

Investigations Diary 21

by Gloria Heather Dixon

On Saturday 30th September 2000, the BUFORA NIC held their second meeting for this year in Doncaster at the Railway Public House. This was an informal meeting for investigators and I would like to extend my thanks to all those who attended especially those, who made long journeys in order to be there. It was very rewarding indeed to see you all.

This particular meeting was a very interesting one and as I reported in the last issue of the Bulletin, BUFORA are receiving an increase in the more exotic framework of reports, which encompass claims of alien encounters and abductions. This increase should now cause some room for concern for all BUFORA investigators. As I also discussed in the Investigations Diary we have had several people, who have contacted BUFORA regarding their perceptions of very strange events in their lives. This will be familiar to some long term investigators, who can spend several hours on the telephone at times trying to extract enough information to make a decision about what action can or should be taken on behalf of the witness.

There was discussion on these issues particularly with regard to the fact that BUFORA investigations may have to widen their parameters and remit to include these other high strangeness reports that fall outside of reports of unidentified aerial phenomena. This is something that is now under initial stages of discussion within BUFORA at the present time.

The highlight of the meeting, however, was Judy Jaafar's excellent presentation on our interpretation of some of these reports and the comprehensive and diverse nature of how mythology, beliefs and paranormal experiences have become immersed into the UFO culture of today. This means that we need to have an intricate knowledge of the many issues lying on the borders of UFO/paranormal phenomena and how these are possibly all linked together and maybe part of the same phenomenon being reported. Judy went into great detail regarding these reports and the problems surrounding them giving valuable insight into those significant areas that lie on the periphery of our understanding of the UFO mystery . The content of this talk will be submitted by Judy to either this issue or a future issue of the Bulletin in order that our members may be fully informed of the discussion at this meeting.

It was certainly an enlightening and entertaining afternoon with all attending investigators contributing in a comprehensive way to this discussion. Several of us then adjourned to the hotel for an evening of dinner, drinks and discussion of all things strange.

NIC forward planning has decided that we hope to address these issues further with another meeting and training day in Doncaster in February 2001.

I would also like to extend my thanks on behalf of the NIC to Dave Sankey who made a valuable contribution in arranging the venue and supplying us all with a map and details of how to get there.

SIGHTINGS/CLOSE ENCOUNTER REPORTS

As of the date of writing 24th October, 2000, BUFORA have received 125 reports, which encompass everything from close encounter experiences to lights in the sky.

However, as will be evident we are still looking at an overall decrease in sighting reports. As we logged 217 reports for 1999, it is very doubtful at this stage that we will catch up on last year's statistics, therefore, it appears that there is a definite downward trend with regard to sightings being reported to BUFORA. It maybe the case that the regional groups are receiving more reports, but it would be interesting to have the information and resources to examine this trend.

Photographs and Video Footage

Currently we have an assessment from Bill Rose regarding a jpeg, which was forwarded to BUFORA enquiries from video footage taken in Barmouth, Llanaber overlooking Cardigan Bay. MS reports that he was on holiday and at approximately 4.00am he noticed a bright light reflecting on the sea. He took video footage of this light focusing in on the light, which he estimated to be only about 800 metres away. This distance would be almost impossible to estimate. When he viewed the footage frame by frame he noticed a number of unusual anomalies on the screen, which he describes as a bright disc-shaped object, two flashing red lights and a blue flash.

Bill Rose has once again kindly given his comments on this jpeg. Text of some of his comments follows below.

BARMOUTH JPEG IMAGE PROVED BY MARK STOREY

Further to our previous discussion, I have now had a chance to carefully read MS's questionnaire about the Barmouth sighting. I have also studied my official UK pilot's map of the area and run the date and location through some astronomy software. Much of Cardigan Bay lies within MoD restricted airspace, which has the reference EGD 201 and EDG 202. While this (and the time of day) would seem to rule out commercial air traffic, there is the possibility of military activity perhaps involving a helicopter.

It is also the case that Arcturus - a prominent red star with a brightness of magnitude of -0.04, would have been positioned in the West at exactly the time of the sighting. (see my attached jpeg). The elevation of Arcturus within Bootes would place it in much the same area of sky as the reported object.

I would add that the video appears to have been made through the glass of a window, opening up the possibility of reflections and distortion. Does this particular camcorder have a red LED to show operation?

While it may not be possible to pin down the exact origin of the light, I think it may have been either an aircraft, lights from a boat or possibly Arcturus assisted by an unexpected break in the clouds.

MS does not provide any technical details of the camera, although I know from previous tests that a Sony Hi-8 (most Hi-8 camcorders are Sony or Canon clones) are capable of recording stars dimmer than Arcturus using the low light gain-up function. There are no details provided of the zoom lens' focal length, but most recent models feature a ratio between 16 to 1 and 20 to 1. Focused at maximum focal length, we can assume an angle of view of something like 1.5 to 2 degrees.

Although it would be necessary to examine the original footage to provide any further assessment, I do not believe that the object recorded on video tape was actually the same diameter as the Moon as suggested by MS. I believe he has made his assessment after viewing the tape and not from naked eye observation. At an estimated ½ mile distance as reported by MS, an object with a diameter of approximately ½ a degree would be somewhat sizeable.

However, defocused images of (relatively) bright light sources always appear much larger on playback than they really are and give false impressions of size. This is a regular feature of UFO camcorder footage shot after dark. Under these circumstances, the phase detection system of most camcorders (which controls auto focus) simply fails to lock-on to the subject in low light and inevitably, the image defocuses. This is immediately apparent with the image provided and should be evident on the rest of the tape.

I have seen almost identical images on several occasions and my records show that I investigated (for UFO Magazine) a recording made by Glenn Webster on 3rd November 1995 near to Norwich airport with a Sony 8mm camcorder. This showed an almost identical circle with the same cut outs and I concluded that the defocused image was probably caused by an aircraft light. Several newspapers reproduced this image, but as I recall, the BBC and Anglia TV declined to run the recording.

Bill Rose

24/9/2000

We also have a photograph taken by a gentleman, whilst holidaying in Egypt and taking photographs of the Pyramids. He has recorded an anomaly on one of the photographs and I have the negative in conjunction with other negatives from before and after for assessment. The anomaly seems to be recorded on the negative and Bill Rose has kindly agreed to have a look at this for BUFORA.



Once more, and on behalf of BUFORA, I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to Bill Rose for all his work on some of the photographs and video footage coming into our organisation. This has provided an invaluable contribution to our work in the field of sightings captured on camera.

SIGHTINGS

An unusual sighting was reported to me in 1994, although it goes back to 1978. The lady concerned has contacted us again and I would like to log this here and see if we can jog anyone's memory from this date.

Date of Sighting: February 1978 Location: Lee, London SE12

GB gives the following account of an incident that occurred to both her sister and herself in February of 1978.

I was spending the week with my parents before leaving for Paris to start a new job on the 28th February. I was sharing my sister's bedroom whilst staying with them and if my memory serves me well, what we experienced happened on either the Monday or Tuesday before this.

I don't know at what time we were awakened but it was probably around 2-3am in the morning. Both my sister and I were awakened by a pulsating light which was so bright that it lit up the entire bedroom and woke us both up out of our sleep. The light was flashing or pulsating and was almost as bright (but not quite) as putting the bedroom light on. When we looked out of the window to see what was happening, we couldn't actually see anything as the light was directly above the house. It was at that point that I felt the vibration in my stomach. There was no noise accompanying the flashing light but I was aware of a very low vibration, which I could feel in the pit of my stomach. I couldn't actually hear the vibration but I could feel it - it was so low that it made me feel sick (which could also have been a symptom of the fear) I have to say that my sister and I were both terrified and that we alternated between opening the curtains to see what was happening to literally hiding under the blankets. When we opened the curtains for what I think was the third time, the light had moved from above the house and we saw it stationary just above the cloud levels behind the house. The light was hanging in the sky, motionless and was positioned just above the park at the back of my parent's house.

My parents lived in Lee, London SE12 and their house backed on to a small park which I think, was (and probably still is) called Northbrook Park. It is located on Baring Road in Lee.

We could not make out the shape of the object, if indeed it was a solid object, but we could make out the form through the low cloud level. It was a large ball of light which was emitting strobe-like, flashing lights on all sides. There was no variety of colour, all the lights that we saw were yellow. Again, there was no sound accompanying the flashing lights and I no longer felt sick. In fact, when the light had moved over to the

park, I was no longer aware of the low vibration that I had felt when the light was above the house.

We observed what was happening for a few minutes and closed the curtains in fear and when we opened them again, the light had disappeared and there was no trace of it anywhere.

I cannot say exactly how long the entire event lasted but it was longer than ten minutes but less than half an hour.

I should mention that there is a railway line at not too great a distance from the house, which is the line that goes through Lee station and on to Hither Green station. I personally don't think that the railway line had anything to do with what we saw as everything we observed was in the sky and at no point did the lights that we observed connect with the ground, but I thought I should mention this anyway.

The strange thing about this experience was that it should happen in such a built up area and I cannot imagine that my sister and I were the only ones to see the lights that night as they were so bright. The location is in the middle of South East London with houses everywhere.

As I mentioned to you, what I saw had a profound affect on me and I can still recall it quite clearly. Even after 22 years, I would like to know what it is we observed, be it UFO, earth light, ball lightning or whatever....all I can say is that I had never seen anything like this before and have never seen anything like it since. It's a mystery that I would like to solve.

On the completed questionnaire GB has shown weather conditions that night to be clear, cold and dry with total cloud coverage. I have asked her whether she felt it was possible that there was some form of laser light display occurring, but she is adamant this could not have been the case. Certainly some of the characteristics do not seem to be indicative of this.

There is also a history of strange and odd occurrences from this particular home, details of which follow:

GB was sitting with her mother in the living room one morning when they heard a hug bang from appeared to emanate from the back bedroom of the house on the first floor. As there was one else in the house at the time they rushed upstairs and found that the clock which usually sat on the shelf above the fireplace had been 'thrown' across the other side of the room, almost as though someone had picked it up and thrown it in one go. The clock alarm was ringing when they reached the bedroom.

Two other curious events happened during this time. One involved the entire family when they were sitting in the living room one evening watching television. Suddenly they heard a noise in the dining room next door. GB's father used to paint model soldiers and when they went into the dining room, they found his tubes of paint scattered around the room. Being a meticulous person, her father had left the paints neatly packed away in a box, which he had placed in the middle of the dining room

table. GB makes the comment that it was as though someone had picked up the box and tossed the paints out.

In addition to the above two events GB's sister, who was aged about six to seven years old at the time awoke in the middle of the night on several occasions claiming that a man was standing at the bottom of her bed. Because of this they would leave the landing light on throughout the night. Simultaneously to this GB's mother awoke a number of times to find a man leaning over the bed looking down at her. His appearance was very similar to those reported by GB's sister. These observations only occurred during a short period of time.

Certainly there seems to be evidence of poltergeist activity that surrounding this family during that time and while they lived in this particular house, but a further experience occurred to GB during her time working and living in Paris from 1978 to 1982. She reported the following incident to me from that time.

During here time in Paris she lived alone in a flat in a brand new block which had just been completed when she moved in. Over a period of months GB was a aware of a strong smell of urine, which would come and go in different parts of the flat. Other people noticed this too much to her embarrassment. On two occasions whilst alone, she distinctly heard a man's voice sighing. These curious incidents lasted for a short time and stopped when her grandfather was diagnosed as having prostate problems and was subsequently taken into hospital for an operation. GB truly believes that these events were linked. She was very close with her grandfather.

Date of sighting: 4th October 1999 Location: Eastrunton, Norfolk

LP had visited a relative in Cromer on 4th October and just after midnight left the flat to walk home to Sheringham about five miles from Cromer. He came to the small village of Eastrunton and as he walked up the hill to carry on along the coast road , he observed what he describes as a 'ball of fire' coming down through the clouds. He describes the object as being large with flames behind it, not travelling very fast and it lit up the sky. It passed by at about the distance of a 'couple of fields' and LP describes it as hitting the ground with such a force he could feel the vibration.

This is certainly indicative of a meteorite and it is unfortunate it has been reported so long after the event. I believe the witness reported this to someone , but did not get any response.

Date of Sighting: 20th August 2000 Location: West Wickham, Cambridgeshire

DD and his girlfriend were parked by the side of a small road, which leads to Balsham Crossroads at the village of West Wickham. They were talking when at about 02.15 they both observed two very bright red lights to the right of the car and in the West. They estimated the height to be 400 to 500 feet. Another car passed them and DD felt sure they must have seen these lights. His girlfriend panicked and in so doing lost the

car keys. By the time she had recovered them the two red lights had disappeared simultaneously and she drove them home. DD who was still in the back of the car claims he then noticed a very large object in the sky. They described the weather as mild, dry and very clear. On the BUFORA questionnaire they describe the size of both lights as larger than a full moon. There is a discrepancy in the observation time reported, DD reports it as being one minute and JR reports her observation time as being thirty seconds. No sound was reported..

According to the report from DD and JR, A friend at work reported a similar sighting in Suffolk that night.

Date of Sighting: 1989 Location: Hampshire

Inv. Malcolm Robinson

BS was fifteen years old when he claims to have been walking home from a friend's house. He felt as though someone was watching him and looked up to see a silver metallic disc-shaped object hovering above. The object was making a very quiet humming noise and he noticed a smell of sulphur.

Malcolm is following up this report, although so many years have elapsed since his observation that it will probably be very difficult to make a definitive evaluation.

To conclude this Diary and on a more humorous and lighter note, I received a call in July from a lady, who sounded very drunk on the telephone. She told that she had been drinking with friends the previous night, but never got home!! Apparently she woke up in a park with her purse and a can of lager in her bag. She informed me she has no memory of how she got there and that she obviously had experienced 'missing time'. She indicated she could have been abducted by aliens!! I have no idea whether this was a wind-up, a hoax or possibly someone who was trying to convince her husband that there a valid excuse for her being missing from home for the night!

If any of our members are aware of other reports relating to any of the above sightings, I would appreciate you contacting me by email or BUFORA Central Office