July 2008

MiMUFON Has 5 New FIs

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHIGAN MUTUAL UFO NETWORK

MICHIGAN MUFON

Words From the State Director



Incredible! Just incredible! We have FIVE new Field Investigators in Michigan MUFON! Congratulations to Dan Marcelain, Bill and Linda Murphy, and Bob and Jan Richardson on successfully passing your Field Investigators exam. Big thanks to Gary Golem as well for such stellar skills as Field Investigator Trainer. We are seeing many new reports coming in and can use all the investigative help we can get. UFOs, look out. Here we come!

On a related note, I have still yet to hear from some State Section Directors (by email, phone, or in person) whether you are interested in continuing in your roles. The deadline for responding to last month's direct-mailed request for response was June 30th. I am assuming that those of you who have not responded are selecting to retire your SSD positions and I'll proceed on this assumption, releasing your counties on July 1st, unless you please tell me otherwise immediately. Thank you.

Well, the History Channel's UFO Hunters have come and gone. They spent the weekend of June 14 & 15 in Grand Haven and Holland. As they were unable to reach police officer Jeffrey Velthouse or radar operator Jack Bushong (both key witnesses to the big 1994 sighting event), the UFO Hunters team greatly scaled back their time here from what they originally

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Michigan MUFON
P.O. Box 8532
Kentwood, Michigan
49518-8532

State Director:
Bill Konkolesky
Email:
wjk@mimufon.org

Asst. State Director, Administration:
Robert Wagel
(269) 782-6111

Asst. State Director, Treasury:
Wendy Smith
(616) 261-0690

Newsletter Editor/Public Relations Director.
David Twichell
Email:
news@mimufon.org

Photographer:
Gary Golem

Michigan MUFON on the Internet:
www.mimufon.org

MUFON International on the Internet:
www.mufon.com

www.mimufon.org

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Thank you.

MUFON 2008 Annual UFO Symposium

Doubletree Hotel San Jose, California
2050 Gateway Place
San Jose, CA 95110

Thursday, Jul. 24, 2008 - Sunday, Jul. 27, 2008
7:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Come listen to our lineup of exciting international speakers including:

* Don Ledger - Canada * Nick Pope – The United Kingdom * Dr. Anthony Choy - Peru
* Captain Rodrigo Garrido- Chile * Jeronimo Flores and Victor Camacho - Mexico
* Farah Yarduzo - Turkey * General Wilfried De Brouwer - Belgium

Also speaking are:

* Brian Smith - NASA * Dr. Richard Haines - NARCAP * Ted Roe - NARCAP
* Leslie Kean * George Knapp * Larry Lemke

Important: Hotel reservations must be made and paid for separately.

MUFON's mission is the scientific systematic collection and analysis of UFO / Abduction data, with the ultimate goal of learning the origin and nature and purpose of the UFO / Abduction phenomenon.

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http:www.abduct.com

were planning. This included a choice on their behalf not to meet directly with anyone representing MUFON for their shoot here. The episode should air sometime in the upcoming fall season of the show and include unrelated sightings in neighboring states, as well.

Also, rather exciting, MUFON is looking seriously into having its own television series, based solely on our own organization's cases, and is already in negotiations with a production company to put the show on the Discovery Channel. Things are still somewhat early in this process and hopefully good things will come of the effort.

Our proposed MIMUFON September fund-raising event (something of a sequel to Stanton Friedman, last September at HFCC) has been shelved due to current lack of adequate venue. An event like this is certainly still a strong possibility at some point down the road, though, so stay tuned.

Still scheduled, though, in October, Michigan MUFON will have a vendors table at the Michigan Paranormal Conference, hosted by the Michigan Ghost Watchers. The conference runs October 18-19 at the Garden City Historical Museum and details can be found at ghostwatchers.org. I will be presenting on 'UFOs over Michigan' that Sunday afternoon at the event, as well.

Our fall regular meeting dates will be September 14 and November 2, both at Walli's (speakers TBA).

In the meantime, there's still time to consider attending this year's MUFON International UFO Symposium in sunny San Jose, California (July 24-27). This year's theme for the 39th annual event is "UFOs – A Worldwide Phenomenon." The new MUFON UFO Field Investigator's Guide will also get released at the event. Details can be found at mufon.com. Becky and I will be attending and we hope to see you there.

Also, please visit the Illinois MUFON website illinoismufon.com for details on their August 17th "Truth…If You Dare 3" event featuring Stan Friedman, Ted Phillips, and, drum roll please, our own Bill Murphy.

Don't forget, Michigan MUFON Newsletter subscribers, if you would prefer to download a printable electronic MIMUFON Newsletter to your computer in full color, rather than receive a printed black and white copy in the mail, please let our Newsletter Editor David Twichell know and provide him with an email address where he can send you a link to download your newsletter off the internet in PDF format. To contact David by email, write to news@mimufon.org.

Have a great summer!

ENGLAND 1783: The scientist Tiberius Cavallo was a witness to a sighting that also stunned Royal guests at a celebration to mark the birth of the 15th son of King George 111 and Queen Charlotte! A luminous object appeared from beneath a cloud and soon became brilliantly lit before coming to a halt. According To Cavallo's account of the incident: "This strange sphere seemed at first to be pale blue in color, but its luminosity increased and soon it set off again towards the east." Even though the sun was shining the object is said to have lit up everything on the ground and eventually disappeared with a terrific explosion!

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UFO acclimation now underway?

Steve Hammons
May 15, 2008

The NBC show "Dateline" and msnbc.com have put out a request to the public to submit photos and videos of UFOs.

According to the msnbc.com Web site, a show is planned this Sunday, May 18, using photos and videos of UFOs they receive.

On the msnbc.com site, the public is asked, "Do you think you have seen a UFO? Tell us about it and you may be featured in a future episode of Dateline NBC or on msnbc.com."

"On Sunday, May 18, Dateline plans to count down '10 Close Encounters Caught on Tape,'" according to msnbc.com.

"If you think you've had your own close encounter, submit it here with any photos or videos, and you could be featured on Dateline or on msnbc.com. Videos and stories should be authentic and not staged. Material may appear on NBC's Dateline broadcast and/or Web site. Tell us your story ..."

This Dateline and msnbc.com call for submission of photos and videos for a show is just another development that has raised national and international public awareness about the UFO situation.

The recent news that the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense (MoD) is releasing more previously secret documents about UFOs, with some of the information apparently quite compelling, has been viewed as a positive step by those interested in further disclosure about this subject.

In an article in the Vatican newspaper, the pope's chief astronomer, Father Gabriel Funes, has written an article about intelligent extraterrestrial beings titled "Aliens Are My Brother." Funes is director of the Vatican Observatory and is respected as a scientist who works with other international astronomers, according to published reports.

These developments further acclimate the public to theories, reports, questions and perspectives about the possible visitation to Earth of intelligent extraterrestrial and/or extra-dimensional beings, as well as other possible emerging phenomena.

ACCLIMATION AND DISCLOSURE

Orienting and informing the public about possible developments in the area of extraterrestrial visitation to Earth has been a subject of much speculation and concern in the decades since the end of World War II.

Journalists and writers, TV and film project producers, government military and intelligence personnel, as well as interested people in the U.S. and around the world have been exposed to more ideas, theories and rumors about UFOs and ETs over the years.

We have been acclimated to the idea that it is possible for our planet to have been visited by intelligent beings from elsewhere in space, time and/or other dimensions.

There may even be indications that disclosure of real information about the UFO situation has been subtly released to the

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or email wjk@mimufon.org
or phone (248) 515-9568 to inquire how to order.

public to further orient, acclimate and prepare Americans and people internationally.

Recent UFO reports such as those in Stephenville, Texas, and Chicago's O'Hare airport were reported in responsible and serious ways by many in the news media.

The most recent incident in Phoenix, reported to be road flares tied to helium balloons and launched by a local resident, does little to cast doubt on the 1997 incident in Phoenix when a massive object cruised at low altitude over that city's metropolitan "Valley of the Sun" early one evening.

It was reportedly witnessed by hundreds or thousands of Phoenix residents, including the governor at the time, Fife Symington, a former Air Force officer.

All of these cases, as well as many others, help acclimate not only the general public, but also journalists and those in the media.

When some people interested in this field seek significant disclosure of information possibly held by governmental military and intelligence groups, they have had mixed success.

Interesting documents and "off the record" information can provide a partial picture of what might be going on. At the same time, it could be that significant sensitive and classified reports are "not ready for prime time" and release to the public.

Accounts of formal and even official acclimation efforts and programs indicate that a gradual and safe orientation for the public about a possibly significant UFO and ET situation may be a wise course of action.

PSYCHOLOGY, EMOTIONS, SPIRITUALITY

Adjustment to developments such as confirmation that UFOs are related to visitation to Earth by intelligent civilizations might be difficult for some people. This would disrupt their world view, possibly causing anxiety. For some people, their spiritual beliefs might be impacted in some way.

In addition, many kinds of natural concerns would arise: Are these visitors friend or foe? Are they here to help us or hurt us? What is the role of our governmental and defense organizations? Will human society and civilization change in good ways or bad ways?

This is where safe and intelligent acclimation may be a wiser approach than simply disclosure of too much information. Of course, in actuality, these two ideas work hand-in-hand. Acclimation is disclosure and disclosure is acclimation.

Yet, the subtle interactions and distinctions between these two concepts may be worth considering.

Another element rumored to be in play is the possibility that humans are facing multiple kinds of emerging developments.

Different kinds of visitors may be near, including some who are friendly, some hostile and some neutral. In cases like this, various intelligence-gathering, liaison and rapport-building, dialogue, negotiation and defensive activities could be in play.

Have humans been visited in the ancient past? Were Native American Indians and other cultures exposed to anomalous phenomena that may be of interest to us now?

Are there aspects of our genetics and DNA that may in some ways connect with other unconventional questions?

What are the concepts involved in scientific research into a "unified field" or "zero-point field" that may be an underlying layer or force of Nature and the Universe?

What are the sources of crop circles and what are the messages they seem to contain?

Additional metaphysical phenomena such as connections with other dimensions, including the afterlife or "Heaven" and even beliefs about activities of "angels" could be factors to consider.

All of these ideas and scenarios pose interesting and fundamental questions about where we have been, where we are now and where we are going.

Being prepared for various kinds of developments or contingencies is usually constructive. Reading between the lines of information we come across can also be useful.

Our roles in any acclimation or disclosure processes underway would seem to include improving our "intelligence" in the many meanings of that word – gathering information, interpreting it, sharing it and using it to enhance our personal and collective situational awareness.

Source: American Chronicle, http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/61950

Thanks to MiMUFON member Fred Varner for bringing this article to my attention.

Photographic Evidence of UAP, does it Exist? And, "Raising the Bar"

An Essay By Fred R. Varner, (MIMUFON)

Over the past sixty years proponents of the study of UAP, also known as "believers", made up largely of a body of people who have had some personal experience with UAP, have strove to find some evidence which would convince others to join in research of the phenomenon. Thus far the search has been unfruitful. Early in the study of reports of the UAP especially during the so called "flaps" of the fifties it was said that a good photograph would be convincing evidence that the reported phenomena were real, not imagined. A common argument made at that time was that; "Automobile accidents occurred at a greater frequency than UAP reports and no photographs of automobile accidents in progress exist either; Making the case that an observer with a camera at the ready was not present during the limited duration of the UAP event in similarity to the accident event." At that time no photographs of automobile accidents in progress existed. Of course, today there are many films and videos of accidents in progress. There are however, very few still photographs.

Since those days thousands of photographs, films, and videos have surfaced. Yet, not one has been shown, to the satisfaction of all, to represent "evidence." Not one has even been accepted by any body of experts, or even considered an item of debate except among the "believers."

Can photographic evidence ever be considered as "evidence"?

In 2004 NIDS, (The National Institute for Discovery Science), posted on their website an essay by an author whose name was withheld because he is a PhD Physicist at a U.S. government lab in Maryland. The essay is titled; "Strategies for Collecting Evidence of Intelligent Extra-Terrestrial Activity". (www.nidsci.org/essay/comp/essay25.html)

It is notable that the author of this essay does not mention photographic evidence except in the following context: *"The accessible evidence centers on animal mutilations, crop circles, and abductions. Thus far, the public and the scientific community have been unimpressed by all the analyses of these data. It may be possible that better analyses may be more convincing and they should certainly be pursued, but they are no substitute for ETI artifacts and clear photographs of ETIs in action."*

Further, the author states, in a section headed, "Radar and Pilot/Trained Observer Sightings." "*We have become so overloaded with such reports that they now count as Level III evidence."* (Level III evidence is defined in the essay as, "Suggestive – Sufficient for most people to conclude that further serious study may be justified.")

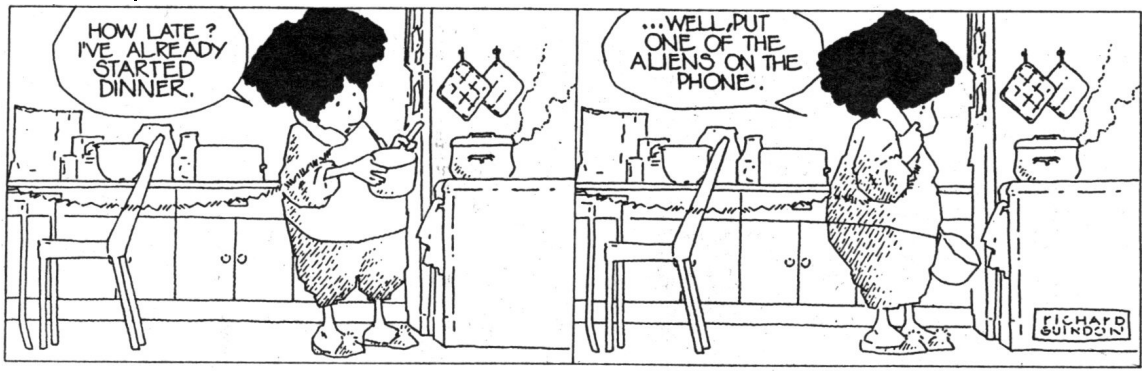
Evidently, the writer does not consider that photographic evidence falls into any of the categories above.

Is there a good reason for this? And, is it futile for UAP researchers to deal with photographic evidence?

A strong case can be made that no photographic evidence will ever be accepted based on the following:

1. Hundreds of still photographs of purported UAP exist produced from the fifties to present on various media including black and white, and color film, and digital. (Obvious fakes aside.)
2. A hand full of purported UAP, were allegedly recorded on moving film cameras.
3. Hundreds of digital videos exist of purported UAP.
4. Camera technology, having advanced to digital, has eliminated the likelihood of a double exposure, but has opened the possibility of computer enhancement, image insertion, etc.
5. Image insertion and enhancement will likely become indistinguishable from actual photos.

KEEPING IT LIGHT



Thanks to MiMUFON member Linda Murphy for submitting this cartoon.

6. No analysis of any single still film photo has ever been accepted as evidence.
7. No analysis of any film or digital video has ever been accepted as evidence.
8. No analysis of the body of the images has ever found any two images alike, some however are strongly similar.

Regardless of any probability that the body of evidence on hand could contain "evidence" useful to persuade the public or scientific community to consider it, the photographic evidence will be rejected.

There is low probability that any future photographic evidence will be accepted, even if such photographic evidence is valid. As stated by the anonymous writer quoted above, "We have become… overloaded."

Given that no photographic evidence will be accepted, and that the past history of UAP research has largely consisted of collecting anecdotal reports, which are scientifically unacceptable, the time has passed to define a new strategy.

UFO Researcher, Author, Marc Davenport Dies



Marc Davenport made the transition from this life to the next on Sunday, April 20. Marc was a dedicated seeker of the truth who believed that we all had a right to know. He fought for human rights, liberty, justice, and the preservation of our planet. He was the author of Dear Mr. President: 100 Earth-Saving Letters and Visitors From Time: The Secret of the UFOs.

Marc was married to Leah Ann Haley.

Marc was deeply grateful for all of his friends and supporters. His wishes were that instead of a formal service to mourn his death those who loved him would hold private gatherings to celebrate his life.

The family requests that donations in memory of Marc Davenport be made to Covenant Hospice; 5907 Berryhill Road; Milton, FL 32570 or to the International UFO Museum and Research Center; 114 N Main Street; Roswell, NM 88203.

Monthly Statistical MUFON Report - for April 2008:

CMS continues to amass sighting reports from around the globe. In April 2008 there were 490 sightings reported to MUFON through CMS. 451 of which were in the United States. 15 of these were in Michigan. Most impressively there were 23 Landings, Hovering, or Takeoffs reported and 41 Entities observed overall.

In May 2008 there were 357 sightings, 314 of which were in the United States. 10 of these were in Michigan. Most impressively there were 16 Landings, Hovering, or Takeoffs reported and 31 Entities observed overall.

To review the CMS data yourself go to www.mufon.com and click on "UFO Case Files" to 1.) Easily look at the Last 20 Sightings, or 2.) Do a customized search of the CMS database by date and/or location, or 3.) Logon to CMS for even more detailed UFO sighting information about your State and the World.

WE ARE NOT ALONE:

Tune in to David Twichell's one-hour radio talk show, **"We Are Not Alone"** on **WHFR,** broadcast from Henry Ford Community College **(89.3 FM).**

Journalist Steve Hammons will guest July 7, 2008. Stephenville, TX journalist Angelia Joiner will guest Aug. 2, 2008 show.

Tune in on the **first Saturday of each month at 10:00 AM (EST)** with a new show each month.

Out of the area? Go to: http://whfr.fm/index.php and click on **"tune in now".** The latest shows are now archived. Click on **"archives of the weekly WHFR Forum"** and click on the date of the show you wish to hear.

Britain Opens Up Secret UFO Files

Tuesday, May 13, 2008
Associated Press

LONDON — The men were air traffic controllers. Experienced, calm professionals. Nobody was drinking.

What they saw has never been explained. And they were so worried about losing their jobs that they demanded their names be kept off the official reports.

No one, they knew, would believe their claim that an unidentified flying object landed at the airfield they were overseeing in the east of England, touched down briefly, then took off again at tremendous speed.

But that's what they reported happening at four in the afternoon on April 19, 1984, at an unspecified small airport near the eastern coast of England.

Their "Report of Unusual Aerial Phenomenon" is one of more than 1,000 pages of formerly secret UFO documents released Wednesday by Britain's National Archives.

The air traffic controllers, each with more than eight years on the job, describe how they were helping guide a small plane to a safe landing on runway 22 when they were distracted by a brightly lit object approaching a different runway without clearance.

"Everyone became aware that the object was unidentified," the report on the incident said. "SATCO [codename for a controller with 14 years' experience] reports that the object came in 'at speed,' made a touch and go on runway 27, then departed at 'terrific speed' in a 'near vertical' climb."

The incident is one of the more credible in the newly public files because it was reported by air traffic controllers, said David Clarke, a UFO expert who has worked with the National Archives on the document release.

"They were absolutely astonished," he said. "It was a bright, circular object, flashing different colors, and after it touched down it disappeared at fantastic speed. The report comes from very qualified people, and it's one of the few that remained unexplained."

He said other incidents were at times reported by aircraft crews whose members also asked to remain anonymous because they did not want to jeopardize their careers by seeming to believe in UFOs.

In one case, the pilot of a commercial plane crossing the Atlantic reported an unidentified object just 1.5 nautical miles from his wing. He speculated that it might be a meteor or a missile.

Although there are some unexplained cases, there is no reported instance in which Britain's Ministry of Defense found any evidence of alien activity or alien spacecraft, said Clarke, who nonetheless expects conspiracy theories about a UFO coverup by the British defense establishment to persist.

"The Ministry of Defense doesn't have any evidence that our defenses were breached by alien craft," he said. "They never found one, no bits of one, that's all we can say."

Clarke said the documents released Wednesday, dealing with the late 1970s and early 1980s, are the first batch of a series that will be made public in the next few years.

The National Archives is releasing the files now because of numerous Freedom of Information requests seeking information about the government's UFO reports.

Officials said names of many individuals had been blacked out to protect their privacy and the entire files had been reviewed to make sure their release did not compromise national security.

Ministry of Defense officials indicate in the files that UFO reports were only investigated to make sure that no enemy aircraft had illegally entered British airspace. This was crucial during the Cold War when Russian planes posed an ongoing threat.

But officials say they did not try to solve the UFO riddles once an enemy attack had been ruled out.

The vast majority of the reports come from members of the public who see strange things in the sky and jump to the conclusion that a UFO is involved even though there is likely a logical scientific explanation for what they are observing, experts say.

"Mostly it's well-intentioned witnesses who are misidentifying things," said Nick Pope, another UFO expert who helped the Ministry of Defense investigate the phenomenon. "The most common things are aircraft lights, bright stars and planets, satellites, meteors, airships and things like that."

Some of the reports are fairly easy to explain — and quite possibly influenced by a pint or two of beer.

This was the case when a number of people leaving a Tunbridge Wells pub at 9:30 at night reported seeing a strange craft "with red and green" lights.

Asked by police where it seemed to be traveling, the pub crawlers said it appeared to be heading for London's Gatwick Airport.

Case closed.

It didn't take a scientist to figure out it was a commercial plane making a routine approach.

Source: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,355509,00.html

Editor's Note: MUFON's Dan Wright had a saying: "People don't get drunk and see UFOs – they see UFOs and then they get drunk!"

UFO enthusiast chases truth, seat in Congress

Libertarian plans to seek 1st District seat; claims that outer space phenomenon ignored

By Thomas Burr

The Salt Lake Tribune

WASHINGTON - A typical campaign kickoff doesn't resemble an X-Files convention. Nor is there usually discussion of UFOs crisscrossing the night sky or of government programs to conceal extraterrestrial technology.

And most politicians yearning for office avoid banners proclaiming, "It's not about the lights in the sky, but about the lies on the ground."

Joseph Buchman, however, announced his candidacy for the 1st Congressional District of Utah under that banner, and his official announcement was book-ended by talk of the news media ignoring signs of extraterrestrial visits and the military's blockade of information about outer space visitors.

"I don't mind being seen as a wacko because to me, the world looks completely wacked," said Buchman, the Libertarian nominee for the seat of Republican Rep. Rob Bishop. Buchman wore a black tie covered in planets and stars and galaxies to the news conference at the National Press Club in Washington.

It may not be the most politically expedient place to launch a congressional bid for a Utahn, but the Park City resident pressed on. He called on Congress to revoke any secrecy oaths the government has forced on military personnel or private contractors so they can talk openly about what they have seen regarding extraterrestrial activity.

And he wants Congress to hold open hearings on the subject.

Many of the speakers at the news conference agreed with Buchman.

And they also agreed that the mass media was ignoring the signs of extraterrestrial life and that the feds were keeping all the details hidden deep in a dark basement. A place "where Mulder and Scully would have to go with their little pen lights," added host Stephen Bassett, a one-time congressional candidate in Maryland, referencing the X-Files stars.

Buchman adds there are other things in his platform for Congress as well. He is not solely running on the UFO-conspiracy phenomenon. Buchman calls himself a lifelong Libertarian who has supported the party for more than a quarter century.

"I'm the Ron Paul of Utah congressional politics," Buchman says, referring to the ex-presidential candidate and Texas congressman.

But even Paul didn't venture into the realm of extraterrestrial discussions during his campaign. Buchman is racking up a bit of a reputation as the ET candidate. A recent *Park Record* story about his candidacy carried the headline, "Immigration, Taxes and Little Green Men."

Buchman couldn't have been happier. "I absolutely loved it," he said.

tburr@sltrib.com

http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_9010957

Books Recently Read:
Bill Murphy's Column

The following titles mostly deal with the sociology of UFOlogy: with the people who study or are otherwise involved or felt to be involved in the field. I'll deal with the works in descending order of their perceived value:

The Lure of the Edge: Scientific Passions, Religious Beliefs, and the Pursuit of UFOs, by Brenda Denzler. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2001, 295 pp. This is one of the best books about UFOlogy by a non-UFOlogist. Denzler's work is meticulously researched, and informed by her own surveys of people attending ufological conventions (including the 1997 MUFON International Symposium in Grand Rapids), and interactions with several local UFO groups in the North Carolina area. In my opinion, Denzler's is a fair and balanced account of the field from the perspective of a religious scholar, and its footnotes allow for an amazing amount of profitable further research on the part of the reader. You'll also get your vocabulary widened, a bit, by reading this book.

UFO Religions, edited by Christopher Partridge. London: Routledge, 2003, 383 pp. This is a collection of essays by different religion scholars on a wide variety of UFO-related topics, including UFO contactee movements and cults such as Unarius, the Aetherius Society, Heaven's Gate, UFO religions and cargo cults, attitudes towards religion and science in the UFO movement (this article by Brenda Denzler), and Jung on UFOs. The level of discourse here is high and the articles generally assume some basic familiarity with the topics, so this is not by any means an introductory book. While the editor Partridge indicates a general sympathy towards the "organized" UFOlogists, the authors mostly concentrate on what many ufologists would consider "fringe" areas of UFOlogy, while discounting or at least virtually ignoring that there is a concrete reality to UFOs. However, this is a very worthwhile series of articles, providing insight into what one scholarly discipline thinks about UFOlogy. Chapter 12, "Alien Doubts: Reading Abduction Narratives Post-apocalyptically", included insights the author Jodi Dean received from her correspondence with the late and much-missed David Caywood.

The Gods Have Landed: New Religions from Other Worlds, edited by James R. Lewis. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995, 343 pp. This is another compilation of articles, many on the same topics as the Partridge book. The essayists in The Gods Have Landed seem a bit less informed on UFOlogy than those whose work is included in UFO Religions, but their articles are still very valuable. It is particularly interesting to compare the Robert W. Balch article in this book on "Bo and Peep's UFO Cult", written prior to the March 26, 1997 mass-suicide of 39 followers of this cult, with the article in UFO Religions, coming after that shocking and terribly sad atrocity, and coincidentally written by the editor of The Gods Have Landed, James R. Lewis. What in itself alone would make this book worthwhile is Chapter 10: "The Flying Saucer Contactee Movement, 1950-1994: A Bibliography", by J. Gordon Melton and George M. Eberhart.

When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group that Predicted the Destruction of the World, by Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken, and Stanley Schacter. New York: Harper & Row, 1964 (original copyright 1956 by the University of Minnesota), 253 pp. The author of the article on "Bo and Peep's UFO Cult" in the Lewis book actually infiltrated Marshall Applewhite's group to gain first-hand material for their study. The same procedure was used by the three co-authors of this book, and additional hired observers, to surreptitiously study a group centered around a suburban Chicago housewife (named Mrs. Marian Keech in this book). Mrs. Keech, a medium of sorts, received messages through automatic writing from one Sananda (also known as Jesus), which culminated in a prediction of world destruction on December 21, 1954. Mrs. Keech and her followers, including a significant element located in East Lansing, Michigan, were ostensibly promised to be taken up in a flying saucer before this ultimate holocaust. As Lewis notes in his UFO Religions article (p. 103): "The scenario predicted in Mrs. Keech's prophecy is eerily similar to that of Heaven's Gate." Fortunately, no one died in the Keech debacle, but an M.S.U. professor lost his job and most of the devotees ended up disillusioned and feeling terribly foolish. Festinger's "underground sociologists" may be criticized for the propriety of their methods and the likely contamination of the group they studied by their own actions. The study has also been attacked by the author of the next book I will discuss as not affirming the hypothesis that Festinger tried to prove – that, when a group's most sacred beliefs are disconfirmed, they hold on to them more fiercely (for, after all, almost all of the group soon drifted away after the embarrassing climax of no pick-up and no end of the world – Mishlove, p. 245). But the Festinger book's image of "UFO enthusiasts" being damaged and gullible individuals of low self-esteem looking to the skies for salvation rather "took hold" within the scholarly world, and you can see it repeated over and over again in the popular media.

The PK Man: A True Story of Mind over Matter, by Jeffrey Mishlove. Charlottesville, Virginia: Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc., 2000, 283 pp. One of the strangest individuals to have become enmeshed in the history of UFOlogy was one Ted Owens (1920-1987), a man who stated that "Space Intelligences" were attempting to use him as their prophet, and who claimed to be able to call down from heaven, in an effort to prove his case, such a variety of natural and human disasters that even Moses would have blushed.

Owens made numerous predictions of disasters from at least 1965 on, but the book's author, then a graduate student studying to be the first American to receive a Ph.D. in parapsychology from a major university, first met the psychic in 1976. Most of the book follows the subsequent career of Owens and his interactions with the book's author, the rest of America, and with his own torn psyche. It is a sad, even frightening, story, for author Mishlove believes, and brings out many cases in an effort to prove his point, that Owens did indeed possess some amazing, destructive psychic power. Whether this supposed damaging talent was derived from UFO "SIs" (Space Intelligences), the Egyptian power Pyrcre ("Pyramid Creature"), or the Mayan Xtolac, later additions to Owens' "paranormal backers", or, as Mishlove prefers to think, from somewhere within his own human capacity, is a further problem. Mishlove's statistical understanding of chance does not seem strong to me, and even he does not believe that all the coincidences Owens claimed proved his power actually were valid. I found the extension of Owens' talents to subverting the Chicago Bears and Philadelphia Eagles football teams particularly tenuous, even without arguing the details of prediction specificity and confirmation, for fumbles and errant passes are a large part of the game, and really aren't all as surprising as Mishlove seems to think. (However, perhaps an angered psychic *could* be the one explanation that could account for the Detroit Lions' decades-long ineptitude?) Some of Mishlove's theorizing about what actually was going on in Owens' life and career is interesting, and the book is a fast read. A regimen for self-improvement that Owens taught, while seemingly standard New Age stuff, is attractive, far more so than the man who claimed, not much in advance of the Challenger disaster, that he and his handlers would bring down a Space Shuttle, and many of whose own "demonstrations" involved loss of life. Mishlove's mention of the website www.intuition.org, which contains transcripts of conversations from his public TV series "Thinking Allowed", is another tangible benefit from reading this book.

UFO Religion: Inside Flying Saucer Cults and Culture, by Gregory L. Reece. London: I.B. Tauris, 2007, 213 pages. This is a popular writer's look at the landscape of UFOlogy. Though it is touted by religious scholars as a handy introduction to the field of UFO religions, I felt it somewhat lacking in depth and understanding of the subject – and certainly of the wider ufological field. The author's attempts to be humorous to add spice to a narrative that should itself be interesting as well as serious sometime fall flat. The funniest thing I found was an unintentional "typo" on page 57, in which Reece informs us that Rachel, Nevada, is a town "not really much more than a trailer park in the middle of the dessert" (wonder whether its residents have weight problems?). Occasionally Reece gives us insights into his own peculiar religious hang-ups, which I am not completely sure are that germane to the study. Although his field of study is worldwide and covers events back to the beginning of the modern UFO era (and before), the illustrations in Reece's book all seem to have been taken from a recent trip to Nevada and California. Many "nuts and bolts" UFOlogists will also not appreciate Reece's essentially lumping them into the same spectrum with ancient astronaut believers and contactee religionists. Capsule summaries of the different UFO cults and positions suffer from the very fact that, as summaries, they are incomplete and sometimes a bit skewed. However, the book is interesting in its contemporary portrayal of UFOlogy and UFOlogists, and could be used – advisedly -- as a springboard for further study.

Visitors: A New Look at UFOs, by Kelly Bell. New York: Universe, Inc., 2007, 203 pp. The front cover of this book touts "Should someone ask you to recommend 'a good book on UFOs,' this should be the one." I would take issue with that advertisement. The author "has been researching the arcane (especially the UFO phenomenon) since the early 1970s" (back cover), but most of his sources seem to stop at 1990. Many of the references are to general popular books like the *Time/Life Mysteries of the Unknown* series, or, worse, the surpassingly fun but seriously suspect Frank Edwards works. Many of Bell's examples are reworked descriptions of Edwards' and others' accounts, with the kind of errors of repetition that John Tenney talked about in his March State Meeting presentation. As a result, serious flaws exist in the Bell book. Bob Lazar's tale is given with no mention of the valid questions about his credibility, the Reverend Barry Downing is noted as a *physicist*, and (what I just did here!), source references usually do not tell the reader where in a cited work the material came from. As an example, I had to search through the whole of a Frank Edwards book a couple times before I found one particular UFO story buried within its recesses. Bell's thesis seems to be that UFOs may be generally explicable in terms of the Christian revelation, but he also argues, rather confusingly, that most of the other theories he trundles out toward the end of the book may have a piece of the explanatory action. Bell seems to veer a little too close to the canard that abductees are in league, unwittingly or not, with demonic forces – at least he does not seem overtly to condemn those positions. Two appendices by co-author Tim Donovan, on "The ET Role in Earth History" and "Saucers Deliberately Crashed", seem the most original parts of the work, although their thrust is about 180 degrees from the very-conservative and rather limited Christian viewpoint Bell espouses. The articles are too brief to represent fully the reasoning that may lie behind Donovan's views, including the novel idea that Christianity was a necessary tool used by the aliens to develop humanity after the stifling Roman Empire, but itself became a hindrance to further development, and now has to be cleared away. Donovan also suggests that the aliens have deliberately sacrificed some of their saucers and crews to bring humans gradually to the realization of their existence, a less culture-rending approach, he thinks, than a massive space demonstration or landing upon the White House lawn, near the Houses of Parliament, and St. Peter's Square. I would argue that there are better books on the subject from a religious standpoint, and certainly from a generalist perspective.



The Day the Aliens Landed

By Stephen Coan

American film maker Randall Nickerson is currently visiting southern Africa to make a documentary that follows up an incident that happened at the Ariel School in Ruwa, Zimbabwe, in 1994, when 62 children aged between eight and 12 reported seeing a UFO and "strange beings" during their morning break.

Those children are now young adults scattered around the globe. Nickerson is tracking them down and interviewing them about the experience. "Their stories have not changed at all," he says. "Not what you would expect if they had made it all up."

So what exactly happened on that day in 1994 at the school in Ruwa just east of Harare? "It was morning break and they were out in the school yard playing," says Nickerson. "They saw one main silver craft that had four others around it," says Nickerson. "It came down on a hill beyond the school yard that was out of bounds. The boundary was the edge of the school yard, then it was bush and the hill.

"They ran to the edge of the school yard to see what this thing was. They saw this small creature walk around on top of the craft while another came down to check out the children. He was all in black, with a very tight suit. The children said he had big eyes 'like rugby balls'.

"The children had direct eye contact with this creature. There seems to have been some kind of communication with the children about the state of the world — what we are doing to the planet, the destruction we are causing, although not all the children got this message. Some of the children were traumatized, others were excited. The young children were the most traumatized as they were at the front of the group.

"They all went screaming back to the teachers. The teachers didn't believe them at first. But then they went home and told their parents who came to the school and wanted to know what had happened."

Soon afterwards the children were asked to draw pictures of what they had seen. "They did this separately. The drawings were all the same."

A BBC television crew were first on the scene to follow it up. In November 1994, Harvard professor of psychiatry John E. Mack visited the school and filmed interviews with the children. He was assisted by South African producer Nicky Carter who had already made a short documentary on the subject for the SABC. "I had a half-brother at the school," she says. "He was off sick on the day it happened, but the children told him all about it and he contacted me."

Carter has no doubt the children were telling the truth. "When they were interviewed by Mack with all his professional skills it was clear they were telling the truth — their voice tone, their body language. They were so consistent, they told their stories with such conviction. And they spoke about it in their own language. One child recalled being told by the alien that we should not be so 'techknowledged' — why make up something like that?"

Mack, a Pulitzer prize winner for his biography of T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) titled A Prince of Our Disorder, was a highly respected psychiatrist. However, when he began researching the phenomenon of reported alien abductions, his fellow academics looked askance. In 1994, when his book Abduction appeared, a committee was appointed to review Mack's clinical care and investigation of the people who had shared their alien encounters with him. According to the BBC, "It was the first time in Harvard's history that a tenured professor was subjected to such an investigation."

After 14 months of inquiry, Harvard issued a statement stating that the dean had "reaffirmed Dr Mack's academic freedom to study what he wishes and to state his opinions without impediment".

In 2004, Mack was killed by a drunk driver while he was visiting London to lecture at a T. E. Lawrence conference.

Mack was guarded in his interpretation of the abduction phenomenon. To one interviewer who said that Mack seemed "inclined to take these [abduction] reports at face value", Mack replied saying: "Face value I wouldn't say. I take them seriously. I don't have a way to account for them."

In a BBC interview he said: "I would never say, yes, there are aliens taking people. [But] I would say there is a compelling powerful phenomenon here that I can't account for in any other way. Yet I can't know what it is but it seems to me that it invites a deeper, further inquiry."

Nickerson sees himself as taking that inquiry further after being commissioned by the John E. Mack Institute, along with producer Dominique Callimanopulos, to make a documentary incorporating the interview footage shot in 1994 with follow-up material shot in the present.

"I want to present the story objectively," says Nickerson. "To show the original raw material. That's what initially interested me about this case. These children all describing seeing the same thing. You can tell they are not lying. But having seen this footage I thought: I need to go to this place, to talk to people, I need to investigate it for myself. Did this really happen?

"The subject has to be approached as scientifically as possible," he says. "There are questions that we need to ask. It's a case of presenting the evidence just like court."

Despite this rigorous approach, isn't there a danger he will simply encounter those on the "lunatic fringe"? "I have found those are the people who have all the answers, but people to whom something like this has really happened don't. They have millions of questions. There is a humility about them, they realize it's not about them."

At the beginning of the project Nickerson set about contacting those people who had been among the 62 children who had witnessed the sighting. "They are mainly students in Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Britain."

Tracking them down hasn't been that difficult. "They are contacting us because of what we put up on the John E. Mack Institute website. What is interesting is that their stories remain the same as in 1994.

"They were affected profoundly," says Nickerson. "At the time one girl was told by her parents not to talk about it, that she had imagined it all. But then she found other people's stories on the Internet. She got in touch with them and realized 'Oh my God, that was real'.

"Others I've met never doubted it. They say the experience opened up new horizons for them."

Nickerson cites two students who are now studying in the U.S. "Their father said they would never have done that, but after their experience the children were totally changed, that's what convinced him that something really happened."

Nickerson's first stop during his visit to southern Africa was Ariel School. "I interviewed teachers and workers who were there at the time." He also came across people from two different schools in the area who had similar sightings on the same day.

Nickerson is now in South Africa trying to track down those living here who were witnesses on that day. He will be here until the end of April following up leads resulting from two radio interviews he has given.

Source: http://witness.co.za/?showcontent&global%5b_id%5d=6379

Vatican says aliens could exist

By David Willey
BBC News, Rome

The Pope's chief astronomer says that life on Mars cannot be ruled out.

Writing in the Vatican newspaper, the astronomer, Father Gabriel Funes, said intelligent beings created by God could exist in outer space.

Father Funes, director of the Vatican Observatory near Rome, is a respected scientist who collaborates with universities around the world.

The search for forms of extraterrestrial life, he says, does not contradict belief in God.

The official Vatican newspaper headlines his article 'Aliens Are My Brother'.

'Free from sin'

Just as there are multiple forms of life on earth, so there could exist intelligent beings in outer space created by God. And some aliens could even be free from original sin, he speculates.

Asked about the Catholic Church's condemnation four centuries ago of the Italian astronomer and physicist, Galileo, Father Funes diplomatically says mistakes were made, but it is time to turn the page and look towards the future.

Science and religion need each other, and many astronomers believe in God, he assures readers.

To strengthen its scientific credentials, the Vatican is organising a conference next year to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of the author of the Origin of Species, Charles Darwin.

Story from BBC NEWS:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7399661.stm

Published: 2008/05/13 22:08:27 GMT
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"If I become President, I'll make every piece of information this country has about UFO sightings available to the public, and the scientists. I am convinced that UFOs exist because I've seen one... "

President Jimmy Carter during his election campaign in May 1976

30 Billion Earths? New Estimate of Exoplanets in Our Galaxy

By Robert Roy Britt

Senior Science Writer

Chances are you haven't spent a whole lot of time wondering how many Jupiter-like planets exist in our galaxy. But Charley Lineweaver has, because it bears on a more important question: How many potentially habitable planets are there?

New calculations by Lineweaver and Daniel Grether, both of the University of New South Wales in Australia, provide an encouraging answer to this question. The researchers expect a flood of Jupiters will be found, perhaps 50 percent more than currently expected.

Each such discovery would be significant in the hunt for planets that could harbor life.

Why? Because much of the evolution of our own solar system, including the formation of Earth, was orchestrated or affected by Jupiter, the largest planet with by far the bulk of the solar system's mass, excepting the Sun, of course.

"Our solar system is Jupiter and a bunch of junk," as Lineweaver puts it.

Our protector

When Jupiter developed, it simply bullied other objects into position or out of existence. Then the mighty gas giant became Earth's protector.

Though the fledgling Earth was pummeled by asteroids and comets, making it difficult for life to take hold, it could have been much worse. Jupiter shielded Earth from an even heavier bombardment of debris that made its way from the outskirts of the new system toward its central star.

That protective role continues. In 1994, Jupiter used its immense gravity to lure comet Shoemaker-Levy into a death plunge. Had the comet hit Earth, it would have sterilized much or all of the planet.

For now, no one knows whether our solar system represents a common method of formation and evolution. In fact, discoveries over the past six years seem to indicate otherwise. Most of the roughly 80 planets discovered outside our solar system are much more massive than Jupiter. They also orbit perilously close to their host stars, locations that would likely prevent rocky planets from forming in so-called habitable orbits.

But experts attribute these findings to the limitations of technology. Smaller planets in more comfortable orbits around other stars simply can't be detected. Yet.

How many Jupiters?

All this in mind, Lineweaver and Grether worked out some new calculations for the prevalence of planets that are about Jupiter's size at about the same distance from their host stars. The calculations are based on some of the most recent extrasolar planet discoveries, in which ever-smaller objects are being detected at ever-greater distances from their host stars.

So how many Jupiters are out there orbiting Sun-like stars in the Milky Way Galaxy?

"At least a billion, but probably more like 30 billion," Lineweaver told *SPACE.com*.

And the math behind that?

"There are about 300 billion stars in our galaxy. About 10 percent (or 30 billion) are roughly Sun-like," he explained. "At least 5 percent (1.5 billion) but possibly as many as 90 percent or 100 percent (about 30 billion) of these have Jupiter-like planets."

These estimates would vary based on exactly what you call Jupiter-like or Sun-like, Lineweaver said.

What about Earths?

The calculations, which are part of a paper that has been submitted to the journal *Astrobiology*, don't bear directly on worlds like our own. But with what's known of planet formation, some speculation is possible.

"A reasonable guess is the same number of Earths as Jupiters," Lineweaver said.

That, however, depends heavily on how one defines Earth-like. If one includes rocky planets in general, like Mercury, Venus and Mars, "then they are probably more common than Jupiters," he said. If, however, you mean rocky planets with liquid water at the surface, "then we really can't answer that very well. They may be as common as Jupiters, or they may be much less common."

Alan Boss, an expert in planetary system formation at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, said the new calculations for Jovian twins seem reasonable. Trying then to estimate the number of Earth-like planets requires "a leap of faith, but one which appears to be plausible," he said.

"As the veil covering the unseen portions of discovery space is lowered in the next decade, I expect we will find that Jupiter-like planets are commonplace," said Boss, who was not involved in the new study. "Whether or not that also means Earth-like planets are common can only be proven by NASA's Kepler mission."

Kepler, recently approved to launch in 2006, will monitor 100,000 stars for telltale dips in light indicating an Earth-sized planet in an Earth-like orbit has crossed in front of the star. While it would not take photographs, Kepler could provide the first census of planets that have the potential to support life.

Source: http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/astronomy/jupiter_typical_020128.html

Recent Michigan Sightings

GRAND RAPIDS: Taking my dog out I saw an object like a satellite heading from the western sky northeast on May 24, 2008, at 11:00 p.m. Suddenly it becomes a huge ball of light then turned very faint. It then changed direction 90 degrees heading northwest and faded slowly becoming very dim and disappeared. I went in to get my binoculars and scanning the sky to the west, slightly northwest of me was a stationary star like object that blinked red, blue, white green. Even with the naked eye you could see it blinking. I watched it about 10 minutes then went inside because of the mosquitos.

Thanks to Brian Vike, Director of HBCC UFO Research, http://www.hbccufo.org.

Occurred : April 12, 2008. 22:51 Location: Waterford, MI. Shape: Chevron. Duration: 10 sec.

Clear night sky, airport traffic in air. One chevron shaped UFO passed above head in SSE direction. UFO was translucent/ transparent, like a jellyfish, moving at a fast rate of speed. Edges seemed white or near-white. Height of travel difficult to discern, size of craft difficult to discern. Appeared for only 2-3 seconds before UFO disappeared behind tree line and then reappeared briefly seconds later far on horizon for 2 more seconds, having turned to a SE direction. Travel was silent as if gliding. Best estimate of speed 100-150 MPH. Thanks to NUFORC

Occurred : April 4, 2008. 21:30. Location: Durand, MI. Duration: 45min.

04/04/08 object sighted moving from west to east. Approximately 45min duration, arcing to the north while still moving towards east. This part is what struck me as strange the craft did a button hook and stopped abruptly as if someone or thing had parked it. Witnessed by longtime friend who viewed the same object as I did. Both of us will take a polygraph to confirm sighting is authentic. Time was 9:15pm till 10:00pm. The small object was not a satellite.

Thanks to NUFORC

Occurred : March, 24, 2008. 21: Location: Hastings, MI. Shape: Triangle. Duration:5 minutes.

I had gone to the gas station to get a news paper, taco bell, and soda on the trip home; I had seen what was apparently an airplane. It became apparent that it was a UFO when it stopped going in its direction and just started to hover. It had a flashing red light, and I started to point out of my window to let others see it. This is the 3rd UFO that I have seen in the past 7 days. Oh yes, the UFO was totally silent, and flying low. I would say that it could not have been more than 200 feet off the ground. It was approximately 2 miles north of Hastings, off of M37. It had an almost parallel path to the airport in Hastings when it was moving. When it stopped and hovered, my heart sunk.

Thanks to NUFORC

June 1, 2008: While sitting on my back patio, approximately 80degrees up from the horizon and to the South West (south more than west) sky, I noticed what appeared to be a star like light. If it were dusk or totally dark, I would not have given it a second thought. However, at this time of day under a slightly hazy early evening Sunday, it was the only star in the sky which is what got my attention. It appeared to change shape in a manor suggesting an oblong section. This could be an illusion due to ice particles and/or atmosphere distorting the light that high in the sky. I'm not sure about motion, size or shape as a result. I thought of getting out my telescope but I didn't because as I watched it over a few minutes I convinced myself it was indeed a star. I diverted my attention from it for about 5 minutes and when I looked up to see if it was still there, it was gone. I used one of my homes window casings as a stationary point and found that it was slowly drifting toward the west at a pace equal to the night sky stars. This further led to my dismissal of it being something atypical. In spite of having the proverbial gut instinct. So, a singular star in the sky at a time of day when there should be none, visible for only a few short minutes…well who knows? As a second point of reference planes were flying over as they frequently do which made it clear that this object (or star) was far higher. I should have pulled out the scope.

Also, I have noticed on 4 separate occasions in the past 5 years or so a single bright light in the sky (with no discernable sound) two years ago over Lake St. Clair late at night near the mouth of the Clinton River at two different times from the north east and at a high angle. And at my home last summer in what would be my front yard, again from the North East and high angle; then finally last week (mid week) from the Southwest in what would be my back yard and at somewhere between 60 to 70 degrees from the horizon. In all instances I was outdoors and it was beyond 11:00pm. I know what planes and helos look like at night as I live close to Selfridge Air Base. I have lived in this area most of my life. Could it be a plane or a copter? I can't say no! But, this light does what no plane can do…Imagine a powerful hand held spot light about 2 million candle power in the night sky shining down so brightly that you can't help but notice it. Then suddenly it's as if a dimmer switch went off and it quickly gets smaller and dimmer until it is a faint pin point size and then gone, as if it were going straight up. It's as if you were in a car with one of those auto dimmers when it activates!

Thanks to MUFON CMS.

"Truth … If You Dare UFO Symposium II" Another Resounding Success

The second collaborative effort between Illinois MUFON and the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies was held on Sunday, June 22nd, at the Tinley Park Holiday Inn Convention Center south of Chicago, Illinois. A crowd estimated in the hundreds by the local newspaper *Southtown Star*, and including representatives from Michigan and Indiana MUFON, came to this location, the projected site for the 2009 MUFON International Symposium. There they heard historical ufologist and Sci-Fi TV personality Richard Dolan give the featured talk on "The Challenges of UFO Disclosure". Roswell researcher Donald Schmitt initiated the presentations, and Illinois State Director Sam Maranto led the third and concluding lecture. As with the first such affair, there was a Speakers' Panel at the conclusion of the individual presentations, materials from the main speakers were available for purchase, and another raffle of MUFON and UFO-related materials was held.

Richard Dolan's talk was simply the best conference presentation in this writer's recent memory. Mr. Dolan divided his speech into three parts. He first made the case, for those who might be skeptical or know little about the subject, that UFOs were a serious matter for the (specifically, U.S.) military, through instancing 15 U.S. government documents that are publicly known, from the 1947 Twining Memo through 1990 DIA documents on Belgian UFOs. He further averred, and presented more documentary proof of his assertion, that the militaries of the U.S. and other countries have chased and apparently continue to chase UFOs. Richard then moved to what is a main thread in his thinking: that elements within the U.S. government have found it necessary to "cover up" information on UFOs, partly for their own reasons. Some researchers are likely to disagree with Mr. Dolan's methodology and interpretations in this area, but that is assuredly natural for discussion on any historical or current subject. The third part of the Dolan presentation covered the implications of a putative alien presence on earth, both for us earthlings and the postulated "Them". While clearly labeled as speculation, this portion was pretty much a tour de force. Hopefully, this extremely effective presentation will be available through Illinois MUFON or Mr. Dolan.

Though recovering from a serious medical procedure that took place since his appearance at "Truth…If You Dare I", Donald Schmitt showed that he retains the same consistent ability to deliver a riveting talk in strong advocacy of the reality of a crash of more than a Mogul balloon and crash-test dummies near Roswell, New Mexico, in the summer of 1947. In "Clarity of the Roswell Facts vs. the Skeptic Spin" Schmitt insistently bore down on the unlikelihood that elements of the most elite military unit in existence in 1947 could have mistaken as alien technology what were supposedly just bits of foil, balsa wood, and other balloon materials. Don also contrasted the insistent stories of small and odd bodies in 1947 with the latest (1997) government explanation of full-sized anthropomorphic dummies that did not come into existence until five years after the Roswell event. Mr. Schmitt hammered home the fact that hundreds of first, second, and third-hand Roswell witnesses found the various and changing explanations of military and civilian arm-chair debunkers ludicrous. He contended that talk of "time compression" and other dismissive phrases about their stories was insulting in the extreme to the solid citizens who have signed sworn statements to the truth of what they had seen and experienced.

In "Cooper's Corners: Real Life Encounters" Illinois State Director and "Truth … If You Dare" prime mover Sam Maranto provided a fascinating insight into a case-in-progress with video and personal reminiscences by a married couple about a series of experiences centering around their upper Midwest home in 2004. The lights, objects, audio, and other phenomena experienced by this family are strongly reminiscent of those encountered at the "Skinwalker Ranch". During the course of the presentation it was clear that, while the couple was doing well now, the ordeal had placed a tremendous strain upon them, and the constant contact with and ready assistance from Mr. Maranto likely played an important support role throughout and after this period. Linda and I had the opportunity to chat at some length with this couple after the presentation, and they seemed to us to be solid, down-to-earth people. Sam mentioned that this fascinating case will eventually be published.

The next "Truth … If You Dare" Symposium is scheduled for Sunday, August 17, at the same Tinley Park locale. "Show Me the Evidence: The Science of Ufology" will feature UFO trace case expert Ted Phillips as well as Stanton Friedman. Additional speakers are making presentations, and a morning training session on the latest UFO case investigation aids is under consideration. For more information on this symposium, check out the Illinois MUFON website at www.illinoismufon.com.

Editor's Note: MiMUFON's Bill Murphy has been asked to make one of the presentations at the August "Truth ... If You Dare III" Symposium.

Police chase UFO over Cardiff

By Laura Clout 20/06/2008

A police helicopter crew gave chase to a UFO after it almost collided with their aircraft near a military base.

The pilot was forced to bank sharply to avoid being hit by the mystery aircraft as the helicopter was returning to the Ministry of Defence base of St Athan, near Cardiff. The three crew, who described the UFO as 'flying saucer-shaped', then gave chase, getting as far as the North Devon coast before they ran low on fuel, it was reported.

The police aircraft was hovering at 500ft and waiting clearance to land on June 7, when those onboard spotted the other craft hurtling towards them from below. A spokesman for South Wales Police said: "We can confirm the Air Support Unit sighted an unusual aircraft. This was reported to the relevant authorities for their investigation."

It was reported that the aircraft closed in at great speed, aiming straight for the helicopter which swerved sharply. "They are convinced it was a UFO. It sounds far-fetched, but they know what they saw."

The helicopter crew are said to have crossed the Bristol channel in pursuit of the UFO, but lost sight of it and had to turn back due to a fuel shortage.

The sighting comes weeks after the most comprehensive Government files on UFO activity are opened to the public for the first time today and they disclose that even air traffic controllers and police officers have seen mysterious craft in the skies over Britain.

The sightings range from incredible tales of little green men visiting the Wirral to corroborated accounts from policemen and pilots of Unidentified Flying Objects hovering above towns and cities.

All were recorded on official forms, held by air bases and police stations, and compiled by the Ministry of Defence between 1978 and 2002.

Story from Telegraph News:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/howaboutthat/2160814/Police-chase-UFO-over-Cardiff.html



Lt. Col. Lawrence J. Coyne, U.S. Army Reserve helicopter pilot with 3,000 hours of flying time.

He and other three airmen had a close encounter with a UFO on the night of October 18, 1973, while flying in a U.S. Army Bell Huey utility helicopter in the vicinity of Mansfield, Ohio. Lt. Coyne described his experience at a United Nations UFO hearing in 1978:

"With the aircraft under my control, I observed the red-lighted object closing upon the helicopter at the same altitude at a high rate of speed. It became apparent a mid-air collision was about to happen unless evasive action was taken.

"I looked out ahead of the helicopter and observed an aircraft I have never seen before. This craft positioned itself directly in front of the moving helicopter. This craft was 50 to 60 feet long with a grey metallic structure. On the front of this craft was a large steady bright red light. I could delineate where the red stopped on the structure of this craft because red was reflecting off the grey structure. The design of this craft was symmetrical in shape with a prominent aft indentation on the undercarriage. From this portion of the undercarriage, a green light, pyramid-shaped, emerged with the light initially in the trail position. This green light then swung 90 degrees, coming directly into the front windshield and lighting up the entire cockpit of the aircraft. All colors inside the cabin of the helicopter were absorbed by this green light. That includes the instrument panel lights on the aircraft.

"As a result of my experience, I am convinced this object was real and that these types of incidents should require a thorough investigation. It is my own personal opinion that worldwide procedures need to be established to effectively study this phenomena through an international cooperative effort. The establishment of a Transponder Code for aircraft flying worldwide is needed, to identify to ground controllers that a pilot is indeed experiencing a UFO phenomena and that pilot anxiety can be reduced to provide safe effective flying, knowing he is under radar control."
(Statement to the Special Political Committee of the United Nations, November 27, 1978.)

From The Editor's Desk



David Twichell

Hoaxes Hurt UFOlogy

When it comes to photographic and video evidence of anomalous aerial phenomena, there are misidentifications of conventional objects and natural phenomena, actual unconventional objects and then there are outright hoaxes. The internet's popular "Youtube.com" overflows with a hodgepodge of all of the above. Separating the wheat from the chaff is a never ending process that always results in some so-called "experts" in direct disagreement with some others. The UFO cynic will dismiss all evidence as a hoax regardless of its authenticity and painstaking analysis. Conversely, a small portion of the public will accept anything that comes down the pike.

In 2006, Australian filmmaker Chris Kenworthy received a grant from the Australian government to produce several hoaxed UFO video clips. The final product was a convincing demonstration of how modern photographic technology may be used to make nothing at all look like something anomalous and plausible. Ironically, before Kenworthy came clean about the ruse, the skeptics marched out their standard explanations of "birds", "ball lighting", "Venus" etc. while the serious UFOlogist saw through it in record time. The experiment was a lesson to all concerned to carefully scrutinize any and all photographic evidence before dubbing it genuine. It also begged the question "why would any government sponsor such a project"?

A gentleman recently had his fifteen minutes of fame (or shame) touting a picture he claimed was a typical disk-shaped UFO in the center of the frame. The problem being that the dark object was also in the center of the sun. Taking a picture of the sun will often produce this effect as well as colorful orbs surrounding the star. They are not UFOs, angels or the spirit of your late, great Aunt Matilda; it is the camera lens objecting to the overwhelming amount of light it is being subjected to. It doesn't do a lot of good for the camera either. Whether this was a hoax or ignorance of photography is a matter of debate.

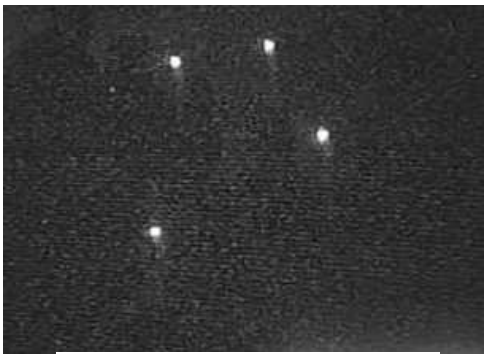
In April 2008, Phoenix made national press coverage with video of lights moving randomly through the night sky. A man later said he saw his neighbor launch several helium balloons with flares attached to them from the back porch of his north Phoenix home, to which the prankster later confessed. The witness said the balloons took off about 8 p.m., right before the mysterious lights were spotted. This latest stunt shouldn't take anything away from the authenticity of the Phoenix Lights incident of eleven years ago – but it just might in the minds of many.

Now, Jeffrey L. Peckman is calling for the creation of an Extraterrestrial Affairs Commission within the city of Denver, Colorado. This in itself might be a venerable idea, however it's based on his highly questionable (if not downright ludicrous) video of a bug-eyed alien playing peeping Tom in a third story window of the home of an alleged abductee, Stan Romanek. Experts may prove me wrong but it looks like a reflection of something from inside the room or a model outside the window. One video entrepreneur has already duplicated Mr. Romanek's video and done a far better job of it. Others have spoofed the video as well and displayed their creations on Youtube.

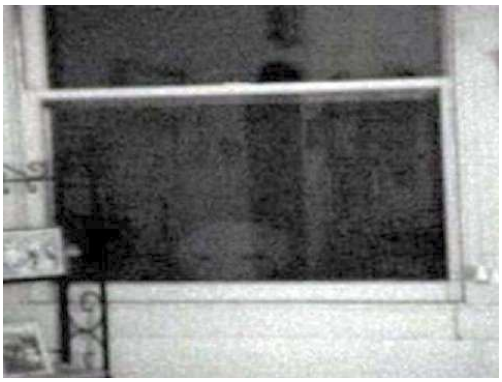
Such cases are far too numerous to mention here but the point is; a skeptical public tends to throw the baby out with the bath water when a deliberate hoax grabs its attention and is promptly exposed for what it truly is. Deliberate hoaxes give UFOlogy a black eye and hamper further study worthy of serious scientific investigation.

This is the very reason that Stanton Friedman uses only photographs taken in the 1950s, when computers and Paint Shop could not have been used to generate them. The now-famous Trent photos are a case in point. Even these are still dismissed as hoaxes by the voluntarily blind and those who refuse to surrender their self-appointed designation as the most intelligent and advanced beings in the universe.

David Twichell
MiMUFON Newsletter Editor



April 2008 Phoenix lights hoax.



Stan Romanek's alleged alien.



The Paul Trent photo taken on May 11, 1950 in McMinnville Oregon.

Michigan MUFON Contact List

The following people are the State Section Directors for Michigan If you have questions, comments, sightings, or any other report, please contact the State Section Director covering your county.

Bob Wagel, 269-782-6111
mwagel@beanstalk.net
Berien, Cass, Van Buren

Len Keeney, 517-669-3128
Lkeeney48105@yahoo.com
Lenawee, Washtenaw, Livingston

Gary Golem, 734-459-7514
ggolem@peoplepc.com
Wayne, Monroe

Zach Smith, 269-274-1611
zachmufonbiz@yahoo.com
Eaton, Jackson, Ingham, Shiawassee

John Castle, Home 269/465-3068, Mobile 269/326-0441
kc8odm@hotmail.com
Clinton, Ionia, Montcalm, and Gratiot

Jon Long, 616-738-3049
jon@jdlong.com
Allegan, Barry

Bill Konkolesky, 248-515-9568
wjk@mimufon.org
Oakland,

Harold Marquardt, 586-463-5553
Macomb

Wayne Erickson, 810-364-9938
Weric1293@sbcglobal.net

Randy Baker, 810-794-3876
shadowresearch@hotmail.com
St. Clair

Wendy Smith, 616-261-0690
wapsmith@umich.edu
Ottawa, Kent

Oceana, Mason, Muskegon
Contact Wendy or Jon Long

Judy Kulka, 231-599-2594
ufoquilter@torchlake.com
Grand Traverse, Leelenau, Kalkaska, Antrim

Sunny Young, Chief Investigator. 269-352-7917
Caboogie2u@yahoo.com
Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Van Buren, St. Joseph

Isabella, Mecosta, Oseola, Clare
TBA

You will note that not all counties are covered with section directors. In that case you can contact any of the following state officers.

Bill Konkolesky, 248-515-9568
Michigan State Director

Bob Wagel, 269-782-6111
mwagel@beanstalk.net
Michigan Assistant State Director, Administration

Wendy Smith, 616-261-0690
wapsmith@umich.edu
Michigan Assistant State Director, Treasury

Bill Konkolesky, 248-515-9568
wjk@mimufon.org
Michigan MUFON acting Webmaster

Dave and Darlene Bleicher, 810-797-5551
librarian@mimufon.org
Michigan MUFON Librarians

David Twichell, 734-675-6335
news@mimufon.org
Michigan Newsletter Editor
and Public Relations Director

Dave Bleicher, (810) 797-5551
Umore@provide.net
SSD, Genessee & Lapeer

When possible, contact by e-mail is the best method to reach most of the people on this list, but does not preclude using the telephone numbers if desirable. If you call please be patient as most of the people are not available during the daytime hours. When you leave a message, please speak clearly and leave you telephone number, city, state, and brief message explaining your contact. We will return your call at the earliest convenience.

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