

NIGHT SHIFT by Gloria Dixon

Location: Teeside

Date: June 1981

Time: Ten minutes before midnight

In June 1981, Steve Robbins was working as plant operator for Phillips Petroleum Plant on Teeside. He was on night shift and at ten minutes to midnight he was returning to the control room when he looked up into the sky and saw an enormous flying object which he describes as about one hundred foot in length and twenty to twenty five feet wide. It was flying between two towers and he was able to estimate the height of the object to be between one hundred and one hundred and twenty feet. Travelling on a downward trajectory, he thought it was going to hit something.. It was not travelling at any great speed and eventually Steve observed it right overhead. From this angle he describes it as cigar shaped and a dull bluish steel colour with a luminescence, like a neon light. It shone, particularly around the perimeter, and was pulsating a bright white/yellow light. There was no sound. Eighty yards away from where he was standing there were four enormous crude oil receiving spheres and by this time it was so low he felt it was going to hit the spheres. It didn't....it cleared them with what seemed like feet above. With great trepidation Steve jumped on his bike and pedalled quickly around the roadway to behind the receiving spheres. There was absolute nothing there!!...

He rushed into the control room where his colleagues were having a meal, whereupon they all enquired as to what was wrong as he was so white he looked as though he had seen a ghost. He explained what had happened, to both his colleagues and supervisor, who all immediately went outside to investigate, but there was nothing there. His supervisor contacted Teeside Airport to find out about aircraft activity. However, there had been no aircraft either landing or taking off within the last hour. Fylingdales was then contacted, and Steve was asked questions pertaining to a UFO report. Steve felt there must have been someone else who had seen this object, and therefore proceeded to call various departments across the plant. He received a call from a security guard at the tank farm which was situated one and half miles away, who had also seen this object and described it in a similar way to Steve as well as heading in the direction that Steve had observed it. The supervisor was in fact already concerned about security at the plant due to the fact that four weeks prior to these sightings another employee had report an object trying to 'land' on the main road at the plant.

A few days after these events Steve experienced some electrical problems within his home starting with his television bursting into flames, while he and his wife were watching it. They had to throw it through the window. The television was three years old. During a three day period and always when Steve was there many other electrical appliances malfunctioned. A Hoover, toaster, hairdryer, iron and main alarm clock all failed and even a battery powered portable radio and electric drill failed. The electricity board were contacted and they installed a mains voltage recorder, but they reported there was nothing wrong. Neighbours had not experienced

any electrical problems. I talked with two electrical engineers independently about these electrical problems, and they were puzzled about the electrical events.

These problems continued for Steve when he was at work, and when he was there computer terminals would 'go out of sync' as his colleagues referred to the malfunctions that occurred whenever Steve was around. He went to work offshore in 1983 and the problems with all electrical equipment continued to occur, whenever Steve was in proximity

Approximately two weeks after these events, Steve began to experience some inexplicable events in his bedroom. The first time this happened, he was lying in bed asleep when he was awakened by a high pitched humming in his ears. His first realisation was that he was flat on his back and that he was unable to move a muscle. He felt strongly that this was not a dream, that he was awake and could move his eyes. He was aware of the room about him and the darkness. He tried to move, but couldn't. When his eyes adjusted to the darkness he realised that there was somebody in the room...three or four figures dressed in black...barely discernible in the darkness apart from dull cloak like habits. He wanted to scream but couldn't. He remembers a slight gurgling from his throat that is when he says they communicated with him, not in voices as he remembers, but like a thought transference. He was told that they would not harm him or his wife, who was in bed next to him, and family, two sons. He tried to awaken himself, still believing that must be a dream, but it was not. Still terrified, he tried with all his will to move a muscle, but could not. He could feel sweat trickling down his forehead into his eyes and hoped to God his wife would not awaken. 'They' communicated, not to worry, and that she would not know anything about this, and He remembers thinking, 'what the hell do you want'....'just you, for a little while' was the reply.

Some time later Steve felt able to move again and he got out of bed and went downstairs, where he consumed several cups of coffee....it was dawn. He felt grimy and dirty, as though he had been on a long journey.

He had several more of these experiences over the next two years, although he never actually saw the hooded figures again, only sensed their presence.

Since these events occurred, Steve has experienced several precognitive dreams, which he describes as totally different from other dreams, disturbingly powerful and compelling, with a real quality to them that is quite impossible to ignore. Significant points resurface at any time throughout the day for months, years afterwards and they just will not go away. Among these 'vision' type dreams are the Chernobyl and Lockerbie disasters. These dreams which occurred, six months prior to the events themselves were so specific and had such clarity that when he saw the news about the Lockerbie disaster he was in total shock. In fact when I interviewed him and talked specifically about this dream with him it was so emotive for him that a respite was taken from the interview.

Another change that has occurred in Steve since his sighting is his ability to intimately tune into people upon first meeting them. He finds this ability extremely disturbing and intrusive. Steve has been receptive to other unusual phenomena from being very

young, six to seven years old, ranging from out of body experiences to being aware of communication from somewhere else. His grandmother on his maternal side also experienced paranormal phenomena.

The above events occurred as Steve related to me. There are possibilities and theories as to what happened to Steve. For example

Hallucinations caused by gas or oil. These would have had to have been a joint experience as a witness 1½ miles away also saw a similar object.

Electromagnetic fields, particularly as described by Albert Budden in his cutting edge research into this area. This is a possible avenue of investigation particularly in the area of Teeside where there are many chemical and power facilities, which may have triggered his sighting.

Sleep paralysis and hynagogia are also possibilities and although not entirely dismissed by Steve himself, he finds it hard to accept this was a contributing factor.

One or all of the above theories maybe valid, but what they mainly show is that if we are not careful, we may force conclusions on the experiences of Steve without fully understanding them. What maybe the most crucial factor here is that something remarkable happened to this man, which appeared to cause changes in his whole way of life, dramatic changes that occurred in Steve after these unusual events, triggered by his sighting on Teeside.

Prior to these events, Steve was a man whose main concerns in life involved his family, wife and two sons. He worked hard and enjoyed a few pints at his local pub. He was sceptical, but still open minded about UFOs and related subjects, and basically did not particularly look beyond the boundries of his own life to anything on the periphery. He paid the mortgage and made sure that all was well within his 'world'

After his sighting at Philips Petroleum Plant in 1981, Steve changed quite dramatically, and feels that these events have altered his life, beliefs and the way he views the world, he explained these feelings in a letter to me and I quote from parts of it....

'These experiences have changed my life, but it wasn't one blinding flash type overnight wonder, indeed it has been much more subtle, a slow realisation process. My life is lived now to the full, I watch little TV or read newspapers. There just doesn't seem to be enough hours in the day for what I need to do'. My attitude towards people and confrontational situations has changed. I believe for the better. I will go out of my way to help people, I follow my intuition totally...as long as it feels right it will be right and this is something in which I now have complete faith. I personally have no fear of death and having lost that fear, I can now live my life. To be free of the fear of death means that I can now appreciate life, as just a current phase of eternity.

With regard to having intimate access to people he has just met he says....

'This is something I can do with such ease that it still astounds me to this day, but I try to leave it switched off to overcome feelings of guilt and intrusion.

To sum up his feelings on his sighting and the subsequent events he says...

'I keep my sanity by believing in myself...I believe in what happened, I will never be able to explain it, but at least I can now accept it.'

On a footnote to the above words from Steve, I conducted an investigation into a near death experience several years ago in 1999. The lady concerned told me of very similar feelings to Steve, in addition to having intimate knowledge of people she had just met. These changes occurred to her after her near death experience!

I met Steve several times over a period of years after he reported these events to BUFORA in 1994 and there is no doubt in my mind that he has described some compelling events, the trigger which appeared to be his sighting at the petroleum plant and a continued sequence of unusual occurrences which affected him in a very personal way. These changes are indeed significant, as many researchers are aware. They are of vital importance and relevance, when investigating reports of this nature and often these experiences involve a history of sporadic extraordinary human experiences. The gateways between reports of close encounter experiences and subsequent paranormal events are linked in a way that we have yet to understand.

The changes that have occurred to Steve, are changes that occur in many of those who undergo these remarkable experiences and these curious changes maybe more important than the incident itself, as they are perceived in a very personal way within the individual. The real focus of interest, in my opinion are the evolving changes in people both spiritually, psychically and creatively. Interestingly Steve started to write poetry after these events, something he had never thought about prior to this. His interest in environmental issues increased in an overwhelming way. The additional factors of having access to people's thoughts and precognitive dreams are impressive when researching this case. The changes are startling and have occurred to many close encounter witnesses!

The late Ken Phillips of BUFORA initiated one of the most important projects within BUFORA known as ' The Anamnesis Project, examining the life history of people who report incidents of this nature. In my opinion this should be a priority during investigation , as it appears that these experiences may be prevalent in a certain type of person, often people, who have a life history of inexplicable or paranormal type events. Therefore an examination of the people who report these strange events, their beliefs and their backgrounds are vitally significant during investigation and research.