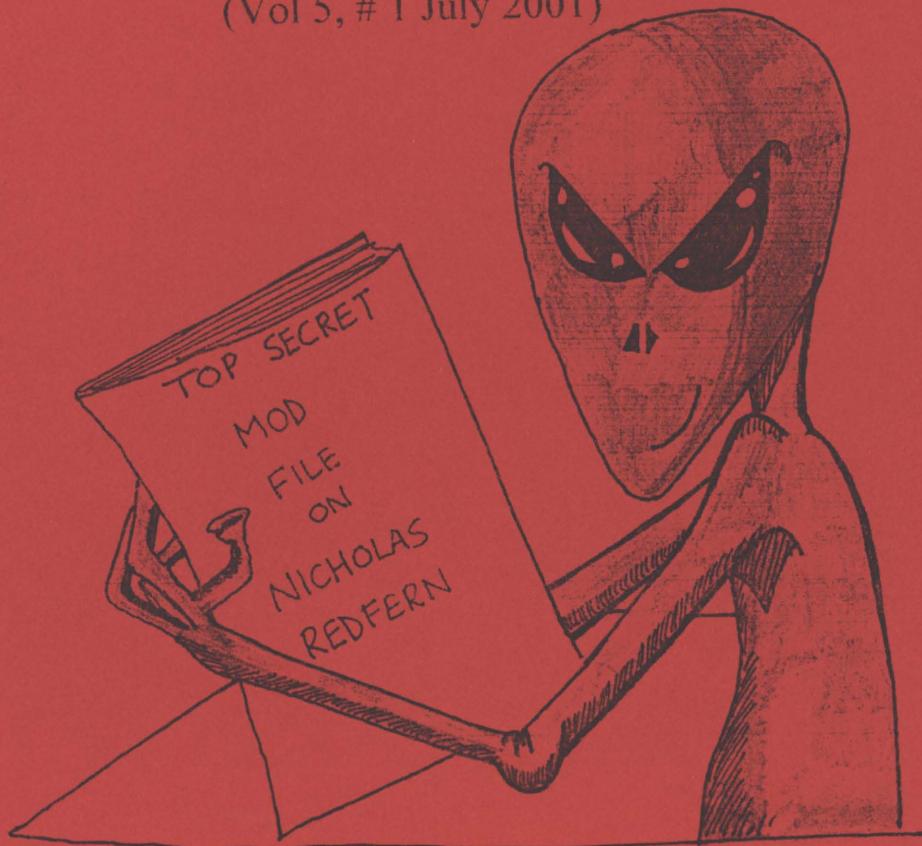


YUFOS
YORKSHIRE UFO SOCIETY

PROJECT RED BOOK

(Vol 5, # 1 July 2001)



inside this document

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"ANGELS & AIRSHIPS": THE PHANTOM MENACE Pt 2

And much more...

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Message of the month: Don't take "Cake", kids...

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"It's better than goofy golf."

AN INTERVIEW WITH NICK REDFERN

Nick Redfern was born in 1964 and is the author of the book *Covert Agenda; The FBI Files*; and *Cosmic Crashes* (which has just been released in paperback). His books were serialised in the *Sunday People* newspaper. Nick's books are also available in the USA, Canada, Australia, Poland, Russia and Portugal. He writes the book review page for *UFO Magazine* and writes for 2 internet sites *Destination Space* and *UFO City*. With Jon Downes he has a monthly link-up with the Jeff Rense radio show in the States; and he writes a column on mysteries for 3 Staffordshire newspapers. He also writes for *The Daily Express* and the *Western Daily Press* newspapers. When he's not chasing the ultimate conspiracy Nick likes to get drunk and watch horror films with his mates, wine and dine his girlfriend Dana and listen to the dulcet tones of The Ramones, The Sex Pistols and anything loud and punky.



DAVE BAKER: Okay Nick, my usual question first: How did you become involved in ufology?

NICK REDFERN: I got interested in UFOs around 1978. Up until then I don't think I'd really given the subject any thought at all and at that age I was more interested in punk rock music, girls and experiencing the delights of Woodpecker cider! In fact nothing really has changed since except that the cider is now either lager or whisky and coke!

But as far as UFOs are concerned, it was my father who got my interest going because he had been involved in a weird incident in the 50s. He worked as a radar mechanic with the RAF and in '52 was stationed at RAF Neatishead in Norfolk and over the course of a couple of nights the radar people tracked unusual objects and targets over the North Sea, aircraft were scrambled from RAF Coltishall and this was all the subject of an official inquiry by the Air Ministry who sent guys up to interview all those involved, told them they were all under the Official Secrets Act and all this really sparked off an interest in me. So it's all my dad's fault that I'm stuck in this bloody business!!

You are probably known more as a researcher into documents and declassified files, but did you start out investigating UFO reports like most investigators. Can you give us an example of some of your cases?

Yeah, I did begin by just investigating straightforward reports of lights in the sky, stuff like that. As I said, I got interested in 78-

ish so I'd have been 14 or 15 at that time. And between then and the next few years I would just read books on the subject, subscribe to magazines - things like that. Then in the mid-80s or thereabouts I began subscribing to the very early version of Graham Birdsall's *UFO Magazine* - I would do some writing for them, sending information and that sort of thing. But the area of the Midlands where I was living was on the doorstep of Cannock Chase which is a huge stretch of forest in Staffordshire and there are a lot of weird reports of things there: UFOs, big cats, ghosts, would you believe even "Big hairy men" reports! But I got a lot of reports from that time - say about 85 - of Flying Triangles and many of these were the same as today's; although of course in 85 the FT's were much less known. But these were the typical Triangles with the light in each corner, black colour, low humming sound and so on. So these and the lights in the sky were mainly the sorts of things I was looking into when I first got into the subject. But it was always the stories of military and government involvement that fascinated me most.

Do you still go out "into the field" to interview UFO witnesses?

Oh yeah! If I get reports of UFO sightings from people who phone me up I always take the time to speak with them, listen to them, give advice and if they want me to I'll jump in the car and go and see them. My view is that whatever people have seen, if they take the time to contact you then it's only right to try and help. What I also do if the witness is okay about it is to pass the details on to various UFO groups to help with their data bases too.

But yeah I never really get tired of the research side of the subject. Plus it's good fun too! And you know I see so many people in ufology with big egos who think "Huh, why should I bother; they just saw a star," but the way I look at it is that if people read my books and from there contact me to report things then it's only right to give something back.

What led you into the kind of work you do today?

Well as I said it was my father's experience that first got me interested in the whole secrecy angle of the subject. But back in the 80s the Public Record Office began to release a few UFO files and then in 90 I think it was I wrote a chapter for one of Tim Good's *UFO Report* books that he used to edit and I wrote a piece on the files that had been released by that date and included a contact address for me. Well I had a bunch of replies from people who read it that set me off in pursuing other leads, documents and files and by about 93 I thought "I could do a book on all this!" and that's what led me to seriously pursue the whole cover-up/conspiracy/documents angle of the subject.

How do you go about your research? Do you target a particular event you wish to follow-up, research a time-period, or is it more hit and miss?

It's probably a bit of both. I mainly now just concentrate on the secrecy side of things - but less now on the PRO and the files and more on the stuff that isn't coming through officially but which is coming through via other sources - GCHQ investigations, Special Branch studies, things like that which you hardly ever get to see officially and this is all stuff that I'm actively looking into right now. And that's because not only is that the area that interests me most but I think if answers to the UFO subject do exist then they are going to be found in the archives and vaults of the military and the Intelligence community. But what I tend to do now is pick up on those cases that to me seem most interesting and where I think there is a chance of taking the subject further. But yeah some things are just hit-and-miss and someone will write to me or phone and tell me a story that is really interesting and I just go off at a tangent - I like to keep all my options open! Plus I like to get involved in lots of different aspects of the secrecy/files angle. I can't think of anything worse than moaning on

about the same old case for 40 years and boring everyone to death.

Do you find that some documents lead you on to others, kind of opening up a can of worms?

Sometimes I do. The good thing about the PRO is that it does give you the opportunity to not just look at the UFO files but also files on what else the RAF or whoever was doing at the time and from there you get an idea of what different departments did, you begin to see the same names cropping up time and again and so it really does lead you on a paper-trail. For example, there are a few UFO reports at the PRO investigated by the RAF's Provost and Security Services who were based at Rudloe Manor until 98 and those files sent me off a long and on-going search that is a really big can of worms!

Much of your work involves de-classified military documents. We are constantly told by the MOD that there has never been any military investigation into UFOs. Have you ever found any evidence to prove otherwise?

Oh yeah. Less so in the files. But I've lost count of the number of retired, former and in some cases still-serving military and government people I've spoken to who have had involvement in investigating these things. Now I would agree that none of this on its own sheds any light on what UFOs may be, but the idea that all the work is undertaken by this little office at Whitehall is total bollocks.

There is much debate over Nick Pope's time at the MoD "UFO Desk". Some researchers claim that if the only UFO reports he dealt with are the ones he tells us about in his books, then there isn't much of a UFO mystery at all. Do you think -regardless of Nick's own belief's - that the "real" UFO reports went elsewhere, and that he was merely a public face to please the public? (whether he was aware of this or not!)

Oh I knew Nick would pop up in these questions!! Okay, this is the deal: I have no problem with Nick at all on a personal level and I see him maybe once or twice a year and we have a lot to drink and have a bloody good laugh. Now there are those of course who think

Nick is some sort of sinister character and who is hiding the truth about UFOs and is just there to promote the idea of this small office at Whitehall from where all this work is carried out from. I think that's a pile of crap. But I do think that there is far more going on behind the scenes. Now that's not in a Fox Mulder "I want to believe"-type of way: it's based on investigations, interviews and studies with people who have been able to point me in various directions. I know that Special Branch is up to its neck in the UFO subject and they have files on so many UFO researchers you wouldn't believe! Now these aren't files on UFO sightings but files on those in the UFO community themselves. Special Branch also have files on the APEN group that was doing the rounds years ago - that's actually a really interesting story and one I have got a lot on and I'm working to get this published. It's pretty weird and involves Special Branch monitoring various right-wing groups, and all sorts of stuff. GCHQ has a small team of people that look at this subject. The Computer Crimes Unit people at Scotland Yard have been involved and at one time MI5 were definitely in the loop but to what extent that continues today I'm not sure; although again I know they have helped with gathering information for Special Branch - and sometimes the other way around. So no, Nick Pope and the Whitehall office are far from being the only players in this subject.

What do you think about Rudloe Manor? Underground bases? Stored alien foetuses? Matthew Williams' gun battles? Is there any truth to any of the rumours?

Well Matthew is a good mate of mine and we've known each other for years and I have many a happy memory of jumping over fences with Matt. I like Matt because he doesn't care if he offends people and he often has unconventional ways of getting information - two things which I have no problem with at all. I think the days of doing things by the book to get answers are long gone. And if as Matthew and I both believe things have been done to hide certain facts relating to UFOs by the Intelligence community, then frankly what's good enough for them is good enough for us too.

As far as all the controversy about Rudloe is concerned, there's no doubt at all about their involvement in the UFO subject. The only real question is how extensive that involvement was. I spoke quite recently to a retired RAF

guy of high standing who told me that Rudloe was involved in UFO studies in 48 and this was in connection with an early joint US-UK study. Plus in '96 no less a source than the treasurer of the RAF Police Association told me quite openly and on the record that Rudloe was the first port of call for all UFO reports generated by the RAF and that all these went to Rudloe first and not the MoD.

I could cite numerous other such people too so there is no doubt that Rudloe has a murky history with regard to UFOs. Don't forget too even the MoD now admits that Rudloe acted as the official co-ordination point for UFOs for the RAF for a number of years and what prompted them to say this after years of silence and denial is still a mystery. As far as reports of bodies of aliens under Rudloe is concerned, well...who knows? I admit that I do believe that some crash-retrieval cases are valid and I guess that the material evidence would have to be stored somewhere! But I admit too that this is the most controversial area of the whole Rudloe saga and one that requires very, very careful study.

Tell us a little about the Official Secrets Act and how it affects classified documents. I understand that it's very different from the Freedom of Information act they have over in the States...

Okay, the party line is that UFOs don't come under the constraints of the OSA. But there is one file at the PRO from 58 that very specifically warns RAF personnel that talking about unusual radar trackings with the Press would be considered a violation of the OSA. Interestingly, Matthew was specifically directed to this file by an insider which suggests that maybe someone wanted this side of the story to get out. But again I've lost count of the number of elderly, retired military people who have told me that they were warned not to discuss UFOs or risk the wrath of the OSA.

Do you think there are more documents which will *never* come to light?

Oh yeah!! I've spoken to people whose job has been to just shred documents to ensure that there is no chance of them ever being declassified.

Is there a "Holy Grail" for you, a document or series of documents which you search

for more than any other, but always remains tantalisingly out of reach?

Well, I would say that with my main interest being crash-retrievals that if any of these incidents are valid, then logic dictates that files would exist so to get them would be the ultimate goal - we'll see what happens!

Has any of your research proved to you that some UFOs are extra-terrestrial?

In terms of proof the answer has to be no. But when you speak with an elderly pilot who pursued a 200-foot diameter disc or someone who tracked on radar the movements of a vast UFO the size of a battleship over the North Sea, or who witnessed 5 decades ago a Flying Triangle of the type seen now and who works for the MoD, then the image that this creates in my mind is one of a technology far in advance of ours. I actually have no problem with the secret weapon theory, but if that's valid then why don't we see them on the battlefield if we've been test-flying these things for years? So yeah I think we do have a presence here from somewhere else.

Now I certainly don't think that these things are falling out of the sky left, right and centre but the idea that there have been over the course of the last 50 years or so a number (not a large number) of cases that could conceivably be extra-terrestrial is one I think is very valid.

During a question & answer session after one of his YUFOS talks, Andy Roberts picked you as one researcher who he doesn't always agree with, but who he has a great deal of respect for...high praise indeed from Andy. How do you get on?

Oh I like Andy! He's a good guy and I consider him a friend. Although it's true that we disagree on some things it's probably not as much as some people might think. I think - and Andy if you're reading this I'm not creeping, mate - that *The Armchair Ufologist* that Andy edits is just the best UFO-related mag there is - totally hilarious, biting, cutting, controversial and good old fun! I wish it was more frequent though. And I think that *UFO Brigantia* was a great mag too - I used to subscribe to that years ago and it was always good.

Now Andy is a Grateful Dead fan and as someone who still annoys the neighbours with

loud punk music I can't forgive him for that but we'll let that one pass! But I like Andy and I know he enjoys stirring up the shit and then sitting back and watching what happens and he calls a spade a spade. The good thing I've found is that even though me and Andy don't agree on everything, we can sit down and discuss a case or a question rationally over a beer and still agree to differ. But there are so many people in ufology where if you aren't with them you are against them or you must be working for MIS - pathetic! And Andy has a good sense of humour too. That's another things I've found: there are some fine researchers in ufology but, by God, there are some humourless bastards too. So now that I've massaged Andy's ego he can send me the tenners he promised for doing so!

Speaking of Andy, he has given his view of the Berwyn Mountains 'UFO' crash at YUFOS meetings. Do you have a different view of things?

Ha! I just knew that question was gonna rear its head - I knew it! Okay here we go: when I first looked into this case I genuinely thought this was a British Roswell, if you like. But, hands up, most of that was based on the findings of others. In my book *Cosmic Crashes* I interviewed various players who had looked into the case to get their views. Now *Cosmic Crashes* wasn't really meant to be just about crashed UFOs as such. Loads of people have written books like that. So what I did was to write it in the first person as a kind of on-the-road diary of me travelling around the country and the bizarre situations I found myself in. Even when *Crashes* came out I was still convinced of the reality of the case. Now, when I read Andy's findings I not only began to get doubts but also began to see that there were major flaws in the story - that turned much - but not all! - of the story around for me.

And I'm not the sort of person who would hang on to a theory if new data pushed it in another direction - I'm not at all interested in the "I want to believe" scenario at all. But I'm still looking into this case and new information is still coming through and I now think again that something weird did happen but I'm just not sure what. That's not a case of fence-sitting - just that this case is so weird that rather than say X, Y or Z happened, I'm now saying I don't know what happened but I think there is much more to the story.

There are for example these Special Branch files on APEN who were implicated in the Berwyn case - I know why those files exist and it's all to do with right-wing groups. Also, remember when Tony Dodd surfaced with this story in 96 about a British Army guy known as James Prescott who claimed to have taken alien bodies from the Berwyns to Porton Down? Well, I can now prove conclusively that that story was in circulation with a certain branch of the RAF in '79 and that it contained all the key ingredients of the Prescott story - the Army involvement, the bodies, Porton Down etc. So I am really digging into this now and hope to publish my findings and tell the whole story whatever that may be. It's such an intriguing story with so many angles and deserves to be resolved. So in conclusion while I think Andy has effectively demolished a lot of the mythology of the case, now in 2001 I still think that there is "something" else there too.

As you said, your book *Cosmic Crashes* deals with so-called "Crash retrievals". The most famous is of course Roswell, New Mexico, but there are allegedly others...

Well there's dozens of reports of course and most of them are either hoaxes, misidentifications, rumours, or whatever. But in *Cosmic Crashes* I did write about a few cases that hadn't been discussed before and that were very intriguing - one being an incident on Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, where a number of people had seen this small triangular shaped object crashed in a field. Now there is evidence of interest in this case on the part of the military today and that all centers around weird telephone calls and things like that which I talk about in the book, so while Roswell is seen as the premier C/R it's certainly not alone.

Tell us about recent press reports that the CAA has a file concerning 30 UFO "Near Misses" with Jet liners...

Yeah, these are files that the Civil Aviation Authority has released and that cover about the last 22-23 years and that concern sightings by airline pilots of unidentified objects seen in close proximity to airliners and the CAA has been quite open about this and frank that these sightings remain unexplained. So it's an interesting slant on the subject.

Tell us a little about the series of books you are writing with fortean and cryptozoologist Jon Downes...

Jon's a good mate of mine and like Andy he has a good sense of humour and I do a lot of work with Jon - hardly any in fact on UFOs though - mostly freelance stuff on animal stories for magazines that he writes for and I take photos for. But Jon lives in Exeter and runs this group - the Centre for Fortean Zoology - that investigates mystery animals and monsters. Well, I go down to see Jon maybe once every 6 weeks or so on the pretext of doing work but to be honest it usually descends into me, Jon, Richard - who Jon shares a house with and who's one of the last remaining Goth's in the UK, I think! - and various other friends including witches, bikers and all sorts just getting wildly pissed, talking complete nonsense and cranking up the CD player.

But on the rare occasion that me and Jon actually succeed in getting something done, we have started doing a series of titles called *Weird War Tales* that look at everything from UFOs, lake monsters, bigfoot-style reports, ghosts etc that have been reported in, for example, the First and Second World War, Vietnam, the Gulf etc. It's a diversion for us both and we have fun doing it - which is the main thing!

It's never boring at Jon's - last time I was there a drunk driver ploughed into his car, the kitchen caught fire, I got an electric shock off the fridge, a snake escaped in the room where I crash out on the settee at night and...well, I could go on and on!

But Jon is a great writer and really has the ability to tell a good story. Check out his books *The Blackdown Mystery* or *Only Fools and Goxit-Suckers* - try and imagine a cross between *Cosmic Crashes* and *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* and that would be about right! Plus I was proud to have had a starring role on Jon's epic movie, *The Owlman and Others*. I was very proud of my acting...well, no actually that's not true! I can act about as well as I can sing but we did get a couple of naked lesbians in the film and that made it all the more worthwhile. If it's a case of naked lesbians or UFOs, I'll take the former thank you very much! So yeah, in between the booze and the house blowing up I do get the occasional piece of work written with Jon. You should interview him next!

I know that you are lecturing for BUFORA in a few weeks on the topic of the CIA's investigations into the location of The Ark. Can you tell us a little about that?

Yeah this is a strange one. The CIA has released a file - or parts of a file, I should say - that deals with their records on Noah's Ark and a search they made for the Ark years ago. The CIA admits that 2 and maybe 3 departments have files on the Ark but they refuse to release them because they are classified. Now that sounds like something straight out of *The X-Files* but it's there in black-and-white; so I'll be telling people all about the file, what it contains and what might be contained within the withheld material.

You have written a number of books and appear regularly on the lecture circuit, but you stay away from Internet discussion lists and do not appear to be a regular on TV. Why is this?

Yeah I do a lot of lectures. Couple of reasons for that: first I enjoy doing them, second you get to see the world, third most conferences have a good social aspect to them too, and finally it beats 9 to 5! But I do do quite a bit of TV - *Big Breakfast*, *GMTV*, lots of cable stuff - that probably no-one watches though!

But it is true that you don't see me on internet discussion sites. Now that's not because I actively avoid them as you suggest. This is the deal: Although I suppose most people associate me with the UFO books, I actually work as a journalist for both the nationals and a number of provincial papers around the country. Plus, I am constantly writing books on the subject and together this means that I put about 6 days in per week and from about 8am to 6pm.

Now, after having done all that, to be honest the last thing I want to do is sit in front of the computer all night discussing the pros and cons of the bloody Roswell incident for 3 hours!!! I would much rather go out for dinner or to a club with my girlfriend, go down the boozer with my mates, play music or watch TV. I don't live for UFOs and never have and never will. So while I enjoy writing and lecturing about UFOs, debating on chat sites for hours seems pointless when you could have a life instead.

Plus, much of the stuff on the discussion sites (which, incidentally, I check out once a week or so to see what's being discussed) doesn't actually achieve anything other than arguing. What's the point? If it resolved things that would be great but just to bicker down the internet is something I'm not interested in and

don't care about at all! I'd much rather see good research and see stuff resolved and investigated than a bunch of people saying "your stuff is crap" or "the Roswell craft was circular" or "no it wasn't; it was triangular"! Forget all that and GET A LIFE!!!!

Which five books do you think should be on every ufologists bookshelf?

Actually I can only think of 3 - *A Covert Agenda*; *The FBI Files*; and *Cosmic Crashes*!

No - I'm kidding!!! Actually my favourites are perhaps ones that people wouldn't think would be to my tastes. But I would say John Keel's *The Mothman Prophecies* - I love Keel's stuff.

They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers by Gray Barker. Barker was a wonderful story teller and that's why I like this - but don't take it as one hundred per cent gospel!

Round In Circles by Jim Schnabel is another favourite - all about his expose of the crop circle subject - very funny!

There's a trilogy of novels titled *UFO Conspiracy* by David Bischoff that rank amongst my favourites - in fact I'd say these little known books are the best UFO fiction ever - well worth reading, lots of action, humour, adventure and a good knowledge of UFO lore.

Then I would say Leonard Stringfield's *Situation Red* which was the first book I really got into as a kid and I suppose I have a lot of nostalgic memories of.

Okay, let's finish off with a game of sound bytes. Briefly, (or not!) what do you think of the following staples of ufology....

The MJ- 12 papers

Well I've just come back from a week at the National Archives in Washington with Ryan Wood and we found a lot of intriguing things. At this stage the research is on-going but MJ12 is far more than some guy simply hoaxing documents in his front room! This story will be a big one - I promise!

Rendlesham

Yeah another controversial one! Personally, I think more than a lighthouse was seen but, as with the Berwyns, whether it was a UFO or some sort of weird experiment as has been alluded, or something else entirely I really don't know.

Alien Abductions

I think there are abductions but certainly not on the scale that some people allege! Blimey if there were the UFOs would be colliding over roof tops with each other on a nightly basis!

Mexico City Waves

I think a lot of the film footage is interesting and evidence of something weird but that big UFO behind the building? HOAX!!

Gulf Breeze

Ha-ha-hah-hah-ha!!!!

Crop Circles

People!! Used to think it was aliens when I were nobbut a lad but the passage of time has shown otherwise!:) The complex ones? All people. The simple circles? Christ knows!

Men In Black

This is an interesting one because in the UK I have been able to conclusively trace back a couple of MIB accounts to the workings of the RAF's Provost and Security Services who until 98 were at Rudloe. Again I hope to publish something on this soon.

Cattle Mutilations

Well the FBI's files on this are very eye-opening. There's no doubt that something strange was going on in New Mexico in the 70s - the Bureau's files definitely show that. I veer now between a UFO link and something to do with biological warfare.

Area 51

That's where the aliens live and dine on strawberry ice-cream - true!

Kenneth Arnold saw pelicans

Kenneth Arnold - Praise the Lord! Yeah I've read all the stuff and the discussions about the pelican theory and there's no doubt that it's an interesting twist on the story but having seen both sides' arguments and having re-read Arnold's book as a result and several other papers on the sighting. I'm still persuaded that he saw something unusual.

The Phoenix Lights

I think this is a genuine puzzle and a real UFO incident - so there!

Many thanks for the interview Nick, don't annoy the military too much, and don't deafen the neighbors!

And....look!!!

FUTURE EVENTS

Tuesday, 9th October 2001

YUFOS proudly presents

NICK REDFERN

at

*The THREE CRANES
QUEEN STREET
SHEFFIELD CITY CENTRE*

More details to come...

THE PHANTOM MENACE: UFOS IN WORLD WAR ONE? (part two)

BY DR DAVID CLARKE

"...the first days of [the First World] war passed, and the Zeppelins did not come. Not the real ones, that is, though fear created their image in many places. Zepps had been definitely seen off the coast, over the Channel, shadowing ships at sea...Londoners watched the sky uneasily and lay at night waiting for the new terror of twentieth century war to come, snarling and roaring overhead..."

Kenneth Poolman, *Zeppelins over England*

Phantom Zeppelin Raids

One report of an early visit by a Zeppelin to the British coast during the first months of the First World War was taken seriously by the British authorities. It appears in the official British forces War History published in 1925. This report resulted in the War Office sending an intelligence officer, Captain Stansfield, to take statements from the skipper and crew of the Hull trawler SS *Ape*. Ship's master G.F. Hiles told Stansfield how the ship was sailing towards Yarmouth at 4.10pm on 15 December 1914 when just south of the Protector Shoal Buoy the crew sighted "a black object astern which gradually drew nearer." Although the sky was overcast and hazy, it soon became clear the object was an airship as it slowly approached the ship at a height of 500 to 600 feet. "She soon turned and headed in towards land, rising as she did so," Stansfield wrote in his official report to the Imperial General Staff. "A car was then observed underneath amidships...as she rose speed increased and she was gradually lost sight of in haze and increasing darkness." The skipper was prepared to take an oath this was a Zeppelin and thought "he could hear a buzzing noise" as the large craft disappeared towards Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast.

Stansfield concluded his report by stating: "The Master gave his evidence in an exceedingly clear and truthful manner and I can suggest no reason why his evidence should be doubted." This sighting was judged to be good evidence for a visit by a Zeppelin to the East Coast defences immediately prior to the bombardment of Scarborough, Hartlepool and Whitby by German battle cruisers which took place on the morning of 16 December. Major James of Military Training appended a note to Stansfield's report which reads: "Mark up the

paper on the attack on Hartlepool and note in that paper this evidence of an air reconnaissance before the attack." However, after the end of the war it became clear that a German airship could not have been responsible for this sighting. Zeppelin war diaries examined by historian Douglas Robinson show that weather conditions were so atrocious on December 15 that none of the airships were even able to make local practice flights from their sheds in Northern Germany. Records kept by the British war office showed a barometer reading of 29.15 inches for the time of the sighting and no flight over the sea was conducted under such inclement conditions throughout the war. Was this report the product of a rumour or did a "phantom airship" visit the Humber Estuary just hours before German battlecruisers launched their surprise attack on the East Coast of Yorkshire?

Equally as puzzling are the reports of strange lights observed by members of the Royal Flying Corps charged with the defence of London from Zeppelin raiders. On the night of January 31, 1916 orders were sent to the fighter aerodromes warning that enemy airships were expected to attack the capital. Nine Zeppelins of the German Navy had left their sheds on the Continent with orders to bomb central England in weather conditions of freezing rain, snow and thick ground mist. Amidst much confusion targets in the North and Midlands including Burton-upon-Trent, Scunthorpe and Birmingham were attacked and bombed, but none of the raiding airships reached London or the home counties. Reports that one of the Zeppelins had initially turned south on crossing the East Anglian coast led the War Office to calculate its course, if held, would take it over north London around 8.10pm. Orders to this effect were sent to the fighter squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps, one of these being Hainault Farm, four miles north of Romford in Essex.

At 7.40pm Lieutenant R.S. Maxwell arose from here in his BE2C biplane No 2087 but saw nothing unusual until 8.25 when according to his report "my engine was missing irregularly and it was only by keeping the speed of the machine down to 50 mph that I was able to stay at 10,000 feet. It was at this time when I distinctly saw an artificial light to the north of me, and at about the same height. I followed this light northeast for nearly 20 minutes, but it seemed to go slightly higher and just as quickly as myself, and eventually I lost it completely in the clouds."

Some 20 miles east of Hainault Farm was another of London's fighter aerodromes at Rochford, Essex. It was from here at 8.45pm that Flight Sub-Lieutenant J.E. Morgan arose for a patrol in his machine. He reported that when at 5,000 feet he saw a little above his own altitude and slightly ahead to his right, about 100 feet away from his plane, what he described as "a row of what appeared to be lighted windows which looked something like a railway carriage with the blinds drawn." Believing that he had come across a hostile Zeppelin about to bomb London, Morgan drew his Webley Scott pistol and fired it in the direction of the "railway carriage", whereupon "the lights alongside rose rapidly" and disappeared into the inky blackness!

A full account of Morgan's sighting, dubbed "an encounter with a phantom airship" appears in Captain Joseph Morris's official history of the German air raids, published in 1925. The book was compiled from then classified Air Ministry records, and Morris refers directly to the airman's report filed with the War Office. However, extensive searches of the Air Ministry records at the Public Record Office have failed to locate Morgan's original report although the station log from Rochford aerodrome gives brief details of the flight with the addition of the word "ZEPP" which shows he did have an encounter with something he took to be an enemy airship. Morgan's report is not included in the official account of the 31 January 1916 raid published at the end of the war, so it appears no credence was attached to it by the authorities.

Morgan was not, however, the only British airman to report a mid-air encounter with an unidentified flying object during the defence of the country from air raids. On 6 September 1914 Flight Commander C.E.H. Rathborne of the Felixstowe Naval Air Station, Suffolk, returned from an early morning patrol in his RNAS seaplane to report an encounter with

another "phantom airship." His report, preserved in the station log, reads: "At 5.35 am whilst on patrol half way between the Sunk and Shipwash lightships, I sighted an airship, with a silver coloured envelope on the horizon. I was flying at 1,300 feet at the time. I at once started to follow her, and did so for about ten miles, when she disappeared into the haze, and I was unable to pick her up again. The estimated position of the airship is from 25 to 30 miles south of Orfordness. The airship appeared to be steering south-south-east. Owing to the haze and distance it was impossible to distinguish any details, such as cars. The shape appeared to be similar to the Astra Torres [semi-rigid German Army airship], and the sun showed up the silver colour of the envelope clearly."

Despite the hype which the Zeppelin fleet received in the popular Press prior to the outbreak of the war, its actual strength would have surprised even the most knowledgeable military intelligence sources. For the facts were that Germany had just one Naval Zeppelin and five Army airships in service when the First World War was declared. Within the first few months of hostilities most of the Army ships had been destroyed or wrecked following action over the battlefield, leaving no aircraft free for the raids against England demanded by the German High Command. It is clear that whatever Flight Commander Rathborne saw over the Suffolk coast, it was not a German airship. His report, and that of the two Royal Flying Corps airmen in 1916, are the first mid-air encounters with unidentified flying objects reported by military fliers.

How Rumours Begin

An understanding of how rumours were spread during the First World War is essential before the phantom Zeppelin sightings can be fully understood and properly interpreted. Belief in visits by German airships was in fact just one of a series of overlapping rumours and panics which spread like wildfire through Britain and the other countries caught up in the mushrooming armed conflict between 1914 and 1918. For example there was a rumour which began late in August 1914 of a Russian army being shipped from Archangel to northern Scotland, with the soldiers being transported in great secrecy hidden inside covered railway carriages through England to the south coast and from there shipped to fight

against the German army in Belgium. Although it was "just a rumour" many eyewitnesses came forward to claim they had seen the railway carriages containing the Russians, some of whom still had "snow on their boots". Indeed, a Mr Champion even claimed to have travelled from Archangel with 2,500 Cossacks and was able to take photographs of them. There is enough "eyewitness" evidence of this mythical event to construct a conspiracy theory which claims that a Government cover-up of the facts exists to this day. There is in fact sufficient eyewitness testimony for this to be used as "proof" that Russian soldiers fought alongside the British Expeditionary Force on the Western Front in 1914 and that a conspiracy of silence has existed ever since.

More accurately, the "Russians in England" rumour demonstrates how we *cannot rely upon the statements of those who claim to have observed incidents where they are rumour-inspired*. Similar psychological motivations lay behind the stories of "eyewitnesses" who have come forward in recent years claiming they were present when alien bodies were removed from the Roswell UFO "crash" were examined in Air Force hangars. Sociologists define rumours as "a recurrent form of communication through which people caught together in an ambiguous situation attempt to construct a meaningful interpretation of it by pooling their intellectual resources." In time of war, information is in short supply and rumours rapidly become beliefs which are acted upon. The lack of any co-ordinated Government censorship of the Press in the first few months of the First World War encouraged the spread of stories such as those concerning the Russian troops, the Zeppelin sightings and the almost continuous claims of flashing signal lights supposedly employed by German spies. To give some idea of the extent of these rumours, a Military Intelligence report from 1916 estimated the total number of reports of "enemy signalling" to be as high as 2,000 from the Scottish command alone during the first year of the war.

In August 1914 off the East Coast of Yorkshire and again in April 1915 in Norwegian waters rumours spread of a battle between British and German warships. Flashes in the sky and explosions reputedly caused by gunfire were reported by the crews of a number of ships from neutral countries. Once again these rumours produced eyewitness testimony of events which did not take place. The most dramatic of these came from the captain of the Danish steamer *Hilda Maersk* who claimed on

arrival at Hull that when 15 miles off Spurn Head he had distinctly seen a number of ship's masts rising out of the water at the mouth of the Humber estuary. Six of these were visibly flying the German flag, from which he was able to conclude they were the remains of German warships sunk in a battle with British cruisers. His account was confirmed by the steamer's first officer. Unfortunately, the naval historical records from this period demonstrate there had been no naval battle in the North Sea and therefore no sunken warships, German or otherwise!

Possibly the best known rumour of the First World War period was the story of the Angel of Mons. The Battle of Mons on 23 August 1914 was the first engagement of the war between British and German forces and historian A.J.P. Taylor notes it was the only one where "supernatural intervention was observed, more or less reliably, on the British side." This intervention took a number of forms, from a mysterious cloud which appeared between the BEF and the German cavalry as the former were in danger of annihilation, to claims that ghostly archers had felled German soldiers with supernatural arrows. Later, visions of angels were spoken of which placed themselves between the opposing forces, allowing the outnumbered British soldiers time to retreat while German horses and soldiers fled in terror. Those who investigated the Mons mystery could never find a single reliable eyewitness account from veterans of the battle itself that was not third-hand or unreliable. The origin of the rumour was traced to a work of fiction called *The Bowmen* by Arthur Machen which was first published in the London *Evening News* in September 1914. Not one single account of the Mons battle which appeared prior to Machen's story contains any reference to angels and supposed witnesses only began to come forward during the summer of 1915 after the rumours about the angelic visitation had become firmly rooted in popular belief and consciousness.

UFO historian Granville Oldroyd has concluded that socio-psychological explanations can explain all the different categories of rumour which surfaced in British society during the First World War period. In the case of the phantom airships and enemy signalling, there are clear similarities with contemporary UFOs in that both reports came in waves, were largely nocturnal and the percentage of "unknowns" were roughly the same. Belief in the existence of German

signalling continued throughout the course of the war because the rumour had become self-perpetuating. The Zeppelin scares and the stories concerning the Russians, the phantom naval battles and the Angel of Mons all produced eyewitness accounts of events which did not take place. Although all four were "one-off" belief systems specific to a certain time and place, a study of how they began can help us better understand today's all pervading UFO mythology. Granville writes that: "The World War One belief systems were created entirely by ourselves so we are quite capable of creating the UFO belief, except that this one has become self-perpetuating with its own subject imagery."

These conclusions are shared by sociologists such as Robert E. Bartholemew and Phyllis Fox who have both discussed the role of belief systems in the creation of UFO reports. Dr Fox described the process by which people decide an ambiguous object in the sky is a UFO or spaceship is a type of collective human behaviour "similar to the transmission of rumour." She concluded that human beings do not observe events in the way that a camera does. "To a considerable extent, people see what they expect to see; and what they expect to see is not simply a result of their personalities but also of their social and cultural milieu."

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NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY 14 AUGUST 2001

7:00PM – 10:00PM

THE THREE CRANES

QUEEN STREET,

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

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

NEW EVIDENCE SHOWS FALSE MEMORIES CAN BE CREATED

(University Of Washington Posted 6/12/2001)

"I Tawt I Taw" A Bunny Wabbit At Disneyland: New Evidence Shows False Memories Can Be Created

About one-third of the people who were exposed to a fake print advertisement that described a visit to Disneyland and how they met and shook hands with Bugs Bunny later said they remembered or knew the event happened to them.

The scenario described in the ad never occurred because Bugs Bunny is a Warner Bros. cartoon character and wouldn't be featured in any Walt Disney Co. property, according to University of Washington memory researchers Jacquie Pickrell and Elizabeth Loftus. Pickrell will make two presentations on the topic at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Society (APS) on Sunday (June 17) in Toronto and at a satellite session of the Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition in Kingston, Ontario, on Wednesday.

"The frightening thing about this study is that it suggests how easily a false memory can be created," said Pickrell, UW psychology doctoral student.

"It's not only people who go to a therapist who might implant a false memory or those who witness an accident and whose memory can be distorted who can have a false memory. Memory is very vulnerable and malleable. People are not always aware of the choices they make. This study shows the power of subtle association changes on memory."

The research is a follow-up to an unpublished study by Loftus, a UW psychology professor who is being honored by the APS this week with its William James Fellow Award for psychological research; Kathryn Braun, a visiting scholar at the Harvard Business School; and Rhiannon Ellis, a former UW undergraduate who is now a doctoral student at the University

of Pittsburgh. In the original study, 16 percent of the people exposed to a Disneyland adfeaturing Bugs Bunny later thought they had seen and met the cartoon rabbit.

In the new research, Pickrell and Loftus divided 120 subjects into four groups. The subjects were told they were going to evaluate advertising copy, fill out several questionnaires and answer questions about a trip to Disneyland.

The first group read a generic Disneyland ad that mentioned no cartoon characters. The second group read the same copy and was exposed to a 4-foot-tall cardboard figure of Bugs Bunny that was casually placed in the interview room. No mention was made of Bugs Bunny. The third, or Bugs group, read the fake Disneyland ad featuring Bugs Bunny. The fourth, or double, exposure group read the fake add and also saw the cardboard rabbit.

This time 30 percent of the people in the Bugs group later said they remembered or knew they had met Bugs Bunny when they visited Disneyland and 40 percent of the people in the double exposure group reported the same thing.

"'Remember' means the people actually recall meeting and shaking hands with Bugs," explained Pickrell. "'Knowing' is they have no real memory, but are sure that it happened, just as they have no memory of having their umbilical cord being cut when they were born but know it happened."

"Creating a false memory is a process. Someone saying, 'I know it could have happened,' is taking the first step of actually creating a memory. If you clearly believe you walked up to Bugs Bunny, you have a memory."

In addition, Pickrell said there is the issue of the consequence of false memories or the ripple effects. People in the experiment who were exposed to the false advertising were more likely to relate Bugs Bunny to other things at Disneyland not suggested in the ad, such as seeing Bugs and Mickey Mouse together or seeing Bugs in the Main Street Electrical Parade.

"We are interested in how people create their autobiographical references, or memory. Through this process they might be altering their own memories," she said. "Nostalgic advertising works in a similar manner. Hallmark, McDonald's and Disney have very effective nostalgic advertising that can change people's buying habits. You may not have had a great experience the last time you visited Disneyland or McDonald's, but the ads may be inadvertently be creating the impression that they had a wonderful time and leaving viewers with that memory. If ads can get people to believe they had an experience they never had, that is pretty powerful."

"The bottom line of our study is that the phony ad is making the difference. Just casually reading a Bugs Bunny cartoon or some other incidental exposure doesn't mean you believe you met Bugs. The ad does."

JETLINERS' 30 NEAR MISSES WITH UFO'S

(*Western Daily Press, Bristol / England - June 15 2001*)

Hundreds of passengers were within a split second of Britain's worst aviation disaster when two jets missed colliding by just 100ft at Heathrow airport. The public was shocked and public confidence severely dented. But what air travellers didn't know was that in the last two decades there have been around 30 similar near misses - with UFOs.

The Western Daily Press has uncovered a dossier detailing the sensational incidents. The Civil Aviation Authority's X-Files are now in the possession of top investigative author Nick Redfern who has shown the contents to the Daily Press.

The CAA's hidden files, only recently released after years under wraps, documents pilots' and air traffic controllers' descriptions of the unidentified flying objects which were close to bringing down jets loaded with passengers.

Last night the CAA's spokesman Chris Mason said of the classified papers: "Our reports are from highly trained pilots and air traffic controllers. We have no argument with what they say they have seen, even if what they saw can't be explained."

"We admit that in some cases the aircraft

which were nearly in collision with the aircraft have never been traced.

We keep an open mind about UFOs. Some things just can't be explained, but they have been reported by top professionals and we do take that into account."

The CAA has been carefully and quietly collecting and analysing data pertaining to near-collisions between airliners and UFOs for a number of years.

And while such a claim might sound like something straight out of an episode of *The X-Files*, it is one supported by the CAA's own records.

"I've never seen anything like it before and can't explain what it was," said British Airways pilot Mike Dalton, of his sighting of a large, silver disc-shaped object from his Boeing 737 from Rome to Gatwick on the night of November 5, 1990.

"My co-pilot and I called in two cabin crew to see it and then it went out of sight. Ground radar couldn't pick it up, so it must have been travelling at phenomenal speed."

Subsequent investigations determined the UFO had been seen by a second BA pilot and the pilot of an RAF Tornado aircraft who was obliged to take "violent evasive action" to avoid a collision with it.

On the night of 21 April 1991, the term 'close encounter' took on an altogether more significant meaning for the crew and passengers of a London-bound airliner. At 9.00 pm Captain Achille

Zaghetti, who was piloting a McDonnell MD80 aircraft, was amazed to see an unidentified flying object pass his aircraft as it flew over the coast of Kent at a height of more than 22,000 feet.

As the UFO was no more than 1,000 feet above the airliner, and the incident therefore classed as a 'near-miss', an official inquiry was launched by the CAA.

Approximately two weeks later the following brief statement was issued: "The pilot said the object was light brown, round, three metres long, and did not describe any means of propulsion."

"The aircraft was under the control of London

air traffic control centre who had no other aircraft in the vicinity, but consistent with the pilot report, a faint radar trace was observed ten nautical miles behind the Alitalia aircraft.

"Extensive enquiries have failed to provide any indication of what the sighting may have been."

But more was to come. The next incident to occur took place on June 1, 1991 when a yellow-orange cylindrical object, ten feet long, was seen at close quarters by the crew of a Britannia Airways Boeing 737 en route to London from Dublin.

Sixteen days later, yet another cylindrical-shaped UFO was sighted, this time by one Walter Leiss, a German engineer aboard Dan Air flight DA 4700 as it headed toward Hamburg.

Nick Redfern is the author of three best-selling books on UFOs. The latest, *Cosmic Crashes*, is published by Simon and Schuster at £6.99.

Air traffic controller: 'was it, er, an aircraft?'

January 6, 1995: Captain Roger Wills and co-pilot Mark Stuart were beginning their descent towards Manchester Airport in a Boeing 737 twin jet with 60 passengers on board.

Seventeen minutes before touchdown, a mysterious, triangular-shaped UFO flashed past the right-hand side of the aircraft at a distance described as being "very close" - so close, in fact, that the crew instinctively "ducked" in their seats.

This is an extract from the conversation between crew of the B737 and the radar controller.

B737: "We just had something go down the RHS just above us very fast."

MANCHESTER: "Well, there's nothing seen on the radar. Was it, er, an aircraft?"

B737: "Well, it had lights; it went down the starboard side very quick [and] just slightly above us, yeah."

MANCHESTER: "Keep an eye out for something, er, I can't see anything at all at the moment so, er, must have, er, been very fast or gone down very quickly after it passed you I think."

B737: "Okay. Well, there you go

BIG FOOTPRINTS STIR SASQUATCH SPECULATION

(Francine Dubé. *National Post*, June 25, 2001)

'These things happen all the time ... we underestimate the power of the imagination': 'Maybe monsters'

In May, reports that a monkey man with steel claws was killing people as they slept panicked residents of New Delhi. Last week residents of Santiago, Chile, were enthralled by tales that a 10-year-old boy had been found living in a cave with a pack of dogs. Now, Canada is fielding reports that Bigfoot is prowling around Northern Ontario.

Footprints 35 centimetres long and 12 centimetres wide have been found on the Weenusk First Nation reserve along the south shore of Hudsons Bay, 1,600 kilometres north of Toronto.

"It's definitely not a bear," said Abraham Hunter, chief of the 260-member band.

"I looked at them. They were six feet [two metres] apart, walking."

Brett Kelly, a non-believing spokesman in the office of John Snobelen, Ontario's Environment Minister, noted no official analysis has been done of the print.

"It's just big, shaped like a human footprint, and ... further analysis will be required to determine its origin," said Mr. Kelly.

He said the official position of the ministry is that officials are "bemused."

Such sightings are typically cultural-specific, said Dr. Laurence Kirmayer, director of McGill University's division of social and transcultural psychiatry.

No one would believe that a crazed monkey man was on the loose in Canada, but in India, where monkeys are common, people did believe --until it was proven to be the product of mass hysteria. The dog-boy of Chile, meanwhile, turned out to be embellishing.

"These things happen all the time, but we're surprised because we underestimate the power of the imagination and the power of belief," said Dr. Kirmayer.

At the Weenusk First Nation, elders have spoken of the existence of a sasquatch for hundreds of years, Mr. Hunter said, and two elders claimed to have spotted the beast about 20 years ago.

On June 14, days after the reserve sighting, a provincial Ministry of Natural Resources officer examining old radar stations uncovered an unusual track 150 kilometres east, in a remote area of Polar Bear Provincial Park.

"I was walking through the bush and I looked down and saw this footprint," said Rick Tapley, an MNR officer with 31 years of experience. "I couldn't explain what it was. I naturally thought it might be Bigfoot because of the shape of it."

He has taken a lot of ribbing from colleagues, but Mr. Tapley has believed Sasquatch is real since coming across giant footprints leading out of the woods north of Sudbury in 1972.

Cliff Crook, a sasquatch tracker from Washington state who believes in sasquatch but not all sightings, says he can't be sure without visiting Canada whether the footprints are real.

"I call them 'maybe monsters,' because I believe people are sighting apparitions -- things that exist to them, but not to anybody else," he said.

IS THE REAL NESSIE JUST A CASE OF THE SHAKES?

(Roger Highfield, The Electronic Telegraph, 27 June 2001)

The Loch Ness monster stirs from her underwater lair when the earth shakes, according to a geological explanation unveiled today at an international scientific meeting.

Decades of argument about whether the lake is inhabited by a dinosaur-like monster may be ended by the new theory advanced by Dr Luigi Piccardi of the Centro di Studio dell'Appennino e delle Catene Perimediterranee in Florence.

The first record of the monster in the seventh century was inspired by an earthquake, according to Dr Piccardi, a geologist who specialises in seeking links between myths and geological phenomena.

He argues that the most convincing of the

many thousands of recent sightings agree on few details except that the "monster" creates a huge splash and commotion in the loch, similar to the wake of an earth tremor.

Dr Piccardi presented his theory yesterday in Edinburgh at Earth System Processes, a meeting organised by the Geological Society of London and the Geological Society of America. The scientist, who believes studies should be conducted to link seismic activity with unusual water movements in the loch, has not yet discussed his paper, Seismotectonic origins of the monster of Loch Ness, with Nessie hunters.

He admitted yesterday that he will be relieved if they merely listen and "don't become Piccardi hunters". It is no coincidence that Loch Ness is positioned directly over the fault zone of the most seismic sector of the Great Glen Fault, the major active fault in Scotland, said Dr Piccardi.

Still active, the fault was responsible for a major quake as recently as 1901. And a huge earthquake in Lisbon in 1755 triggered a small tidal wave in the loch when the fault channelled its energy, he said.

The first recorded mention of the monster appeared in the seventh century AD in Adomnan's Life of St Columba, the saint who converted the northern Picts. The Loch Ness monster is thought to derive from a primitive cult of the water horse, sacred to the Picts. St Columba chased off the ferocious monster on the loch by "forming the saving sign of the cross in the air".

He said that the Picts' beast was not their creation but originated from the hippocampus of Greek mythology (hippos, horse, kampos, sea monster), the sea horses that drew the chariot of Poseidon, the god of earthquakes. "They called Poseidon the earth shaker," said Dr Piccardi.

He said: "Loch Ness is exactly on the fault zone. When there are small shocks, it can create a commotion on the water surface. Along the fault there can be gas emissions, which can create large bubbles on the surface. There are many surface effects which can be linked to the activity of the fault."

There have been more than three and a half thousand Nessie sightings. Of those, some are due to natural explanations, others are due to hoaxers. If these are excluded to leave relatively few reliable accounts, what is

usually described is a violent commotion or anomalous wave, and the beast is inferred as the cause. Few describe Nessie, and if they do the details do not match, Dr Piccardi added.

The first locally-recorded sighting, announced in the *Inverness Courier* in 1868, spoke of a huge fish. But the phenomenon did not really take off until 1933 when a Mr and Mrs MacKay reported seeing a massive creature disporting itself in the lake for over a minute. The following year the first "photograph" of the creature was taken.

ISLE OF MAN MOUNT SNAEFELL INCIDENT UPDATE

(Chris Rolfe, UFO-MEK)

Just thought I would let everyone know the latest on the Mount Snaefell incident of Sunday, January 14, 2001.

UFO Monitors East Kent, have just recently received an audio-tape of an interview conducted with one of the witnesses.

The witness was out horse-riding with a friend, when their attention was drawn to the clear blue sky, after noticing a very bright flash. As they looked up towards Mount Snaefell, they noticed an object about the size and shape of a micro-light heading towards one of the communications masts on top of the mountain. It then struck the mast, and fell from the sky over the other side of the mountain in a cloud of smoke. Then thick black smoke was seen to come up from the general direction of where the object had gone down (This smoke lasted for about 20 minutes).

The two horse riders rode to the nearest farm, and asked the farmer if he could call the emergency services. He too observed the smoke. The emergency services arrived and took the two witnesses to the top of Snaefell so that they could point out the direction in which the object went down.

After a few hours the two witnesses went home, and asked the police officer in charge if they could let them know the outcome of the search which involved about 40 - 80 persons, which included police, mountain rescue, fire and Civil defence personnel.

At about 23:30 hours the police called the witnesses to inform them that the search had been called-off until first light. The search the following morning had been called-off at

12:30 pm, after nothing was supposedly found. On the following Tuesday morning (16 January), two police officers turned up at the witness's place of work and asked her if she would take them to where her and her friend had seen the object from. When they arrived the police ruled out a model aircraft due to the distance involved, and told the witness that they were not particularly happy with whom ever was in charge of the investigation, as they felt they were not being told everything that was going on. A cover-up?

I spoke to Inspector Gary Roberts of the Isle of Man in May, and he told me that they were told the name of someone who was flying a large remote controlled model aircraft on top of Snaefell, which had caused the damage to the mast. Well if that's what the two horse riders saw, then at a distance of 3 miles it must have been a bloody big model that's all I can say. When I asked him if the police had questioned the individual responsible he said "No."

So an irresponsible person flies a model aircraft and causes a few hundred Pounds or more of damage to a communications mast, apparently putting the emergency services off-air for a few hours, is not interviewed by the police and reprimanded for his actions! I find that most unbelievable indeed.

We would like other witnesses to this incident to come forward, and if anyone has any more information we would be pleased to hear from them.

The latest issue of *UFO Magazine* (UK) carries a 6 page update on the incident with more to follow. They can be contacted on 01943 816611.

I can be contacted at astratech@supanet.com or on 07968 583435.

Chris Rolfe

Director of Research & Investigations
UFO Monitors East Kent.
(United Kingdom)

YUFOS ON THE ROAD

A review of Monday, 25th June events

By Jonathan Slater (YUFOS)

A report on the Yorkshire UFO Society's presentation held before members of UFO group 'Hanger 18', on the 25th June, 2001 in Scunthorpe.

The journey there was uneventful and in no time at all we arrived at our destination, the Drangonby Hotel, a very posh looking building which seemed to situated in the middle of nowhere.

We were greeted in the car-park by Dave Jackson, the Chairman of Hanger 18, and shown inside. We set up our gear and laid out back issues of *Project Red Book* and waited for the rest of their group to turn up.

The meeting was set to begin at 8pm and when that time arrived only seven people had made the journey to come and see the Yorkshire UFO Society i.e.: Dave to do his talk.

The meeting began with reports of local sightings from around the Scunthorpe area. Unfortunately, I cannot report what these sightings were; not because they are top secret or anything, but I was at the bar getting our fearless leader, myself and Richard a drink.

The presentation was the same, which was held at our last meeting entitled YUFOS case reports 1997-2001, but this time it was more a polished, more detailed and overall a more confident talk.

After the huge applause had died down Dave began his talk, starting with the sighting of a domed disc seen over the Oxbriar flats area off Sheffield in the summer of 1991. Various slides were used to illustrate this case, and it seemed there group was impressed with the technology we had on show¹.

The first laugh of the night came in the second report that of a woman who saw an object flying over her house in the Firth Park area of Sheffield in the Summer of 1962.

The object passed overhead, just above the chimneys moving Southeast. It had a circular body with a large red flashing light beneath it, and the object was silent and soon faded away. When Dave mentioned that this woman gave him a copy of *The Watchtower* to read, a little ripple of laughter went around the room and various comments were made.

During the next couple of case reports seen around the Molineaux Road area on the Shiregreen estate of Sheffield, the talk was running very smoothly and everyone seemed to be enjoying the evening.

Just before the meeting was coming to its half time end, Dave moved on to the sighting during the Gulf war on the 10th & 11th of January 1991. He described the background to the events and showed the witness sketches.

And it was at this point when one of the members of their group came back in from getting a drink and slammed the door a little to hard smashing a pane of glass in the door.

The second part of the evening was taken up by watching videos; the first one was of an object taken in Doncaster on the 5th of October 2000, which showed a very bright yellowish object seen hovering in the direction of Rotherham or Sheffield.

Various comments where made about what was shown on the video and what the object could be, Dave pointed out the most likely explanation for the bright, slow moving object was a plane about to land at Sheffield Airport around 6.50pm or maybe a little later. The time was easily checked on the video because in the background you could hear the theme tune to *Emmerdale* playing - this made some of the group laugh.

Some people in their group would not accept the fact that the footage shown was possibly a plane because it moved too slowly and why was it there in the first place. One man asked saying to his friend "It proves they're here and this is in fact a UFO".

¹ Power Point slide presentations displayed through video projector onto large screen. Mmm, nice.

Well I guess he was right it was a UFO because we cannot prove what this object was. The next bit of footage shown was the one taken over Mexborough on Saturday, 13th March 1999 at around 4.00-4.30pm. To begin with, the footage shows what appears to be a black object moving in a straight line, which was very visible against the clouds and the blue sky. Later on in the video a second black and mirror image of the first one seems to appear out of nowhere.

As the video played on, the group began to laugh at the broad Yorkshire accent of the witness, and I think some of the group at the back were more interested in what he was saying than the actually footage itself, but in my opinion, some of them had been to the bar a bit too many times.

Dave explained what the Yorkshire UFO Society had done to follow up this case and what YUFOS members made of the two objects seen in this video.

The next video shown was taken over the city Vanersborg, east of Gothenburg on the 23rd August 1997, which was given to us by Clas Svahn of UFO-Sweden.

It shows a commercial airliner moving across the sky when a small bright ball comes flying into view, then about ten seconds later, another ball looking like a copy of the first one can clearly be seen.

We ran this segment 3 or 4 times and people in the room were very impressed at what they were seeing.

A comment was made about Clas Svahn from one of the group members saying "...we emailed him five times about alien bases in Sweden." Does this group in Scunthorpe have information the rest of the world does not know about - obviously not, because even Clas himself stopped replying to this groups emails.

The last bit of footage shown on the night was to show that the Yorkshire UFO Society has a sense of humour and that we don't take the whole subject too seriously: the now famous "Roswell" video that was sent to YUFOS Towers... well not really. It was actually filmed by Dave on his holidays showing what looked like the famous 1947 crash.

We built the video up as the best footage ever seen of the now famous Roswell crash, the

people at the back went silent, which made a change because throughout the second half of the nights' entertainment, they had decided to chat among themselves, which was rude and unfair not just to Dave, but to the rest of their group who were trying to listen.

When the video was played and all it showed was a Frisbee stuck in the ground, the whole room laughed, bringing the video and the night's talk nearly to an end.

Dave then opened the room to a question and answer session and then it was time to pack our gear up and leave.

Dave was given a round of applause from the group and was praised for the night's entertainment, which was seconded by another member. Dave dually bowed his head as you do in that situation and thanked the group for inviting us.

To conclude the night, it gave the Yorkshire UFO Society a little publicity and it helped Dave gain valuable experience talking in front of another UFO group.



APOLLO 15 LANDING SITE SPOTTED IN IMAGES

By Leonard David
Senior Space Writer, SPACE.com

WASHINGTON - Put aside those absurd claims the Apollo moon landings were a hoax. Two scientists poring over photos taken by a lunar orbiting spacecraft have eyed evidence for a touchdown.

New research led by Misha Kreslavsky, a space scientist in the department of geological sciences at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, has found anomalies in the moon's surface in the vicinity of the Apollo 15 landing site.

Apollo 15's lunar module, the Falcon, touched down at the Hadley-Apennine region near the Apennine Mountains on July 30, 1971. Falcon was the first of the piloted landers to carry enlarged fuel tanks, as well as tote along a moon rover.

Moonwalkers David Scott and James Irwin scuffed up the lunar surface during more than 3 days of stay. Using an electric-powered car, the twosome wheeled their way back and forth over the crater dotted terrain for a total of 17 miles (27.4 kilometers).

Lunar properties Kreslavsky, along with research colleague Yuri Shkuratov of the Kharkov Astronomical Observatory in the Ukraine, made use of images taken by the U.S. Defense Department's high-tech Clementine lunar orbiter.

The Ballistic Missile Defense Organization's faster-better-cheaper Clementine probe circled the moon in 1994, making use of a camera that snapped well over a million images in the ultraviolet/visible range.

A set of Clementine images in the vicinity of the Apollo 15 landing site were intensively studied by Kreslavsky and Shkuratov. Their work was dedicated to help discern fresh impacts on the moon, or to search for sites of recent seismic activity in the lunar crust. The work and the techniques utilized not only proved useful in studying the lunar surface, but also yielded a bonus find.

Picture this...

A small dark spot found in the Clementine images is not associated with any fresh crater, but exactly coincides with the Apollo 15 landing site, Kreslavsky told SPACE.com. "This is a result of my processing 52 images taken by the Clementine spacecraft through a red filter, while the spacecraft went over the scene from the southern horizon through zenith to the northern horizon," Kreslavsky said. A diffuse dark spot can be seen exactly at the landing site, he said.

The new research adds to earlier work published in 1972 by space scientists Noel Hinners and Farouk El-Baz.

In an Apollo 15 preliminary science report, Hinners and El-Baz studied two high-resolution photographs of the landing site vicinity. One picture was taken from the Falcon lunar lander during descent. The other image, snapped by astronaut Alfred Worden, was taken from the Apollo Command Service Module, Endeavor, a few hours after Scott and Irwin had landed. "Some brightening of the immediate vicinity of the landing point is seen on the second photo," Kreslavsky said.

Rocket blast

Using Clementine photos taken of the Apollo 15 touchdown zone, several anomalies can be seen. "All of them but one are related to small fresh impact craters. The only one not related to any crater, exactly coincides with the landing site," Kreslavsky said. The disruption in the structure of the lunar regolith is caused by the landing, Kreslavsky said. He contends that the alteration has been created by the lunar module's engine during touchdown. The anomaly is within a 164 feet (50 meters) to 492 feet (150 meters) radius around the landing site, Kreslavsky said. "Unfortunately, the Clementine data do not allow similar studies for any other landing sites."

Is this the nail in the head for the whistle-blowers? Or is this just what we expect them to say? Over to you lot, then. ED

LAST WORDS

(or How to Fill up the Last Page)

By Dave Baker

Recently, those wonderful people at Columbia Tristar released upon the DVD-hungry world the classic movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind – Collectors Edition*.² And although I already had the original version on video, and then the *Special Edition*, and then the *Collector's Edition*, I was more than happy to bring Steven Spielberg just that bit closer to buying his next island, and I went out and bought it on DVD like the sad, sad git I am.

But it was while I was watching the film with my wife that I realised just how much of an effect the blockbuster had had on me, and - ultimately - on the very journal you hold in your sweaty little hands.

It was going to the Gaumont Cinema (or was it the ABC?), to see this effects-laden spectacle in 1977, which set me on the path I follow now. Spielberg's epic fuelled a mild interest into an obsession, and to the extent of how I now spend my time, and how I met some of my best friends and colleagues - changed my life.

It was one thing reading the little material that was easily available before CE3K, but it was another to see those things up on screen. CE3K was...real!

And I was a complete ET believer! CE3K simply told it like it was, and I must admit that on the eerie entrance of the Grey at the climax, the hairs stood up on the nape of my neck and I had a near-religious experience³. I did walk out of that cinema on an emotional high which I don't think any other film before or since has given me. Of course, before the likes of Andy Roberts starts sniggering into his beard, I was only 12 or 13, and nowhere near the hard-bitten cynic I am today.⁴

So instead of merely reading about aliens and flying saucers, I was enthused with the idea of actually *doing something*. So by Christmas 1977, a new British UFO organisation was born.

UFPIO, (Unidentified Flying Object Phenomenon Investigation Office) was based in my bedroom and so too small to be an Organisation or even a Society, and consisted of myself and er...my cousin, Robert. We would tirelessly copy out sighting statistics from such books as Hynek's *The UFO Experience* and hastily-bought back issues of *Flying Saucer Review*, and stick coloured pins in to maps of the USA and England. We had different coloured pins for

different types of sightings, and we fervently hoped that we would see a distinct pattern. And we did - a mass of coloured pins.

Like anything else though when you are thirteen, interest in UFPIO waned when we never actually achieved anything⁵, and much like Dennis Plunkett, I closed my bedroom door and put up posters of *The Bionic Woman* instead.⁶

My interest in UFOs never really died though, but access to material dried up and was more or less restricted to *Flying Saucer Review*, which eventually dropped down to four issues a year instead of six, stopped featuring actual case reports, and all in all went a little silly.

This remained until SKY-TV began showing the US-show *SIGHTINGS*⁷ and the global phenomenon that is *The X-Files* was thrust upon an unsuspecting public. Hungry once more, I began collecting the Birdsall brothers' newly launched *UFO Magazine*, and even attended one of their now regular Conferences, the one with Stanton Friedman and Bob Dean.⁸

Then one Saturday morning, I opened a borrowed copy of *The Sheffield Star* and saw a photograph of UFO researcher Martin Jeffrey looking dark and brooding with his binoculars out. Dave Clarke had written a piece about Martin and his newly formed group SUFORA (Sheffield UFO Research Association), and Martin was requesting both sighting reports and potential members, and I wasted no time in phoning him.

Before long, we were producing SUFORA's magazine Area S1⁹, and SUFORA held monthly meetings, and things were fine for about a year. But *The X-Files* original boom was beginning to fade, and your average punter grew disappointed when we never produced any 'answers.' I think people honestly expected us to wheel on a dissected Grey, and say "Behold!", and were a little crestfallen when all we could manage was a talk from "channeled" Laura Sayers.

Then in April 1997, Martin -for a number of reasons- decided to withdraw a little from the UFO scene, and SUFORA ceased to be. But I was still hungry...and so, in May 1997, YUFOS was born....

² With bits taken out, added and taken back out again. Aah, Spielberg!

³ The next time was on tasting my first lager, but that's another story

⁴ Although I still blubber like a baby when the traumatised little black kid talks at the end of Bill Murray's "Scrooged".

⁵ Except make the owner of "Colored Pins R Us" extremely happy

⁶ Well I did anyway. Can't speak for Dennis.

⁷ "Hi - I'm Tim White..."

⁸ I know....

⁹ Martin lived in the Sheffield 1- the postcode. S1, 51. Area 51, the secret base in...oh forget it.