIs on my team that here was a genuine UFO enthusiast within the MoD. That was long before he was known to the world and so his conversion was clearly afoot during his tenancy. Indeed, there were occasions where we were finding a solution to a case and Nick was suggesting, no, this case looks like a real UFO. The irony of role reversal between BUFORA and the MoD was sufficiently odd that I commented on it at the time and wrote an article for 'International UFO Reporter' (that Nick actually cites in his first book) where I termed him our own Ed Ruppelt. That is slightly more accurate than calling him Fox Mulder but would not have sold half as many books. Big book selling is all about hype these days.

As for him being an MoD 'patsy' I shall define that since my e mail reply cited last issue was necessarily brief. He believes (sincerely) his was the key - indeed only - department charged with UFO study at the MoD and as such saw all the best data flowing in. For several reasons I do not agree. I think Air Staff 2A is what I term the shop window, whilst the real work goes on out of sight at the back of the store. The office chappies like Nick are useful to the MoD and respond to letters from zealous UFO buffs accusing them of a cover up and hiding great truths. As they honestly believe such things are not true, because they don't see any hint of that

and dont get the better data (eg RAF acquired gun camera footage) they can sincerely react to these odd folk with pleasant carefully pre ordained words. Nick soon enough concluded that there was something interesting going on within the cases that he got to see and there was a real problem behind the UFO data. He thinks he saw it all. I have reason to believe differently. But in my view the MoD miscalculated in their plan to set him up as their public scapegoat - the latest in a long line in that job - since they would not have wanted by choice an enthusiastic hard worker willing to be convinced of UFO reality controlling that position.

I really dont see anything sinister in Nick's role - if you think I do. I am satisfied absolutely as to his honesty here and perhaps one day he will come to agree with me about what really went on above and beyond his Captain's classification. Or, of course, maybe I am utterly wrong. Time no doubt will tell.

So I am quite happy with what Nick has done. He has exposed the MoDs shallow logic and also pulled one over by publishing books I am sure they would have rather never seen, but could not do a thing about without making the whole thing look like they were trying to hide something far more important than they publicly contend UFOs to be. Nick pretty well told me that six months before 'Open Skies' was published and when the MoD could still have put a stop to its release, but we both knew they never would.

I also stated in reviews of 'The Uninvited' that I wrote (eg in Northern UFO News) that it is a far better book than 'Open Skies'. I dispute some (not all) of Nick's conclusions, but it is better written and more mature than the first title. No argument. Indeed its a shame at this point that he has decided to abandon true UFOlogy to sign up for a two book novel deal about fictional alien invasions and the brave old MoD fighting them off. But he has a strong money minded agent behind him (the same man who is behind Tim Good, Nick Redfern and the new Georgina Bruni Rendlesham book) so I can understand well from a publishing perspective the idea behind this diversity. It may well lead to movie deals and big bucks. Unfortunately, I dont see UFOlogy gaining much benefit from it.

Now to the real bone of contention - the events in a Florida Toll Booth and my alleged breaching of witness confidentiality. Plus the absurd suggestion that I may be seeking to gain publicity this way when the truth is absolutely the opposite.

Firstly, note that in the quote from me that you cite I do NOT say that Nick Pope is 'Peter'. My quoted remark is that I am perturbed by his decision not to come clean over this story because not to do so is not to play fair with his readers. I stand by that judgement absolutely. It is my honest opinion. But it does not mean that Nick Pope is Peter, of course, merely that by lapsing into MoD speak as he has about the issue - saying - 'I can neither confirm nor deny' - he casts confusion, not clarity on the question. My point is simple. If Nick is not Peter,

where is the harm in saying Peter is not me and Peter does not want his identity known? If Nick is Peter, then he faced two options, in my view, tell the story openly or not tell the story at all. There are plenty of witnesses who are happy to be identified. There is no need to build an abduction out of a frankly trivial incident provoking hypnotic regression and what is in 'The Uninvited' and then compound the problem by shrouding this story in confusion.

I am personally disturbed by how many people are motivated to explore minor incidents in their lives through the highly suspect method of hypnosis. Nick is a very influential figure and understandably so. But that gives him a huge responsibility because what he says will effect what vulnerable, suggestible people will do about the odd events within their lives.

Joe Soap drives on a road, sees a car, looks away, looks back and said car is no longer there (a parody of a real case I have been involved with by the way). What should we do? Not in my view encourage Joe Soap to think the car was a UFO, they have 'lost time' and that hypnosis will reveal the truth about a grey sticking a probe up his rear end. Mrs Bloggs sees a slowly drifting object that is investigated and established to reasonable certainty to be a weather balloon. There is no evident time lapse, memory jump, alien contact, etc, but it is suggested by an enterprising UFO group that Mrs Bloggs might really have just 'thought' she saw a weather balloon. In fact it was a UFO. Put her under hypnosis and eke out the magic abduction lurking below. A hypothetical case this one - sort of- but illustrative of things I have seen.

Such things are happening in the real world and in my view the Florida Toll Booth story is in this league. As it was originally told (and it was originally told before the hypnosis I should stress) this was a minor curio with no UFO involvement at all. The urge for it to be maybe more than it was seems to have been a pressure placed onto the story (at least partly) by UFOlogists and inspired the hypnosis that led to what we have in 'The Uninvited'. Knowing of this case before the hypnosis gives me a perspective the public dont have. That is my point. Nick Pope should have been more discriminating in my opinion because this is not a typical alien abduction. Peter did not see a UFO and aliens, be lead by years of nightmares towards a doctor and learn to his horror that this was really an abduction. Indeed, if I understand what Nick said correctly in the Georgina Bruni gossip column earlier this year Peter does not actually now think this was an abduction at all. Which pretty well makes my point for me.

With a case like this the public need to either see the whole story fully discussed in all its context or, if the witness is concerned about exposure, not to see it at all. Of course, this view is arguable. But it is my opinion that it is wrong to tell half a story because to do so does not provide the readers with the full context they require to properly judge the

case. And moreover, a story not really regarded by the witness himself as a true abduction requires even greater care in presentation. As such, frankness, unhappily, is a factor that cannot be overlooked in these circumstances. As stressed here you can naturally decline to be identified and sometimes with a story that course is acceptable with public discussion. Here I do not believe we had a straightforward abduction and thus in my opinion it was not. Nick's choice was to either say all or say nothing. Unfortunately, in my view, he chose differently. Fair enough. We disagree on that. But that certainly gives me the right to say why I disagree. So I have.

That is my problem - not that witnesses should not be protected. Of course they should. People forget that in 1982 I was responsible for touring the country with several others and creating what is now the 'Code of Practice'. I ensured that BUFORA became the first group in the world to make this mandatory upon all members. One clause forbids the release of witness identities to the public. Indeed the fact that I would not do this has lost me thousands of pounds over the years and more than one TV appearance. Why? Because said programme face my refusal to pass on witness phone numbers (as this is flatly opposed to the code so I never will do) and go to another UFOlogist with less scruples who has been paid a fee and provided such numbers. The UFOlogist who does this can ingratiate themselves with said TV company and get called next time and invited onto future shows. I dont so they stay away. But I do keep my integrity and abide by the code. That matters rather more to me.

This issue, by the way, is one reason I lost my job as BUFORA Director of Investigations after 12 years. I discovered that a certain member was breaching the code in this way. BUFORA council refused to even look into that by checking with the TV stations involved (who were willing to talk with BUFORA). Instead they supported the individual concerned and I resigned. There were other factors at work but the disregard of the code of practice was a serious issue for me.

As such I am frankly livid at the suggestion that I have disregarded such ethics and - it seems the ridiculous charge is - that this was to gain publicity. You may care to know something I would not normally discuss but I seem to have to do this now in view of circumstance. Twice last year I was approached by major media sources but got the impression I would be expected to publicly identify Peter in front of millions as a consequence. One is a TV show that I was offered a four figure sum to work on and because I said no I will now not even feature as an interviewee. I do know the identity of Peter but declined to be associated with the things I was being asked to do. Three months after the above I was being publicly accused in Georgina Bruni's gossip column on the internet for disregarding witness confidentiality - something your magazine now appears to reiterate. Does this make me regret that I said no to national TV exposure and a nice cheque that right now I could badly use to pay the

mortgage (since I dont get paid £50,000 to write a book)? No it does not. I stood by my principles and always will put them above money. Sadly not that many people in UFOlogy are aware of how some silly twits like me seem to consider this sort of action a virtue in todays money grabbing, fame and fortune society.

As stated, I know for certain who Peter really is. But Peter asked me personally only this year not to reveal his identity in public and that I will abide by, of course. However, what I want to make abundantly clear is this. I have not gone behind anybody's back and blabbed a confidential identity to the public. You need to understand what actually happened. Nick Pope himself revealed the identity of Peter to many people long before I did. As such I was not under any obligation nor any impression of witness confidence until that very recent request by Peter. Once a witness is publicly outed by the person writing up his story I find it incredible that anyone can turn around years later and suggest it is somehow my fault if the media find out who this witness is.

For the record, Nick identified Peter to a room full of UFOlogists in a London cafe in May 1995 - at least so several of them told me (indeed one who was there has already written up this story in a book!) In my presence Nick shared the news with others at a UFO conference. In late 1995 I read the original manuscript of 'Open Skies, Closed Minds' and this told the story of Peter using the real identity of the witness. Several others read the MS too in 1995 and indeed were instrumental in setting up the hypnosis of Peter, which was in fact conducted by a UFOlogist, I gather, not a medical professional, at least if I understood correctly what was said by that UFOlogist in a public lecture before hundreds of people.

As such the identity of Peter was common knowledge amongst quite a few folk, apparently thanks to Nick himself, before I even came to know about it and it created a rumour sweeping UFOlogy long before I said a word. I spoke three times face to face to Nick between 1996 and 1998 advising him of this news and suggesting that I would not be selling the story to the media (despite several opportunities to make big money this way). He has long known that I knew. He knew how I knew (because I told him I had read his MS when we met for me to film an interview with him at the MoD in December 1995 - long before his book was even published - and indeed that night I offered suggestions to him about the text). He knew that I felt it more than likely someone would tell the media soon. So, I argued, you would be well advised sorting this out under your control. He told me on two separate occasions (and in front of witnesses - eg at the April 1998 Fortean Times conference ) things like - 'if many people in UFOlogy know who Peter is I dont need to tell them, do I?' and 'Peter's identity will be revealed when the time is right'. All fair enough, of course. It was down to Peter as and when this happened - if ever - and also to Nick for being the

person who revealed Peter's identity in the first place.

But I truly fail to see how what I did was anything less than proper. Despite knowing who Peter was since 1995 I have said nothing during numerous media interviews when asked what I thought of Nick Pope. I did say something a couple of times in UFO circles - I admit - but after the book was out and the curious way the Peter story was being handled in public by Nick became apparent. Also not until I became well aware of how various other UFOlogists knew Peter's identity already via Nick himself. So at no time was I responsible for deliberately breaking a witness confidence or disregarding the code of practice to expose the identity of Peter. I felt it not my place to out Peter to the media, so did not do that, but acceptable to comment to fellow UFOlogists, many of whom knew anyway and because I became concerned about the way Nick was presenting this story and from his stated disinclination to set the record straight. I was never at any time asked by Nick to keep Peter's identity secret, despite him knowing for four years that I was aware who Peter was and despite my speaking to him face to face on the matter several times during this period. Neither Peter nor Nick (who had my ex directory phone number) made any attempt to call me, or write to me, or in any way privately request that this matter was one they wished me to keep confidential. The first such request came from Peter only a matter of weeks ago - after the Georgina Bruni gossip column discussion about the matter this Spring.

As for now. Frankly, I have a hard time not coming straight out and telling you what I do know about the identity of Peter, given the way this has all occurred, the manner I have been scandalously accused of publicity seeking, and the extreme lengths I went to so as to play fair with Nick and Peter. Whilst Nick is making money out of Peter's story I have lost both money and opportunities by choosing not to do so. Yet somehow I am cast as the villain here. Incredible.

But, a promise is a promise and I will keep to it now that it has been requested - and the code of practice is a code that I choose to abide by. But I would appreciate people not jumping to conclusions. Unfortunately, Nick and Peter, that's what happens when people only get told half the story.

Best wishes,  
Jenny Randles

FROM ANDY ROBERTS:

Y'all,

Why this has trundled on so long beats me. It's not a matter of witness confidentiality as Popey has made his claims in public in at least two places. Therefore he can no longer claim confidentiality. The *only* way to deal with this and to stop all the to-ing and

fro-ing - and to save Jenny's typing fingers which must be almost down to the bone ;-)- is this:

Jenny, if I were you I would issue a public statement pointing out that you were told by Pope, at whichever UFO conference, that he was Peter. Also quote the relevant sections from wotsisnames unpublished book (what better way for publicity).

There will follow a period of squeaking by Pope and the Bruni woman, Pope won't be able to even hint at the event again, and all will go quiet.

Otherwise we will just go round and round in circles. And by doing so feed Pope the mysterious status he desires and make it possible for him to eventually use this 'abduction' to promote himself and make money.

This has nothing to do with witness confidentiality, nothing to do with the Code of Practice. If Pope hadn't wanted people to know then he should have kept it shut. C'mon, he hasn't even denied it...ipso facto and all that sort of thing.

So, there y'go. Simple, surgical and quick. It's the only way. If we don't expose him soon it will just become another layer of folklore, another layer of obfuscation.

Happy Trails

Andy

AND FROM DR. DAVE CLARKE:

Hiya all,

Since I've been asked for my view on this tiresome nonsense, here it is. Nick Pope has a cheek accusing anyone of seeking publicity, as it seems to me his entire "career" in UFOlogy has been cleverly engineered to make himself as much cash and fame as possible based upon a pretty uneventful 3 or 4 years as a civil servant. Can't blame him for that - I'd have done the same.

But this whole "Peter" business is a joke, and the only people fooled by it are the newcomers and the naive. As far as I'm concerned its common knowledge that Peter is Nick; it's been exposed to millions via the Sunday Times, it's in the public domain.

You can't have your cake and not eat it. The fact that Peter is Nick was in the first draft of his book, and as Jenny says the man himself has told dozens of people over the past five years. Given those facts, he has no right to turn around now and claim otherwise, trying to turn the clock back and accuse others of being "unprofessional."

As a journalist it is my code of practice that if someone is challenged and they say "I can't confirm and I can't deny" that equals: "Yes it's true."

It's a practise I've followed in countless newspaper stories over the past ten years, and has served me well. As the saying goes: "If you dance with the devil you have to expect to be pricked by his horns."

What I suspect is that Nick Pope has some deal sewn up with a publisher to produce a book on his "abduction"; he has decided to clamp down on any leaks because that might upset the publishing schedule and the carefully engineered publicity that would follow.

To deny this is the case and carry on prattling about "witness confidentiality" and the lack of honour and professionalism among UFOlogists is just a sick joke.

The sooner Nick Pope comes clean about this the better. So I agree with Andy on what should be done to lay this to rest once and for all.

If he thinks he is getting a hard time from UFOlogists - just wait until some hard-bitten news reporter sinks his teeth into this can of worms. Then he really will have something to complain about.

That's my two pennorth.

PS On the issue of "witness confidentiality"; of course I support the Code of Practice.

But like all codes, reality is somewhat different. It's no good defending someone's right not to have their identity revealed, if behind your back they are blabbing to all and sundry for their own personal gain.

And lets face it, UFOlogy in the 90s is all about money, personal gain and ego tripping.

And where did Jonathan Dagenhart stand when it came to "confidentiality" - those in BUFORA who like to blather about protecting witness identities were quite prepared to allow Max Burns to break that code and use his testimony against his express wishes at their London lectures. But this was allowed because Dagenhart had been "silenced" and forced to change his testimony by that MI5 agent Clarke.

Oh, that's all right then!

## AN APOLOGY TO URI GELLER

*In last month's PRB, we featured a controversial interview with Andy Roberts. As the original interview was conducted via e-mail, a typographical error was made which may have caused some offence and confusion to Uri and to PRB readers.*

*In giving his thoughts on The 'Amazing' Randi, Andy stated: "...Geller is a bully who uses his wealth to protect himself from sceptics."*

*This should have read; "SOME people think..."*

*It was only on reading the issue that Andy himself noticed the error and was quick in pointing it out to me.*

*As Uri is a member of YUFOS' mailing list, and a friend to the group, I immediety contacted him, apologised and explained the mistake.*

*Myself and Andy apologise again to Uri for the error and for any distress or confusion this may have caused.*

Dave Baker

### NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 12th October, 1999  
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

THE THREE CRANES

Queen Street  
Sheffield City Centre

## UFOs FOR THE NEW MILLENIUM!

BY ANDREW ASHMORE

Was it just me, or were many other people hoping to get a 'UFO show' during August's eclipse of the sun, as they had in Mexico in 1991? Perhaps it was just wishful thinking, although it would have given us a glimpse of what may be in store during the next millennium.

I have often wondered, with the passing of time, just how exactly humankind is going to perceive this phenomenon in the future, and whether it will be a completely different notion to what many of us have at this present point in time.

When we amateur ufologists, and even the 'professionals' are pushing up the daisies and have gone to meet our maker – that big alien in the sky- will our findings and ideas / beliefs be passed on to the next generations or will they have opinions which are unconnected to what we think now?

Just look back through history and you get the idea that these things – UFOs – have been around longer than most books on the subject would suggest : (*"It all began in 1947 when Kenneth Arnold etc etc..."*)

Early cave paintings thousands of years old depict strange images that to some of us look like descriptions of alien 'Greys' reported today. But what exactly did our primitive human painter make of all this, if this is indeed what he was actually drawing? He may just have thought he belonged to some other tribe.

Much later in time when religion came into being, the people of the time probably thought it was their gods on a visit.

One thing that always puzzles me is how the human race ever thought of the idea of worshipping gods in the first place – much as some of us still do today without ever having seen them...or had they? Maybe visits from life-forms thousands of years ago started the whole idea of a higher being/beings than ourselves.

The Romans had their gods but also witnessed "flying shields" and other strange things. Does their reference to these things mean their

perception of the UFO phenomenon at that time?

The Bible as we know is full of odd descriptions of events which can be read any way you want to read them. But unless witnesses were on strange substances or perhaps completely smashed on booze, then things happened that were difficult to put down in words, but done the best they could in respect to their then more limited vocabulary and understanding of science.

As time progressed to the Middle Ages, fireballs were seen, and then when astronomy reached the telescope age, maybe things were put down to comets.

It wasn't until the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century that objects were seen and described as "airships" – even though these were still a few years away. They had balloons but the descriptions would seem to suggest that they were powered by some means. If that is the case it was probably thought that humans were controlling them.

Even though H.G.Wells' *"War of the Worlds"* was on the bookshelves, the idea of aliens coming to earth was not really taking off and did not seem to be linked to explanations for UFOs.

It wasn't until such events as Roswell gave people a new idea to latch onto and subsequently spawned scores of 'alien' science-fiction films during the 1950s.

And there you have it – we've been down that avenue ever since. The only thing that seems to have changed are ideas of why they are here; from destruction or dominance of the world to peace-bringers or sinister abductors with their own agenda.

As the new century and millennium approaches are we to redefine our ideas as to what we may think now? After all, just look how the subject has changed over this last 100 years, never mind about older history- from airships to aliens is a big jump in a relatively short time.

The thing is I personally believe we have now exhausted our explanations and have nowhere

else to go. We may get a few different variations on our thinking now and a few new conspiracy theories, but I believe things will not change much for the foreseeable future. Certainly not until most of us have shuffled off this mortal coil.

That is unless someone makes a radical breakthrough and the proof we have been so desperately searching for is there for all to see.

What form this proof will take is another matter. Maybe the powers that be would decide we are ready to be told just what exactly they have been covering up for all these years. What was so big, so important that we shouldn't be allowed to know things that may end all the speculation and present us with hard facts.

Would we be ready for this new millennium? Will things and people change enough then, for it to happen? Only time will tell...

But when you look back at all the people in our subject, however actively they were involved, who in their lifetime never got to know the truth, it hurts me to think of never having found out the reality behind it when my time is up.

At the end of the day, the subject viewed as an unexplained phenomenon has gone on too long. Let's hope the people in possession of the best data decide to come clean, and hopefully in our lifetime.

It may or may not be particularly beneficial to us to know the truth, but it would at least relieve quite a few frustrated minds.

Andy Ashmore

## FORUM

*In last month's issue, YUFOS member Eileen Fletcher set the Forum ball rolling with a letter concerning the book "Dark Moon", in which it is claimed that the moon landings never actually took place but were hoaxed by NASA...*

*This month, YUFOS member Jon Slater responded with this letter:*

### MOONGATE: THE APOLLO XI MISSION

What a ludicrous theory that the Apollo XI mission had been fabricated by NASA.

The moon landing on July 20<sup>th</sup> 1969 was shown on television to millions of people and the mechanism required to fool the technicians at mission control, their families and friends, all monitoring facilities who tracked the Apollo mission all around the world would have been impossible to control. Unless the hoax was carried out by several nations and tens of thousands of people involved in it's security...but surely one person would have dropped a little hint in 30 years by now!

Supporters of this so-called 'fabricated' story point a suspicious finger to the mental health of former astronauts who walked on the moon. What is clear to me is that the astronauts themselves have never deviated from their stories or down-played their achievements in their ground-breaking missions over the last 30 years.

Surely this is evidence enough to outweigh these conspiracy theories.

Neil Armstrong will be remembered forever as the first man who stepped onto the moon.

John Slater,  
Sheffield

*If anyone wishes to respond to this thread, or anything else featured in this issue of Project Red Book, feel free to wax lyrical or vent spleen, at the usual address. But hey...no name-calling or personal attacks. Let's be careful out there...*

## FROM AROUND THE WORLD... AND BEYOND!!

*UFOs, conspiracies, paranormal and fortean events compiled by Dave Baker*

### Y2K: SECRET NAVY STUDY PREDICTS WIDESPREAD POWER FAILURES

A U.S. Navy report predicts 'probable' or 'likely' power failures in electrical and water systems for many cities because of the Year 2000 technology problem--an assessment more dire than any other made by the government. President Clinton's top Y2K adviser, John Koskinen, called the Navy's conclusions overly cautious, saying they assumed that major utilities would fail unless proved otherwise.

The most recent version of the Navy study, updated about two weeks ago, predicted 'probable' or 'likely' partial failures in electric utilities that serve nearly 60 of roughly 400 Navy and Marine Corps facilities. The study predicted that partial electrical failures are 'likely,' for example, in Orlando, Florida and nine other small to mid-size cities.

It also predicted partial water system failures are probable in Dallas, and 59 other cities and partial natural gas failures as 'likely' in Albany, New York, Fort Worth, Texas, among others.

The military report contrasts sharply with predictions from the White House, which weeks ago said in a report that national electrical failures are 'highly unlikely.' The White House report also said that disruptions in water service from the date rollover from 99 to 00 are "increasingly unlikely."

"The way they worked was, until you have information for contingency planning purposes, you ought to assume there was a problem," said Koskinen, who vouched for the Navy report's authenticity.

The Navy report was initially summarized on an Internet site run by Jim Lord, a Y2K author, who said he obtained it "from a confidential source of the highest reliability and integrity."

"The military has to work from the worst case, but so do we," Lord said. "It's reprehensible for them to know this and keep it from us."

Koskinen said the Navy wasn't withholding information, noting that it was available on a Defense Department website. However, the report was removed from the site about two weeks ago. Neither Koskinen nor the department offered an explanation.

*(UFO Updates)*

### UFO REPORT REVEALS RIFTS AT CIA

LONDON - The CIA has released a secret history of its investigations into sightings of unidentified flying objects, revealing that there is more truth in the popular television series *The X-Files* than is often believed. The highly critical report describes often-bitter debates between real-life X-File investigators who believed "the truth is out there" and their skeptical bosses. It records tales of bumbling undercover agents whose activities that the government was covering up what the agency described as "extra-terrestrial visitations by intelligent beings."

The problem was eventually passed to the agency's physics and electronics division, where in true X-Files style just one analyst investigated UFO phenomena. But the 1950's equivalent of Fox Mulder was constantly undermined by his boss, described by the CIA history as "a non-believer in UFO's," who tried but failed to declare the project "inactive."

While the CIA investigations eventually concluded that all the sightings could be explained, the report concludes that "misguided" attempts to keep them secret led to widespread belief of a government cover-up.

The report, written by Gerald K. Haines, the official CIA historian, was commissioned by James Woolsey, CIA director at the time, in 1993, in the wake of renewed claims of a CIA-led cover-up. It calls, for the first time, on documents that the agency hid from UFO enthusiasts who obtained thousands of more mundane files under the Freedom of Information Act. The report, completed in 1997, was released at the request of the British academic journal *Intelligence and National Security*, and is published in its summer issue.

U.S. intelligence began investigating UFO sightings in 1947, when a pilot claimed to have seen nine discs travelling at more than 1,600 kilometers per hour in Washington state. The claim was backed up by additional sightings, including reports from military and civilian pilots and air traffic controllers.

The first investigation, Operation Saucer, was carried out by U.S. Air Forces intelligence, which initially feared the objects might be Soviet bombers. But some officers became convinced that UFOs existed and, in a top-secret report, concluded many of the sightings were "interplanetary." Air force chiefs had the report rewritten to conclude that "although visits from outer space are deemed possible, they are believed to be very unlikely."

The CIA initially dismissed the investigations as "midsummer madness." But an agency committee decided they could be used by Moscow either to create mass hysteria or to overload the air warning system, making it unable to distinguish between UFOs and Soviet bombers. In 1955, claims by two elderly sisters that they had contact with UFOs attracted widespread publicity. A CIA agent describing himself as an air officer spoke to them and reported that he appeared to have stumbled upon a scene from *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Analysis of a "code" that the women believed aliens were using to make contact with them while they listened to their favorite radio program showed it was Morse from a U.S. radio station. But when UFO enthusiasts heard of the "air force" officers visit, they became immediately suspicious he was a member of the CIA trying to cover up the affair.

One enthusiast pursued the CIA conspiracy theory and was visited by another CIA officer, who claimed to be in the air force and even wore an air force uniform. The ruse failed, making the conspiracy theorists even more

suspicious. The refusal to release 57 documents on the investigation in the 1970s, to protect sources, also fuelled the cover-up theory, Mr. Haines concluded.

*(Michael Smith The Daily Telegraph 8-18-99)*

## UFOs FILMED OVER ENGLISH CHANNEL

By Dr David Clarke

I am in possession of a remarkable camcorder video film which appears to show at least two, possibly three, unidentified flying objects alongside a passenger jet over the English Channel.

The video was taken by a Sheffield family of three who were outbound to Tangiers, Morocco, from Birmingham City Airport, on board an Air Morocco 737, several years ago. The family were sitting in the front passenger seats of the plane, as the couple's daughter is severely disabled. The camcorder was pointing out of the cabin window backwards towards the wings.

Although nothing was seen at the time, when footage of the flight was edited a week ago all the family noticed a strange dark object which is clearly visible on the video apparently hovering beyond the wing of the aircraft, which is sharply visible against a blue sky.

Close examination of the video shows a second, and possibly a third object closer to the wing. The object which first draws attention appears to be ball-shaped and grey in colour, and examination at Sheffield University has identified other apparent "features" which may or may not be significant.

The footage lasts two or three seconds, during which this ball-shaped object appears to join the others before the camera pans away inside the aircraft.

Footage taken earlier and later in the flight do not show any obvious feature on the aircraft window or wing which could have been responsible.

The weather at the time is clear blue skies with light cumulus clouds; and the aircraft was cruising between 33-35,000 feet when the "UFOs" appear. A shot seconds earlier appears to show one of the Channel Islands, possibly Guernsey, shortly before the objects come into

view.

Having examined the video I have unable to reach any conclusions as to what is shown, but have considered the possibility of meteorological balloons or optical illusions.

At the moment the family are trying to identify an exact time and date when the video was taken to facilitate further investigation. The family have offered the video for computer enhancement and analysis as they are anxious to find an explanation for what they filmed.

The footage is currently being copied for examination at two university departments. I am appealing to anyone who can offer, or suggest contacts for further independent expert analysis to contact me by email. No details of this incident have yet appeared in the Press.

*(A complete report will appear in a future issue of PRB – Dave Baker)*

## CASSINI COMPLETES RENDEZVOUS WITH EARTH

On Tuesday, August 17, 1999, the Cassini spacecraft flew past Earth at 8:28 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time, passing 727 miles (1,171 kilometers) above Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific.

The robot spacecraft was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, USA on October 15, 1997. With last week's flyby of Earth, Cassini concludes its "tour" of the inner planets. Its previous stop was Venus.

As it passed each of the inner planets, Cassini picked up a "gravity boost," adding to its speed and adjusting its trajectory for the long trip to Saturn. According to the NASA news release,

Cassini's mission is to study Saturn, its moons, its elaborate rings, and its magnetic and radiation environments for four years. Cassini will also deliver the European Space Agency's (ESA) Huygens probe via parachute to the surface of Saturn's (largest) moon, Titan.

The flyby gave Cassini a 5.5 kilometer-per-second (12,000 miles per hour) boost in speed, sending the spacecraft on toward the ringed planet almost one billion kilometers away." During the flyby, nine of Cassini's 12

science systems were turned on and aimed at Earth and Luna, also known as the moon, to make observations.

Next stop for Cassini is Jupiter. Cassini will fly by the gas giant on December 30, 2000.

The giant planet's gravity will bend Cassini's flight path to put it on course for arrival into orbit around Saturn on July 1, 2004. Cassini will attempt to drop the Huygens probe onto Titan on November 30, 2004.

### The International UFO Reporter

is available from;  
The Centre for UFO Studies,  
2457 W. Peterson Ave.  
Chicago  
Illinois  
60659  
USA

*Subscriptions are \$25 (4 issues)*

Overseas customers add \$5 for postage

## SPY SCANDAL – TIM MATTHEWS REPORTS!

Capenhurst, a sleepy village in Cheshire situated a couple of miles from Ellesmere Port on the Wirral Estuary, has become the focus for an extraordinary scandal. Channel 4 News, part of the Independent Television Network, known for its first-class investigative reporting, recently exposed the 10 year spying activities of the British government whereby an anonymous telecommunications tower was used, from 1989, to intercept all data traffic between Britain and the UK.

The scandal has rocked the British and Irish governments at a time when they are struggling to keep the peace in Northern Ireland and may have serious implications for future joint efforts. One must ask what basis for trust can exist now that this latest dirty secret has been exposed....

The Irish Green Party were amongst the range of political groups in both countries to reel in horror at what they described as a "fundamental breach of human rights".

On 17th July, our intrepid team of roving reporters set out to Capenhurst in order to get pictures of the tower and surrounding facilities.

Capenhurst itself has been associated with another scandal; in the 1980s and early 1990s peace protesters held regular demonstrations and vigils to highlight the activities of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. BNFL has not only pumped radioactive sewage into the Wirral, the River Ribble and the North Sea over the last 40 years but has managed to successfully pollute much of the North-Western coast.

What is more Capenhurst was inextricably linked with nuclear reprocessing as part of the nuclear weapons industry.

The spying activities at the adjacent MOD facility carried on until early this year. The Telecom tower itself is now covered in cream-coloured screening and is approximately 100ft high. The tower is now encased ready for sale or removal. A price tag of some £20 million is said to be put on the facilities.

The Channel 4 team gained access to the huge bunkers below the tower and showed close-up footage of the severed high tech communications and intercept equipment inside.

Furthermore, Channel 4 News made it clear that this system has been replaced with an even better one and we suspect that the Echelon global satellite system is probably what they mean.

Spying on possible terrorists is one thing but it is evident that the Capenhurst Spook Tower was used to intercept information of an economic, political and personal nature. Several Members of Parliament here have been unsuccessful in challenging the activities of the National Security Agency site at Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire, where thousands of phone calls, fax and email messages are routinely intercepted on a daily basis.

US business has been given an unfair advantage over European competitors; in one instance Boeing was able to outbid Aerospatiale through the activities of the NSA spooks.....

*NO laws were broken during this research trip and we encourage all researchers to stay within the law when out in the field....*

Tim Matthews