

NORTHERN UFO NEWS

183

The End
(of 1999)



EDITOR: JENNY RANGLES

Contents:- pp 2 - 3 New Millennium, New UFOlogy p. 3 - 5 - News (UFOs on the small screen, MOD to release British UFO files? Project Flying Triangle Update, UFOIN announce first publications)...pp 5 Quiz Results (Anagramitis) pp 5 - 7 Major articles elsewhere (EJUFOAS launches, alien skeleton, Fate millennium special, missing steam trains)...pp 8 - 9 Books of the Moment - how to spend those Christmas book tokens (Cosmic Crashes, UFO Scotland, The Paranormal Investigators Handbook, The World of the Unexplained, From Other Worlds, SUFOI News 1999)...pp 10 - 12 Investigations (including mid air encounter over Heathrow, video of UFO in Livingston, UFO leaves heat haze and sightings from Scotland, the Wirral and Yorkshire)...p.12 This just In (Tornado stops play and the first big conference of the millennium - in Chorley).



J R Comments:

New Millennium, New UFOlogy

Welcome to the last issue of the 20th century and the first of a new era. What's been happening since my comments about a new UFOlogy in the previous NUN? Well quite a lot!

During the summer a group of disaffected UK UFOlogists had a long internet debate along the lines of my ideas set out in the previous issue. The outcome was a meeting in Cheshire in October that created the outline of a new UFO ideology. UFOIN - the UFO Investigators Network - was born.

UFOIN hopes to bring a breath of fresh air to British UFOlogy. It certainly is shaping up to be different But how different can anyone possibly do UFOlogy, you must wonder?

We started our discussion with the idea - what if UFOlogy was faced with a phenomenon that had just began yesterday and all preconceptions were out of the window? In reality, of course, learning from what has happened during the past 50 years UFOIN has nonetheless sought to try a new approach.

UFOIN is an investigation and research team - nothing more, nothing less. It will not be a social club, or produce a magazine, or hold lectures. Its role is to bring together under a common roof dedicated and objective UFOlogists who want to dig deep into significant cases (new and old) and hunt for that elusive good evidence, but without any preconceptions as to what we are going to find

What will count is scientific principles, common sense and rationality Personal theories about UFOs will not be an issue. Believers in the ETH can sit comfortably alongside near total sceptics. The only consideration that UFOIN requires is that opinions do not get in the way of honest investigation and a willingness to speak up for whatever emerges from a case - be that good evidence of UFO reality or an explanation.

UFOIN will have entry requirements. All interested parties are being asked to submit a statement as to why they want to join this initiative and an example of their case investigation work to show their method of UFO Study. Ability to do case research sensibly is the only job requirement.

The existing team (about 20 as I write in December) votes on acceptance of all new applicants on one person, one vote.

We envisage that UFOIN will grow to maybe 40 all told. But size really doesn't matter (in this case!) For UFOIN is not a UFO group in any traditional sense. There is no membership. No fees, no committee, no officers, no leaders. Literally everyone is equal and all ideas are shared amongst the team in an amicable manner.

Although it is not a condition to take part in UFOIN team members should be on the net to fully benefit. For UFOIN is truly set to be the worlds first near paperless UFO unit. 90% of its data exchange occurs via e mail, a protected (and incredibly civilised) discussion forum exclusively created for the team and rapid transfer of information. We are harnessing the power of information technology not just to chat or to swap silly stories that nobody can verify (as you find on 99% of all UFO web sites) but to make real progress with case investigations and research. This, we believe, is the future of UFOlogy and UFOIN is proving it can work.

Of course, it is early days as yet and there is some way to go until plans are fully realised. However progress in just two months has already shown what can be achieved by a small number of sober minded people who work together as a team and contribute their own strengths and assets to cumulative research.

As an example, one UFO case has sat dormant for 30 years but is potentially one of the most interesting in the UK. Now this has been progressed more in a few weeks than in three decades. This is as a consequence of a dozen or more people contributing to the forum discussion that actually made a difference, opened up new leads and used the power of the net creatively.

This kind of work augurs well for the future and there are huge plans already for 2000. UFOIN will be producing a steady stream of case histories. Starting in the early Spring we expect to be producing a regular flow of these adding significantly to the UFO knowledge. They will be sold in hard copy form and subsequently put on the already developing UFOIN web site to be freely available to the UFO community. An incentive to get on the net!

All money raised by UFOIN through such sales and other methods will go into a central fund administered again on a one person, one vote basis and not by committee decree. Authors associated are being asked to commit to contribute some money from their books back into UFOlogy, community grants are being explored in exchange for educative functions and various other novel ways to fund serious UFO research are planned.

UFOIN is breaking the stranglehold of UFOlogy where in the past inactive members propped up R & I but their money by necessity

pays to keep the same people paying fees again next year. This vicious circle has now been passed because UFOIN is in no way dependent upon pandering to mass memberships or mass market UFO ideals nor has need to keep happy anybody beyond its own team. We can therefore concentrate solely upon doing investigation and research to a level not usually possible.

Already some knives are out. There has been much talk (notably from the US) about UFOIN as a bunch of sceptics and debunkers. This is nonsense. UFOIN will certainly not be silent when answers are found to a case but if some startling new evidence is uncovered (even if it implies an alien reality) then that will be embraced with the same rigor.

The web site will also be shaped into a service for investigators - allowing warnings about ongoing UFO sources to be posted. It will also feature free available reference sources, such as the code of practice (which UFOIN has updated and will adhere to) and the postal training course for new investigators that will be on offer to aid investigators to aid their skills. An interactive Q & A to allow experienced investigators to assist newcomers is planned.

This is an exciting concept that will succeed or fail according to how much commitment those who take part are willing to put in place. Early signs are that the nay savers are going to be disappointed and that UFOIN is not only here to stay but is going to change the face of British UFOlogy. Big words, I know, and only actions will vindicate them. I am confident this will not prove a hollow promise.

The UFOIN concept was put together by a dozen UFOlogists from many groups - none of whom are being forced to give up prior allegiances. This is not a takeover bid for any existing group structure. The team at launch consisted of six published UFO authors and participants from leading UK groups such as BUFORA, the IUN, NARO, LUFOS, and YUFOS. The editors of many of Britain's top magazines are also involved (e.g. Fortean Times, Magonia, Beyond, Armchair UFOlogist, Project Red Book and of course NUN). It is unlikely such a formidable union has ever been forged in UK UFO history - and this is just the beginning. If you think you could be part of UFOIN write to us c/o the NUN address, or via the web site.

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Small screen UFOs

An update from last month is that the new US TV drama series 'Roswell', put together by Jonathan Frakes (Riker of Star Trek) has proved a big success. Based around teen human/alien hybrid descendants of the 1947 crash who are now going to Roswell High (aah) we are told that we will learn about the truth of their origin as they do bit by bit during the series! Sky One, surprise, surprise, have bought UK rights to a series like a cross between the X Files and Beverly Hills 90210 and aim to start transmission of this first series early in 2000.

I also hear that a TV documentary about the excesses of 'UFO industry' made by the production team behind 'Strange but True?' has been indefinitely postponed from its scheduled October screening. Despite my association with SBT I opted out of participation after a few weeks when contacted a year ago because it became clear the plans were unduly negative. Although I agree there is a lot of poor things about UFOlogy to be exposed I declined to be associated with a program that (I felt) was lacking any obvious balance. It was important to allow viewers to realise that there were sensible UFOlogists and research around. Not to do this was in my view counter productive to the UFO community and frankly I won't be sorry if this one hour documentary never gets shown - although I doubt we can be that lucky.

MOD TO RELEASE FILES - OR NOT?

The media were full of the supposed news in November that the MoD were set to release all of its UFO files without waiting for the normal 30 year rule to allow annual batch publication. This was said to be as a consequence of the Freedom of Information bill in the latest Queen's Speech. Frankly, this bill is so watered down with so many restrictions about what can't be made public that I am not sure anybody at the MoD will be running scared of the day!

According to an 'exclusive' in the News of the World (14 Nov) 'Watch this space for truth about aliens' the files - to include 'photos and details of every UFO investigation in the past 30 years' will be freed from a 'bomb proof bunker'. Also to be included are 'plans by a military experts in the event of an alien invasion'

Perhaps you find this just a little curious. If these plans are really so sensitive do they expect no aliens to visit the PRO and read them? Or are they now old hat? And this bomb proof bunker stuff makes the files appear highly important when in fact details of MoD tea bag requisitions are likely to be in the same spot.

The News of the World in its usual style claim the news will 'send UFO spotters into a frenzy' and hope to discover the truth about top cases - some coming from Nick Pope's books (although he was not the source of this story). One such case is the 'triangular three legged spaceship' that the NOTW have decided was in Rendlesham Forest in 1980. Nice to know since most of the witnesses seem a lot less sure that it was a spaceship than they are.

The paper then absurdly comments that the release is because the US have 'recently' released files - including a report on the 'alien corpses' of Roswell. Now so far as I recall, that's all bull. The US Freedom of Information Act is nearly a quarter of a century old (hardly recent) and the Roswell file was not a release but a General Accounting Office study made in 1995 at the request of congress that would never have been secret by law. Nor, of course, did it produce any evidence whatsoever about alien corpses.

The same article then makes the bizarre claim that Nick Pope 'believes HE was abducted by aliens whilst driving in Florida' (their emphasis) and that 'he kept mum while in his job for fear of being labeled a crank'. As Nick has been perturbed whenever similar stories have been mentioned around UFOlogy of late, it would be interesting to know from where the NOTW got this tale and if Nick has asked the paper to retract this allegation. The Defence Minister Peter Kilfoyle says of the planned file release that he is not convinced about aliens and that after careful review he sees no reason to hide these files for the 30 years that present MoD rules require before release onto the Public Record Office.

The story (just said to be from 'a source') kicked up media interest. By the Monday (15 Nov) Nick Pope was found discussing it widely and was given a full page article to write in the Daily Mail. This focused on cases such as Rendlesham (where the radiation levels were discussed) and the Bentwaters 1956 jet chase, where Nick's summary was fair but slightly at odds with testimony from air crew that I met (and whose full story will appear in a UFOIN report soon).

This full page article on the important UK cases gave Nick's recent novel a nice plug. Operation Thunderchild (with a sequel coming next year) seems to have been partly built around the contingency plans for handling an alien invasion of Britain. These are what the anonymous source had

now told the News of the World were about to be released for real.

So what are we to expect (in about February 2000) the approximate promised release date? Possibly not that much.

On the day the story broke journalist Dr David Clarke spoke to the MoD. They seemed sure that such a swift release was unlikely. Next years FoI bill might force a rethink when it becomes law but at this stage it is very premature to know when or if these files will come.

Nick Redfern tells me that he checked with the MoD press office too and their reply was a bit different 'Nonsense - we are not planning any sort of big release of UFO files next year at all' was their unequivocal response. When asked how the story came about, the same media source had no idea but seemed to hint that some UFOlogist might sense the PR opportunity.

So Nick rang Nick Pope. 'Well I can see why they might think that,' he agreed. But he insisted this was no PR ruse - 'a few other things' were going on for real at the MoD. Sadly right now he could not comment as to what these might be. When the time was right, he would.

Anyone who has been to the PRO to access MoD UFO files will know it is not worth hyper ventilating over what is likely to be available. We are not talking about fact packed investigations into major close encounters but scraps of paper about lights in the sky investigated often hardly at all. It is very improbable that any file release will chum out things that will offer much evidence of alien reality. The fact that Peter Kilfoyle has allegedly okayed them for publication is probably all you need to know. If, of course, he has done so.

Nick Redfern also worryingly notes that the MoD suggest the FoI act will limit the release of files from departments other than Air Staff 2 A. In the past we have had occasional snippets and papers from defence intelligence units such as DSTI and DI 55 (e.g. with the 1998 release of the Colin Perks case from Wilmslow, Cheshire, 1966). If we lose access to these because of the FoI act then that may prove far more significant overall than getting any feeble MoD sighting reports a few years early.

BITZ...

:: Project FT has conducted a study into the flying triangle reports between 1993 and 1997 comparing the UK sightings with those from mainland Europe. They have discovered that in two thirds of the cases where a sighting occurred over Europe a similar report occurred over the UK within 3 hours. In 40% of cases the follow on sighting was within an hour. Another trend noticed was a connection between UK sightings and nuclear power stations. 45% of British cases occurred over such a location (notably Bradwell, Essex. Sizewell. Suffolk & Dungeness, Kent). Thanks to Victor Keen for this fascinating news.

:: Good news from Philip Mantle, Despite much time in hospital he is well on the road to recovery after his heart trouble. Other very good news is that Lynda and Tim Matthews had their first child in November (Alexandra). Congratulations from all at NUN.

:: Tim and Philip have also teamed up to write a book on the alien autopsy footage. This is one of the more interesting joint ventures for the year 2000. They ask if any readers have information about this case that they convey it to the authors.

:: The first publications promised by UFOIN for spring 2000 include a detailed reinvestigation of the October / November 1967 wave (one of the biggest in the UK) and a new study of one of Britain's most famous cases - the 1956 Lakenheath/Bentwaters radar-visual.

:: UFOIN will also be starting a brand new research venture. Each year they will announce a project for the coming 12 months. This will be on a specialist topic. A paper setting out the information needed, research goals and questions to be asked about that topic will be circulated widely each January. For the next nine months a massive research project will be set in motion and the various strands explored, bringing in many and outside sources. A final report will be published late every year. The 2000 research topic is to be 'car stop cases'. So if you wish to assist the research, have ideas or data, questions to pose, have contacts that may be useful (eg scientists, car mechanics etc) or want information sending, contact UFOIN now.

Quiz Results

Congratulations to all who came up with witty entries to our competition to create anagrams from UFO book titles. There were some fine ideas. I do trust authors of the titles remember this is all just in fun and nothing mean spirited is intended about any

of their books (which is why I include a range of my own titles in the entries below)

Here's a selection from Rosie Oakes, who must have had a good time with the likes of *Sees cold men in disk ops* (Open Skies, Closed Minds) and *Route Five, Nola* (UFO Revelation).

Paul Noble *Ehey my pen is rotten Jun* (The Pennine UFO Mystery). Sally Whittaker *I view soft brain putt tosh* (UFOs: A British Viewpoint).

Two were offered anonymously (not sure why as I wouldn't have been offended nor I doubt would Peter): *Fools like another gin* (Looking for the aliens) *We hate the nuts forever* (the forthcoming The UFOs that never were).

But the winner was Nick Redfern. He not only offered his own The FBI Files as *Flee this fib*, but anagramed Nick Pope's Open Skies. Closed Minds to *MOD spoiled Nick's sense*.

Thanks for all the fun!

MAJOR ARTICLES ELSEWHERE

On the news stands The X Factor is drawing to the end of its run. Issue 66 has a look at NASA attempts to build warp technology, plus a report on the Mundrabilla encounter. Issue 67 has a report on the top 10 IFO types and Issue 68 investigates the wave of giant entity sightings from Israel. This will feature in a new satellite TV documentary next year, which also includes new evidence on the Voronezh case.

Fortean Times is being produced to its new lively format. August is an eclipse special with all sorts of associated oddities. There is also the latest colour images of 1999 crop circles, September features a contactee special including an exclusive taster by Lynn Picknet and Clive Prince of their 'Stargate Conspiracy' book (review in next NUN) that suggests how the new age/channelling/contactee movement might have been the result of a covert experiment

copies of these magazines are on sale in many shops, or on subscription

Fate also has a special edition out for the Millennium. Issue 597 of the longest running paranormal monthly in the world (over 50 years!) has a look at the top paranormal stories of the century with special items written by leading researchers. You might be surprised by some of the

choices for the top UFO cases. Fate can be hard to get in UK stores Or check out their web site.

Beyond has so far only produced one issue (September); although I understand from editor Tim Matthews that more will follow. 'Issue 2 is sitting here ready to go' he reported in early December. However, it may end up being more commercially orientated to become financially viable. That's my guess anyhow.

The biggest new arrival of this period is *EJUFOAS (European Journal of UFO & Abduction Studies)* (£9 for 2 issues from *EJUFOAS Totton College*). Edited by Craig Roberts this venture seeks to produce a refereed scientific journal about UFOs and abductions. For those who recall that far back it has much of the feel of *BUFORA's Journal of Transient Aerial Phenomena (or JTAP)* (which disappeared at the time of a water strike and never reappeared I recall Nigel Watson once quipping!) *EJUFOAS* has some first rate support from across Europe with celebrated UFOlogists such as Perry Petrakis (France), Edoardo Russo (Italy) and VJ Ballester Olmos (Spain) on its editorial board. The UK editorial panel is less well known (but includes Marcus Allen of *Nexus* magazine and David Kingston of *DUFOG*). But this is no detriment to a good launch issue; although rather top heavy with Albert Budden updates of his EM pollution research. Still there is a useful Italian data base on ball lightning and a look at Spanish Air Force files. There is a bit of a way to go but this is a promising start and it deserves your support - which is how it will get better.

Also new (to me) is *FTL (Faster than Light)*- a lively, colourful and pretty packed review of internet gossip and stories from the UFO world. I think you'll like it.

BUFORA Bulletin With subs

Jul/Aug: Retrospective on pioneer Bristol UFOlogist Graham Knewstubb who died in May.
Sep/Oct: Reviews the new *BUFORA* projects into subjects such as censorship, alternatives to the ETH, memory retrieval etc & Tony Eccles on how the media portray UFOs
Oct/Nov: (??) Camcorder images by Brian James and Kate Taylor on lucid dream states.

IUR (CUFOS (USA))

Summer: A fascinating UFO crash landing case from Argentina in 1950, cases from Canada, the South Pacific and Dave Clarke on the Howden Moor case.

MUFON Journal (USA)

June: The Alien Skeleton story that inspired an episode of *Jonathan Creek* (what next!)

Aug: A review of the Washington DC conference in July.

Sep. Detailed report on Swissair Boeing 747 mid air encounter over New York. Also fascinating reader survey on viewpoints about UFOlogy and UFO authors (8 of the top ten are from the US, the other two are British - no more clues -see if you can work them out!)

Oct: Computer analysis of a UFO wave and landing trace case from Missouri.

MAGONIA (editor John Rimmer)

Martin Kottmeyers latest lengthy report - on the future of humanity and the perceptions of science fiction. My report on Joe Firmage, the computer millionaire who has discovered UFOlogy and aims to marry it to space technology.

Abduction Watch 19/20 (editor Kevin McClure)

Nice to welcome this back after an absence. Kevin tough talking and perceptive questioning of the fringe areas of modern UFOlogy are always worth your time. Here he takes a look at everyone from Betty Cash to Budd Hopkins and Max Burns to Betty Trout Don't miss it.

Strange Daze (editor Gloria Dixon)

Gloria Dixon has turned this magazine into possibly the best general paranormal title on offer in the UK. The breadth and scope of content and insightfulness of the articles make this a terrific read. This issue contains everything from the Kennedy assassination to mountain men and from secret aircraft to an in depth interview between Gloria and Tim Good that will tell you a lot about this kind and yet powerful researcher. SD is a great read. You're daft if you miss it.

Project Red Book (YUFOS)

Gets my vote for the most consistently interesting UFO monthly around. Whilst Dave Baker has the energy to produce it so often snap it up. You'll not regret it Sept: An interview with Jerry Clarke and a debate on the 'is he or isn't he?' (Peter/Florida abduction) farce. Oct: The CIA and UFOs debated

UFO Network UK

Letters, clips, sightings etc from West Yorks.

OVNI Sep/Oct 94

All the latest news on UFO sightings in Derbyshire - home of the flying triangle

Phenomenal News Scotland Summer (SEMR)

Scottish UFOs, ghosts and all sorts of oddities.

SUFOG

Interesting TV and radio reports - listening out for all the appearances by UFOlogists (!) and updates on 1999 crop circle activity in Hants.

UFO Afrinews 20 (Zimbabwe, Africa)

Cynthia Hind is irrepressible Her reports on case investigations across the continent are unique. A fascinating survey of the latest goings on in areas where western influence can be less strong.

IUFOPRA Journal Autumn 99

Strange events, UFOs and animal mutilations in Ireland from the nations top research team.

UFO Historical Review 5 (USA)

Airship sightings from 1897. A fascinating case from a mount Everest climb in 1933. Barry Greenwood's mag concentrates, as the title suggests, on sightings pre the modern UFO era.

Georgia Sky Watch Sep 99 (MUFON Georgia USA)

News and sightings from this US state.

Folklore Frontiers 36

Folk tales and urban myths including mystery deaths etc culled from the media by journalistic sleuth Paul Screeton.

Journal of Meteorology Apr 99

Edited by Terence Meaden and covering reports on flukes of nature such as UK tornado activity and latest sightings of ball lightning.

The Labyrinth 2 (editor Rory Lushman)

Where else would you find articles about UFOs, the hunt for the 'strategic reserve' of secret steam locos, relief work in Rwanda and photos of trains all in one place. If you like UFOs and choo choos you will love this new venture.

The Circular Summer 99 (CCCS)

All the pretty maps, pictures, and low down on the seemingly undefeatable world of cerealogy.

Coming soon.... Books lined up for 2000 include 'The UFOs that Never Were' (Dr David Clarke, Andy Roberts and Jenny Randles) just into the new millennium, the (as yet top secretly titled) new report on Rendlesham Forest by Georgina Bruni, (date unknown), 'Supernatural Causes' (by Peter Hough and Jenny Randles) (Spring)

Cosmic Crashes 328 pp Hardback with photos By Nick Redfern Simon & Schuster £16.99

This is the third in a trilogy of books about government UFO investigations by this well respected Midlands author. It is rather different from the other two that tackled UK and FBI files via the available archives. This looks at cases of alleged UFO crashes - but not the ones you might expect. Although Roswell is mentioned it is only as a reference to other events. This book focuses on British cases.

A whole book on British UFO crashes? No doubt like me you wondered how this might be possible, and the outcome involves some stretching of fairly thin evidence rather more noticeable than in Nick's previous books.

Nick tells me that it is important to see this book for what it really is - a diary of his time as an investigator and the crashed UFO stories that came his way. Treating it in this manner does help you to cast aside some of the things that you might otherwise expect (like much in the way of evidence, for example!) As a social commentary on some of the characters in UFOlogy it is run. You see how curious stories turn into myths and legends and it reads far better than if you read it hoping to be convinced that alien spaceships fall on this sceptred isle with such frequency that John Prescott would have to be directing their transport policy.

To be fair there are some intriguing cases, such as the Cosford saga (see a recent NUN for new data on this) plus information about goings on at Rudloe Manor where covert UFO investigation seems to have been going on.

In the end this book is a bit of a space oddity. It will please fans of Nick's writing (which is easy on the eye and always entertaining). Its coverage of many lesser known British stories is a major plus. Little rehash is on offer here. But those a little cautious about matters will do well to apply caveats. Compare Andy Roberts first hand study of the Llandrillo UFO crash saga (in 'The UFOs that Never were') with Nick's largely second hand version here for instance. Indeed I gather even Nick now accepts much of what Andy says. But treat this as just a good old read you won't be disappointed

Randles Rating: Good Read, Dubious data

***UFO Scotland
338 pp Softback with photos
By Ron Halliday B A W Publishing £7.99***

Now here is a treat a big book packed with information on Scottish cases. Ron runs the group SEMR and is an experienced and sensible

UFOlogist. So you know you can trust this book to provide a fair commentary.

This shines through in cases that Ron knows well (e.g. Livingston) and his inside notes are often illuminating. However, there are times when you'd have appreciated a bit more. For instance, his comments on the Jim Templeton case don't seem to take account of any of the data about it beyond press cuttings from 35 years ago. Still, you cannot expect everything.

I was also a little uneasy regarding the coverage of video footage. There are stills from films and references to sections of the UFO rim that are missing in these, when in fact the effects on view are well known artifacts of camcorder photography created when a light source is filmed out of focus to trigger a pseudo structure.

But the author makes up for this with plenty of fascinating statistics and data about cases north of the border that makes this a really valuable reference work. Useful stuff.

Randles Rating: Good old fashioned UFOlogy

The Paranormal Investigator's Handbook 144pp Large Format Softback Valerie Hope A Maurice Townsend Collins A Brown £14.99

This is ASSAP's first big league book and rather like the association it has a finger in every pie. Trouble is that most people only have ten fingers and there is a huge world of the paranormal to cover. 144 pages on every kind of case investigation you can imagine is a tall order. Predictably its delivery is somewhat basic.

There is some good sense in here and the essence of case investigation is covered But UFOs are not amongst the best topics handled The subject gets just 12 pages and it is pretty obvious you are severely limited as to what you can achieve that way. Although there are some reasonable paragraphs about IFOs. I felt that far too much room was given over to fluff on Arnold, Roswell, Adamski and Betty Hill. Not only should these (incredibly poor) choices to highlight UFOlogy have been thought out but the limited space in a book like this should have gone to more data about investigation per se.

Crop circles fare poorly too - little more than a couple of paragraphs. This was disappointing as its an area research where UK readers need more guidance. Thousands chase every circle. Few will ever pursue some of the topics in this book.

It is not all gloom or a missed opportunity. The opening general chapters are good and subjects such as ghosts and poltergeists figure better as

these are the authors' strong points. Yet even here I felt the book would have been advised either trying to be a fuller summary of the paranormal or an investigators handbook, rather than attempt both. As a result I don't feel it does either thing as well as it might. The reference section is also an idiosyncrasy.

Nice idea, from authors whose work I respect, but sadly only partly successful.

Randles Rating: Not bad, but could be better.

The World of the Unexplained
176 pp Hardback with colour photos
Janet A Colin Bord Blandford £16.99

Some of the problems with the above book stem from titles like this. Little more expensive but looking substantial in comparison and easily more attractive to the casual buyer. That's why the ASSAP book should have focused entirely on its aim of serving the would be investigator (who as a consequence of prior interest doesn't need basic info on George Adamski)

Janet and Colin are experts at producing glossy books of this sort. They have been writing for 30 years and are true all rounders (having investigated cases from UFOs to Alien Big Cats). As owners of the Fortean Picture Library they also have a head start in making a book look good on the eye. This one scores there with its neat lay out and logical range of topics.

Alien animals get excellent coverage, with colour shots of lake monsters, and recent alien big cat sightings in the UK. Crop circles too is given substance (at 7 pages and lots of photos). However, don't buy this book for its UFO content as that is minimal. There are reports on some well known CE4s and sections on earthlights and ball lightning but nothing you won't already know. Of course, its attraction is the large colour reproduction of lots of weird photos of strange happenings. You may think that is worth the cover price regardless of the usefulness of the text itself.

Randles Rating: Nice coffee table snack

From Other Worlds
192 pp Hardback A full Colour Illustrations
Hilary Evans Carlton £14.99

Wow! Now here's how to do a coffee table book from a publisher who has spared no expense to make this look superb and teamed up with a writer not noted for light stuff. The result is possibly the best book of this type I have ever seen. Great text, brilliant illustrations.

This is not a small book either. There is more text than in many unillustrated titles and dozens of fine images, nearly all in full colour. The

idea is to look at mankind's interest in other entities beyond ourselves. This does not just mean aliens but also covers inter dimensional beings, angels, ghosts etc. However, much of the text is either about or directly relevant to UFO studies. It shows a maturity level way above what most publishers and authors would have done from that same premise.

The book traces our association with the concept from myth, through fictional images of what they might be like and onto modern day research into the possibility. All done through the serious and perceptive filter of someone who I consider one of the best theoretical observers that we have. Hilary recognises that you cannot separate what may seem to be individual phenomena and that you can find important clues by doing what he does - tracing the interactions between disparate things and the role played by our culture.

It is not often that a book combines good sense, a powerful vision and a spectacular design. As a writer I can only marvel at how this publisher backed Hilary with the money and the motivation to fund such a production and to sell it so relatively cheaply. Most I know would have run a mile from the very idea. If you want to treat yourself to some holiday reading don't hesitate. I totally recommend you to put this on your bookshelf and let others admire your taste.

Randles Rating: Stunning

Also available...

SUFOI News 1999 The Scandinavian UFO team have published a 32 page English summary of the best of their recent cases and research. It's a treat. Featuring case analyses, statistics and news it brings to an audience who would otherwise not have a clue a neat picture of what is happening in these active lands.

Latest UFO sightings***Up in the Air-Again***

It seems that hardly an issue goes by now without the latest in a growing line of mid air encounters. Indeed the net has been full of attempts to blame the tragic loss of several aircraft off America's North Eastern seaboard in recent years on some sort of oddity.

As such this case got undue attention from the media when it surfaced (wrongly implying it to be recent). Indeed the (t) rusty Daily Mail picked up the story a month late and ludicrously told readers it had happened in September 1999 - which it did not

Here's the full story behind the case. Judge if you think the media were justified.

The incident occurred on 9 June 1998 at 12.45 pm. (Most newspapers wrongly date it to 12 June at noon). The aircraft involved was a MD 81 jet operated by what is unofficially believed to be a Scandinavian airline - possibly SAS.

The flight had just moments earlier taken off from runway 27L and was heading from London Heathrow to Oslo. The plane was climbing and turning into cloud at a height of between 3000 and 3500 feet. The location was above the M 4 between Slough and West Drayton. The latter is (by delicious irony) the small town to which all official UK UFO reports are first directed!

There followed a brief sighting of an object crossing them to their left. It was made by the pilot and co pilot (but of less than a second duration). The co pilot termed this a 'bright light, very close'. The captain who saw it a fraction of a second earlier called over the radio to London ATC saying that 'a flare or something passed 20 feet from our aircraft'. Radar showed nothing at that time.

Upon further discussion the pilot told ATC that he was 'not sure' what he saw and that it might have been 'a fighter or something'. The ATC operator was unconvinced, but the pilot insisted it was something real and moving 'very fast. As such he was advised to file a near miss report (an airprox as they are now called). This was made over the radio on another frequency and led to an immediate investigation.

The pilots airprox report refers to a 'metallic grey' object seen through cloud and about 150 feet away. It was 'the size of a small aircraft with lights on' - substantially different from what both crew described at first. Their idea of what was present had now crystallised that the object might be a jet fighter.

The CAA investigated and it was the release of their report 15 months later that created

the impression this was a new case. But their findings were all negative. Police in Slough, London and Maidenhead all sought possible causes (model aircraft fireworks etc) with no result. No UFO sightings were reported to them or relevant ones sent to the MoD. Extensive study of all available radar records revealed nothing but the MD 81 was present. The Daily Mail suggest that was because this was a super secret radar invisible plane - although the folly of flying 2 miles from such a busy airport is so obvious that seems absurd. In their report it is clear the CAA dismissed this theory and they note that the air crew had as they put it 'little opportunity to describe what they had seen' as their view was such a 'brief glimpse'. They note the divergence of testimony from a light to a flare to a fighter and metal grey craft but are sure that 'even a very small craft in such close proximity to Heathrow would have been detected'.

The case was closed as being 'unassessable'. But it is yet another of these mid air UFO encounters that are now such a menace.

**Case 9630 Inverness, Scotland 2 June 1996
Source: Mark Fraser Haunted Scotland**

Mrs A was talking on the phone when a glowing orange ball was seen by her to travel slowly down the valley opposite her home. It then rose up over the mountains and went behind. She expected to hear it crash. All the time she gave a live account to her friend on the phone.

Next day Mrs A called the police who had assigned an officer to deal exclusively with a flood of recent sightings. She was also contacted by an intelligence officer at RAF Kinloss who asked many questions and to be directed to the site. He confirmed that Mrs A had seen no aircraft or helicopter or anything they knew about. Mark has learned that RAF Kinloss have since required the local police to forward to them details of all sightings and witnesses further indicating that they take this matter seriously. Will the alleged MoD file release tell us more?

Case 9904 September 1999 Wigtown. Scotland
Source: Roy Sandbach

Mrs G and her family were driving home from Wigtown near Baldoon Airfield Kirkcubright. It was 20.15. On pulling into their drive they saw a large orange light over hills, which appeared disappeared and then reappeared. After all the family had leapt back into the car they set off in pursuit but could not find the object again only an 'area of rising heat' that was coming from a field. They describe the light as 'tungsten' coloured and creating an aura around it. About three miles away (in hills near Whauphill) two men out shooting saw an orange ball with a tail rush towards them and light up the sky. But it is not clear that this was on the same night.

The latter sighting sounds like a bright meteor and Roy sensibly suggests the Wigtown report could well be the rising moon through low mist or cloud. It has certainly created similar shape changing, disappearing orange masses before.

Case 9905 Thingwall. Wirral 5 October 1999
Source: Tony Eccles MARA

Mr B was walking his dog in fields in this area north of Heswall on the Wirral when he saw a point of light moving across the sky. Then he spotted two others that created an isosceles triangle with one light leading the others across the sky. They disappeared as if they had suddenly entered the earth's shadow, which was the clue that Tony needed to tackle this case - reported to him via the astronomy section of Liverpool Museum.

Tony's detailed investigations led to the conclusion that these lights were NOSS satellites. These are US navy ocean surveillance operations that form part of their intelligence gathering programme. They did indeed disappear by entering the earth's shadow. This was a first rate piece of investigation.

Case 9906 Humberside 2 Nov 1999

Source: Chris Evers HUFOS

Sketchy details as yet of a UFO 'big as a four bedroom house' seen over a farm near Humberside Airport at 19.50. Occupants of three vehicles saw this event.

Video of UFO over Livingston

Case 9907 29 November 1999

Craigshill, Livingston, Scotland 08.10

Shop assistant Mrs W was getting ready to go to work when she saw two golden yellow balls hovering in the clear morning air over the Pentland Hills. As she had her Sony Handycam (with 60 x digital zoom) nearby she used it to film the objects.

Zooming in on the two balls a shape became evident. Black rings surrounded the stationary objects and they also altered shape - becoming first ovals then a rhombus. All told five minutes of footage was taken of the two UFOs before an aircraft (much smaller) enters shot and the UFOs disappear.

This case is of some interest because of its location - close by the site at Dechmont Law where in 1979 the famous alien attack involving a forester took place. In that case the UFO also changed shape and appeared to fade in and out of visibility, leading to speculation (e.g. by Stuart Campbell) that it was a form of mirage. Many UFOlogists dispute that idea, of course, and the case is widely regarded in some circles as a proto abduction.

In this context it is interesting that Professor John Brown, Scotland's astronomer royal, has been quoted as suggesting that the objects in this new video are some type of 'sun dog' caused by the early morning sun shining off ice crystals in the atmosphere.

Perhaps there is substance in this, but the optics of camcorders need to be considered too. As I noted in the review of Ron Halliday's book this issue video cameras struggle to properly accommodate lights in the sky. Aside from the artifacts referred to cameras with an autofocus (as here) often have problems. They tend to run in and out vainly seeking to get a 'focus lock' on the object creating what appears to be both weird shapes and also transmogrifications as reported in this case. Moreover the dark aura is another camera artifact and not actually a feature of the UFO image.

As such, whilst there is obviously no question that something interesting was seen above the Pentland Hills and that film of it has been secured I suggest we sound a note of caution about reading too much into shapes and changes reported in sightings of this type.

Hopefully Ron Halliday will report further news on this promising incident soon.

Tornado Stops Play!
Saturday 5 February 2-6pm HUFORA

Thanks to reader Ann Chamley for news of a freak weather attack on 30 October in her local Stockport. A tornado swept through the town creating many odd events. Mrs W of Cheadle Hulme describes that 'wall of water' that struck her home in a few incredible seconds.

The met office said that pressure in Edgley and Cheadle plunged in a few minutes creating the fluke effects. At the time Stockport County were playing a football match at Edgley Park and for the first time ever in the UK the referee had to stop the game so that the players could flee to safety from a tornado! A player later commented that had they tried to take a goal kick they would undoubtedly have scored in their own net. Ann was at the match and says the tornado hit at about 4 pm. Accompanied by just one loud bang.

At about 4.10 pm the same storm (presumably) hit Dove Holes. There was a huge crash like an explosion (but no thunderstorm as such) (this is probably due to the rapid pressure drop) and the rain suddenly turned horizontal being blasted down the street like it was coming from a jet motor. It lasted about 2 minutes then the ferocity fell off just as quickly. Afterwards debris was scattered far and wide. Do any readers know of any UFO events on this date?

This Just In...

- IUFOGRA have just produced a special report 'The UFO Drive' which is by Dr Mark Dixmier This special publication looks at UFO propulsion systems. I'll be reviewing it next issue.
- Apologies that this is just a 12 page issue. Christmas / Millennium printing and posting / boozing deadlines meant send an issue at this size or a 16 page issue when everyone has recovered from their hangovers (around caster). I'll try to make up for it next century.

Coming Attractions

Winter events that I know about. If your event is missing, then tell your PR officer to inform NUN about it in future!

Professor Arthur Ellison (one of Britain's most influential paranormal researchers) will describe

research info altered states, lucid dreams and remote viewing.

Saturday 4 March 2-6pm BUFORA

Len Farra is a researcher into ancient astronauts who aims to present evidence that ET visited the earth 5000 years ago

Saturday 1 April 2-6pm BUFORA Lionet Fanthorpe (Fortean Times motorcycling vicar) will lecture in his amusing manner on mysteries of ancient man

The lecture venue is University of Westminster, London on Marylebone Rd near the Baker Street Tube. Check lecture times may vary

The First Big Conference of the Millennium

Announced for Lancashire on 29 January. Discovery is perhaps the theme and the organising group. Speakers include:-

Andy Roberts (the UFOs that never were), Tim Matthews & Steve Mera (a Winter Hill MIB case?), Jon Downes & Nigel Wright (Animals and Men), Brian Allan (Rosslyn Chapel), Ralph Ellis (Ancient mysteries), Ras Hennessey (SET!) and Jenny Randles (researching British past life cases). Venue:- Woodlands Centre, Charley, Lanes. Tickets: £10.

Groups in Northern Britain

Northern UFO Network Groups in Region

SPI Scotland	Linlithgow
SEMR	Bridge of Allan
Haunted Scotland	Kilmarnock
SRUFO	East Calder
NUFORI	Newcastle
Connect	Iikley
YUFOS	Sheffield
UFO Network	Leeds
NLUFOIG	Morecombe
Discovery	Southport
LUFOS	Lancaster
LAPIS	Blackpool
MARA	Liverpool
NARO	Gatley
Dragon	Staffs Moor
PRA	Derby
SUFOG	Rugdey