

BUFORA

JOURNAL

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National Skywatch report
From Zeppelins to UFOs
Did a UFO land at Rainhill?

Volume 4 Number 9 September/October 1975



Published by The British U.F.O. Research Association

The British Unidentified Flying Object Research Association (Founded 1964)

Incorporating the London UFO Research Organisation founded 1959 and the British UFO Association, founded 1962.

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Aims

To encourage and promote unbiased scientific investigation and research into UFO phenomena. To collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to UFOs. To co-ordinate UFO research on a nationwide scale and to co-operate with people and organisations engaged on similar research in all parts of the world.

Membership

The annual subscription is £4.00, \$10 in the USA and Canada. Membership is open to all who support the aims of the Association and whose application is approved by the National Executive Committee. Application/information forms can be obtained from any officer.

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BUFORA JOURNAL

Volume 4 Number 9

September/October 1975

Editor: Richard Beet
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FBI homes in on UFOs

The February 1975 issue of the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, the official organ (circulation 80000) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation United States Department of Justice, carries an article by Dr J Allen Hynek, Director of the Center for UFO Studies and Chairman of the Department of Astronomy, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

The Center—which is subscribed to by BUFORA—was set up as a focal point for UFO research in the United States, largely due to the major UFO wave which occurred in the US during the autumn of 1973. It has set up a toll-free telephone 'Hot-line'—*UFO Central*, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, exclusively for law enforcement agencies, enabling all official UFO reports to be collated and redirected to other agencies.

The FBI article provides its agents with full details of *UFO Central* and discusses several cases in which police officers have witnessed unidentified flying objects. It stresses the official use of this telephone number and lists questions to be put to witnesses. The article, after only one week, attracted enquiries not only

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ISSN 0306—798X

FBI

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from various police departments, but the US Army, Navy, Air Force, US Department of the Interior National Park Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the US Border Patrol.

Mr Clarence Kelley, the FBI Director, wrote to the Center for UFO Studies expressing personal interest in the article and continuing by stating that it was beneficial to law enforcement agencies all over the country. The *Washington Post* also printed a follow-up article.

At long last, at least in the US, UFOs are becoming respectable in official circles. It remains to be seen whether the UK follow suit. We in BUFORA have the evidence. Let us present it effectively and start the ball rolling.

M G PREWETT

Restraint— a valuable quality

Over-enthusiasm can be embarrassing at the best of times, especially in an organisation such as BUFORA. It is particularly noticeable during periods of high vulnerability, such as skywatches. It is therefore not very helpful to our cause to describe unidentified lights as 'scout ships' and 'mother ship cigars,' not only in the form of a report to the skywatch controller, but also to newspaper and television journalists.

Perhaps the individuals concerned would bear these comments in mind when conducting further skywatches. In the meantime, speculations about 'imminent massed landings' should remain where they were conceived—in the mind.

Setback for British 'saucer'

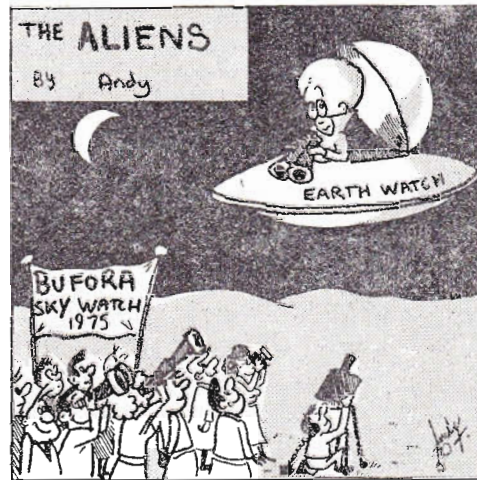
The world's first flying saucer project has been delayed by a month—because arsonists have burnt the plans. Raiders broke into the offices of Epsom design engineers John West, and used plans and files to start a fire. Other plans will now have to be assembled.

The 'skyship' is being developed at the Royal Aircraft Establishment in Cardington, Bedfordshire.

Into the unknown

... is the corporate title of two fifty minute documentaries to be screened on Independent Television on 2 and 9 December.

They are being produced by Lawrence Moore, a former *BUFORA Journal* editor, and deal with many aspects of parapsychological phenomena. Included in one of the programmes is an interview with Dr Jacques Vallee.



"How embarrassing"

Report on the National Skywatch

5/6 July 1975

by KEN PHILLIPS, Controller

I am aware that some of the participants of the skywatch felt that the event was a disastrous failure, with no particular goal being attained at all. Well, in certain respects, this view is correct. But on the other hand, the exercise was successful in that it outlined where the faults in the system lie; it was the detection of these weaknesses that was the whole point of the operation!

There were 17 skywatch sites in all with 136 participants. The map shows the geographical location of the sites and

their area of coverage (assuming a viewing range of 15 miles).

CONTROLLER'S CONCLUSIONS

The main failings of the exercise fell within three groups: notifications, communications and procedures.

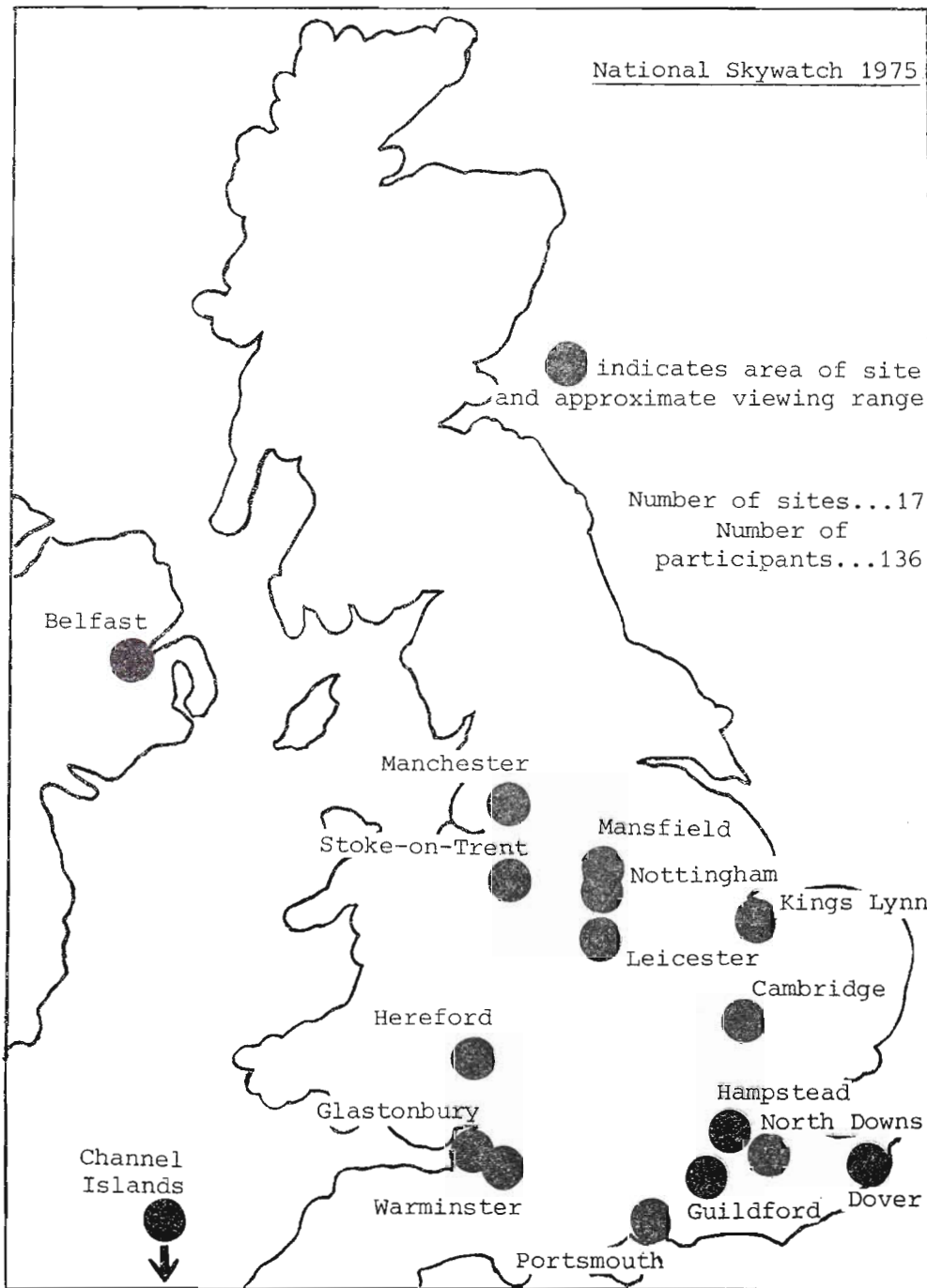
Firstly, the Liaison Officers were given too much work at too short a notice and were not supplied with adequate information on the existence of UFO groups

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CONTROLLER'S LOG

<i>Site</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Report</i>	<i>Name of Reporter</i>
Hampstead, London	20.10	Commenced watching at 20.00 hrs.	Anon
Glastonbury Tor	20.32	Commencing watch at 20.40 hrs.	Ian Vinten
Newchapel	21.15	Conditions clear, temperature 16°C	Tony Pace
Hampstead	22.00	Viewing conditions poor	Anon
Pewley Downs	22.13	Commenced watching at 20.30. Hot-air balloon sighted at 21.00 travelling from Farnborough in a westerly direction	Alan Fossey
Glastonbury Tor	23.18	Quiet—conditions cloudy	Ian Vinten
Newchapel	23.25	Pageos seen. Sky camera in operation	Tony Pace
Campbell College, Belfast	23.45	Conditions slightly hazy. Aircraft seen	Miles Johnston
Newchapel	01.15	Conditions clear—nine satellites seen, also fireball	Tony Pace
Control	01.55	By recommendation from Newchapel, phoned NUFOIS—site not located at that address	Ken Phillips
Hampstead	02.07	Conditions cloudy, nothing unusual seen	Anon
Mansfield	03.00	Seven satellites, three meteors and one bolide seen	Charles Lockwood
Campbell College	03.30	Two satellites seen and site signing off	Miles Johnston
Newchapel	03.35	Soyuz sighted at 03.00—16 satellites seen, signing off at 04.30	Tony Pace
Hampstead	04.00	Nothing to report	Anon
Manchester	04.15	Unidentified light seen—conditions fine and clear, signing off at 04.30	Jeff Porter
Mansfield	04.30	Signing off	Malcolm Taylor
Glastonbury Tor	04.55	Unidentified sighted at 03.10, S to N trajectory, 25° elevation—attendant discs seen	Ian Vinten
Hampstead	06.00	Signing off	Anon
Control	06.30	Control closed, but remained by the phone for rest of the day (Sun.)	Ken Phillips

National Skywatch 1975



National Skywatch

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potentially able to take part in the skywatch exercise. This state of affairs severely hampered the attempt to invite independent and affiliated groups to take part in the vigil.

The date of the skywatch was switched and tended to create confusion both inside and outside of BUFORA.

I failed to envisage the problems of communications. Contact between control and the sites were poor; in some cases contact was non-existent! The reasons for this fault was due to two factors: firstly, expense of telephone calls and secondly, lack of telephones at certain sites, particularly those in the more remote regions.

Most groups seemed to be competent in the way they organised their sites. Almost everyone appeared to be able to identify meteoric and astronomical bodies readily. Reports contained much useful data and were written in a scientific style; only one site failed to return their form to control.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A comprehensive list of all UFO groups and astronomical organisations must be compiled and the respective groups notified at least one month in advance, during periods of quiescent UFO activity and one week in the case of a flap (the latter being a very important condition!).

An instruction booklet on skywatch procedures must be published by BUFORA and its outlines followed as closely as possible; the instructions should include points on how to gather as much useful data as possible.

A recommendation put forward at the last NEC meeting by Jeff Porter must be

continued overleaf

DESCRIPTIONS OF EVENTS		
Category	Descriptions	Frequency
Aircraft:	" Aircraft "	20
	" Jet aircraft "	2
	" Prop aircraft "	1
	" Landing lights "	1
	" Twin-engined aircraft "	1
	" Hot-air balloon "	1
Astronomical:	" Meteorite "	23
	" Meteor "	11
	" Shooting stars "	7
	" Venus "	2
	" Moon "	2
	" Star-like object "	1
	" Crescent Moon "	1
	" Meteoric fireball "	1
	" Meteoric light "	1
	" Fireball "	1
	" Jupiter "	1
	" Arcturus "	1
	" Deneb "	1
	" Spica "	1
	" Vega "	1
Artificial Earth Satellites:	" Satellite "	40
	" Pageos A "	2
	" Salyut 4 "	1
LITS phenomena (lights in the sky)	" Moving star-like object "	11
	" White light "	10
	" Moving light "	8
	" Flashing red light "	3
	" Flickering white light "	1
	" Light "	1
	" LITS "	1
Miscellaneous:	" Flare "	2
Sound:	" Very high-pitched noise "	1
	" Faint engine noise "	1
Unidentified:	" Unknown " (LITS)	3
	" Scout ships, saucers and mothership cigars "	1
TOTAL		167
CATEGORY PERCENTAGES		
Category	Total in Category	Percentage of Total
Aircraft	26	15.57
Artificial Earth Satellites	43	25.75
Astronomical	55	32.93
LITS phenomena	35	20.96
Miscellaneous	2	1.20
Sound	2	1.20
Unidentified	4	2.39
TOTALS	167	100.00

National Skywatch

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adopted as quickly as possible: that is, BUFORA invests in the hire of a radio telephone link. This could be issued to all the recognised sites so that good rapid communications can be established between the sites and control and between the sites themselves.

The police, fire brigades and astronomical observatories should be notified that a National Skywatch is being held; this would contribute towards greater coverage and establish serious co-operation with the authorities.

By giving sufficient notice and by issuing a comprehensive manual on the skywatch model, there would be less confusion and more enthusiasm, particularly among the more far-flung groups. This

would lead to a greater coverage of the UK and the collection of useful accurate data.

The issue of radio telephones would facilitate instant notification of any unidentified seen by a group. Other sites in line with the trajectory of the unidentified could be alerted thereby increasing the likelihood of corroborative data. Furthermore, during periods of low rate of activity, the phone link would help to alleviate boredom and tiredness. It could perhaps also be used to exchange ideas.

I would like comments from participants/readers concerning the skywatch. It is known that Jeff Porter has some views on this and will be writing to the *Journal* in the near future.

Did a UFO land at Rainhill?

Strange prints found near pond

On Sunday, 18 May 1975, at 22.00 an unusual lighted object was seen by three witnesses to pass low over fields in Rainhill, near Liverpool. Subsequent investigation by the Northern Aerial Phenomena Research Association has led to the tantalising possibility that this sighting could have involved a landing with physical traces.

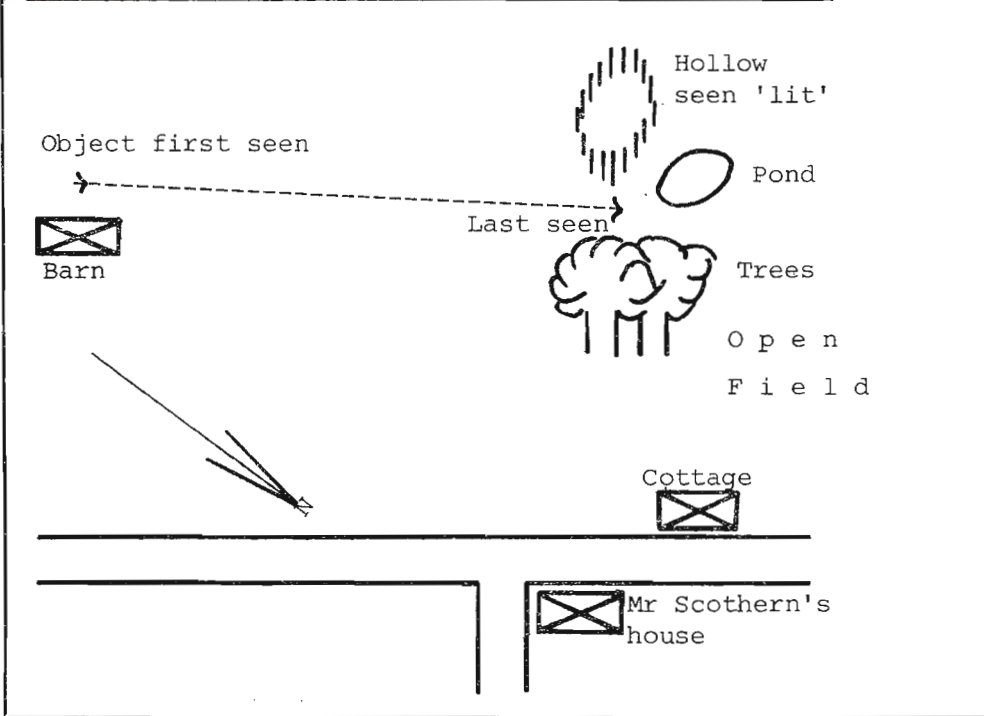
A Mrs Scothern was first to spot the object through the window of her house. She called to her husband and father who both came over and watched for one minute as it moved slowly over a barn and across fields. It was low down and apparently losing height all the time. After it was lost from view Mr Scothern rushed outside and at first saw nothing.

The description of the object is of three pulsing white, globular lights, each the size of a tennis ball. It had only seemed to be 100 yards away and was heading to the north west.

Mr Scothern ventured further into the field over which the object was seen and noted a white glow illuminating a tree-lined hollow in the middle of the field. He rushed back to tell the others but when they returned there was nothing to see. However a faint humming sound was heard for a moment.

Mrs Scothern's father brought a torch and went alone to look at the hollow but found nothing. However, the situation was very different the following morning.

Scene of possible UFO landing in fields at Rainhill



The area contained a small duck pond surrounded by mud. Four strange looking footprints were found in it leading up to the pond. They were 14 inches by six inches and of odd square shape with no instep. The stride length was 45 inches, indicating that whoever had made them was of reasonable stature. They were also heavily imprinted and gave a suggestion of metal inlays. A small stone found inside one of the prints was heavily 'scuffed'.

SPECULATION

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the prints was that there were only four. The only other feature of the area were some dog tracks.

One might speculate that the markings and the UFO report are connected and that the object hovered just above the area lowering an occupant who then walked to take a sample from the pond before ascending into the craft. This possibility is as yet purely unsubstantiated. One must wait the results of the soil, water and stone analysis before the matter can be taken further.

No corroborative witnesses have yet been found. However, a man in St Helens, which is only a couple of miles to the north, did claim that a blue disc shape flew over his car on that same night.

Report by JENNY RANGLES.

Satellite searches stars for signals

A NASA satellite is observing three nearby Sun-like stars for signs that other civilizations may be trying to contact us with ultraviolet laser beams.

The satellite is the Orbiting Astronomical Observatory (Copernicus), whose telescope is scanning the stars Epsilon Eridani, Tau Ceti, and Epsilon Indi—all about 11 light years from Earth.

Leading the Earth's first intragalactic laser communication experiment is Herbert Wischnia, a consulting electro-optical engineer. Wischnia is a guest investigator in the Copernicus programme, in which scientists other than the original investigators are invited to propose experiments making use of the satellite's instrumentation.

Wischnia scanned the first star, Epsilon Eridani, last November, and the data from the satellite, named Copernicus, is now being analyzed. The telescope was trained on the star for 14 orbits while the spectrometer scanned the ultraviolet spectrum for potential laser signals to Earth.

TWO MORE STARS

While data from Epsilon Eridani is being analyzed, plans are underway to scan Tau Ceti and Epsilon Indi this summer and autumn. These laser observations can only be made from a space observatory since Earth's atmosphere prevents ultraviolet radiation from reaching the surface.

Bits and pieces of evidence from astronomy, physics and biology suggest that life is not a one-time accident in the universe, but that it can appear spontaneously in a favourable planetary environment and evolve into complex beings, provided vast amounts of time

are available.

Several American and Russian radio astronomy teams have searched candidate stars for radio signals in the recent past, but without success.

The technical difficulties in detecting radio signals are related to knowing where to look and at what frequency to listen. Ultraviolet laser search experiments avoid this problem, according to Herbert Wischnia. He asserts:

'Lasers in the vacuum ultraviolet part of the optical spectrum represent an efficient and logical electromagnetic radiation source which could be used by an extra-terrestrial community to announce their presence to us. Ultraviolet laser beacons offer the potential of high power combined with high efficiency.'

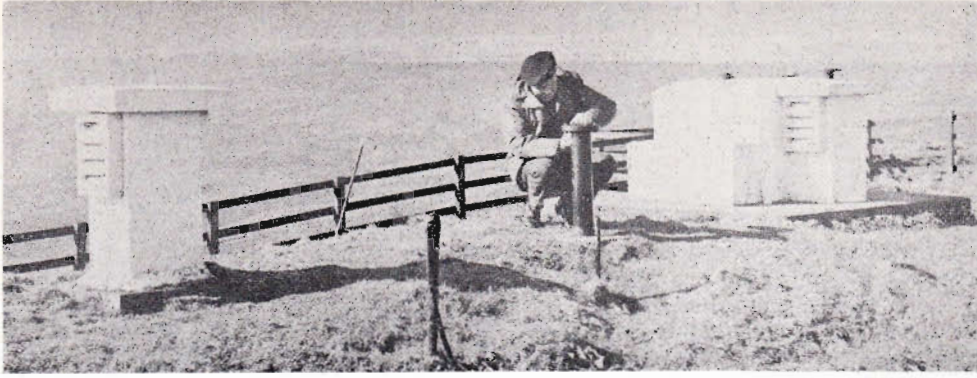
STELLAR RADIATION

'Another point is that stars with a temperature near that of our own Sun radiate very little energy in the vacuum ultraviolet, so that the telescope receivers are not 'blinded' by natural stellar radiation. These reasons make the ultraviolet lasers rational candidates for intragalactic beacons.'

Does he expect to detect signals from one of the stars?

Pointing out that the observations represent only a small percentage of Copernicus observing time, he says: 'While it is possible to speculate on the success of detecting extra-terrestrial signals on the very first attempt, it is more realistic to plan for a systematic laser and radio search for the next 100 years.'

Credit: National Aeronautics and Space Administration.



From Zeppelins to UFOs

The recent skywatch has highlighted some of the limitations imposed on BUFORA by, not only our voluntary status, but also our lack of capital expenditure. One of the worse failings to come out of this year's skywatch was the inability of observation points to communicate with central control or with other observation points.

How much better it would be, some members have suggested, if we had a network of permanent observation posts located throughout the country, interconnected through regional and central control points. Armed with the right equipment, the passage of any aerial phenomena could be easily tracked and photographed.

Well, perhaps we will never be able to afford to set up such a system, however desirable it might be to BUFORA. But there already exists a network ideally suited to the observation and recording of unidentified flying objects. That network belongs to the Royal Observer Corps.

On the occasion of their 50th anniversary we look at their history and their organisation . . . and then sit back and dream! . . .

There can be little doubt that many of our members share a blissful ignorance of what a nuclear attack on this country would mean in real terms. The commonly held view is that a few nuclear bombs or missiles would effectively finish the British Isles and completely annihilate the total population. The thought being too awful to contemplate, we ignore such a possibility unless we are science fiction addicts and from the comfort of an armchair can conjure up a hunting and fishing type of Stone-age existence of a few survivors or flight by space ship to another planet.

The unfaced reality is somewhat different at the Southern Area Headquarters of the Royal Observer Corps at RAF Rudloe Manor in Wiltshire. I will not weary you with detailed statistics which in total amount to the fact that a 20 megaton bomb (an average sized piece of venom) would flatten brick structures eight miles or more from the centre of the explosion, leaving a crater a mile wide and 800 feet deep and create a fireball four and a half miles across. Suffice to say that almost any pattern of nuclear attack might well knock the nation senseless, but there would be millions of survivors. Given even a few minutes warning countless lives

continued overleaf

From Zeppelins to UFOs

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could be saved and further large scale casualties could also be avoided if information on the pattern and path of radioactive fall out could be gathered and broadcast quickly enough. That is the function of UKWMO—the United Kingdom Warning and Monitoring Organisation—which covers every square mile of the country and operates under the control of the Home Office.

FIELD LEVEL

1975 marks the 50th anniversary of the ROC. The ROC is organised on a three-tier basis. At the field level is a network of monitoring posts manned by spare time members of the Royal Observer Corps. These are under the control of the second tier, known as Group Controls. Group Controls report developments in their territories to Sector Controls.

The role of aircraft spotting and reporting is the one which the general public normally associates with the ROC. The pre-history of the ROC commenced during the 1914-18 War when defence against air attack was the responsibility of the Admiralty. Ground observation reports of any aircraft seen were telephoned to the Admiralty by the police. When zeppelins were the only danger the vision of a constable peddling away on his bike to reach the nearest telephone and announce the latest arrival also conjures up an age when there was time to spare. He was most probably travelling faster than the zeppelin anyway.

At the outbreak of the World War II the aircraft identification and reporting organisation of the Corps covered most of England, Scotland and Wales, and by 1941 the coverage was complete with operational control exercised by Fighter Command through ROC Headquarters

at Bentley Priory. It was in 1941 also that the Corps became the Royal Observer Corps, a well earned recognition for long and valuable service.

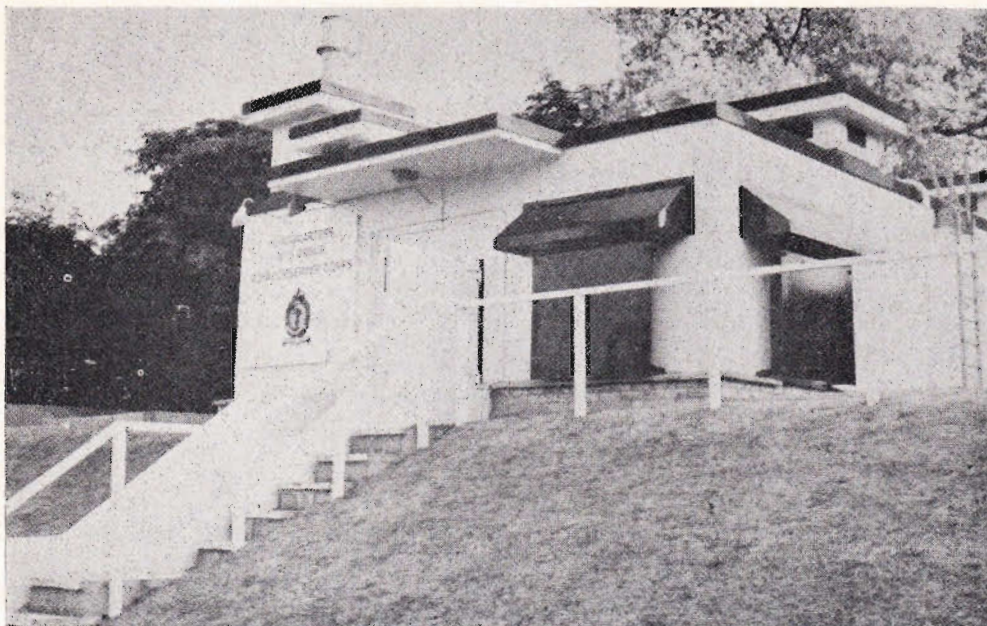
One of the almost unknown aspects of its wartime service is the part played in the landings in Normandy in 1944.

The Corps also played a significant part in the destruction of flying bombs during June 1944 to March 1945 by supplying displays of the tracks of VIs.

A NEW ROLE

The ROC stood down in May 1945 but it was never disbanded and was reformed on 1 January 1947 on much the same basis as existed at the end of the War. In 1955 the Corps entered a new phase of its existence when an announcement in the House of Commons said 'Steps are being taken for the Royal Observer Corps to give warning of and measure radioactivity in the event of air attacks in a future war.'

The ROC of today consists of 11000 spare time members and 70 full time officers who are members of the IPCS. Apart from the serving Air Commodore of the RAF who is the ROC Commandant, at each level the officer in charge is a spare time member of the Corps and his deputy is a full time officer. Thus an Area Commandant is a sparetime officer and the Deputy Area Commandant (Observer Commander) is a professional. Basic to the functions of the Corps are the observation posts, of which there are presently 872 linked to 25 Group Headquarters, which cover Great Britain, Northern Ireland and including Orkney, Shetland and the Hebrides. The posts are clustered in threes or fours throughout the UK, each cluster being linked by



An ROC Group Headquarters—ideal base for the BUFORA NIC?

common land line and/or radio to their Group Control. Eight to sixteen clusters comprise an average Group and five or six Groups form the reporting organisation for a Sector Control of which there are five covering the UK.

HUDDLED

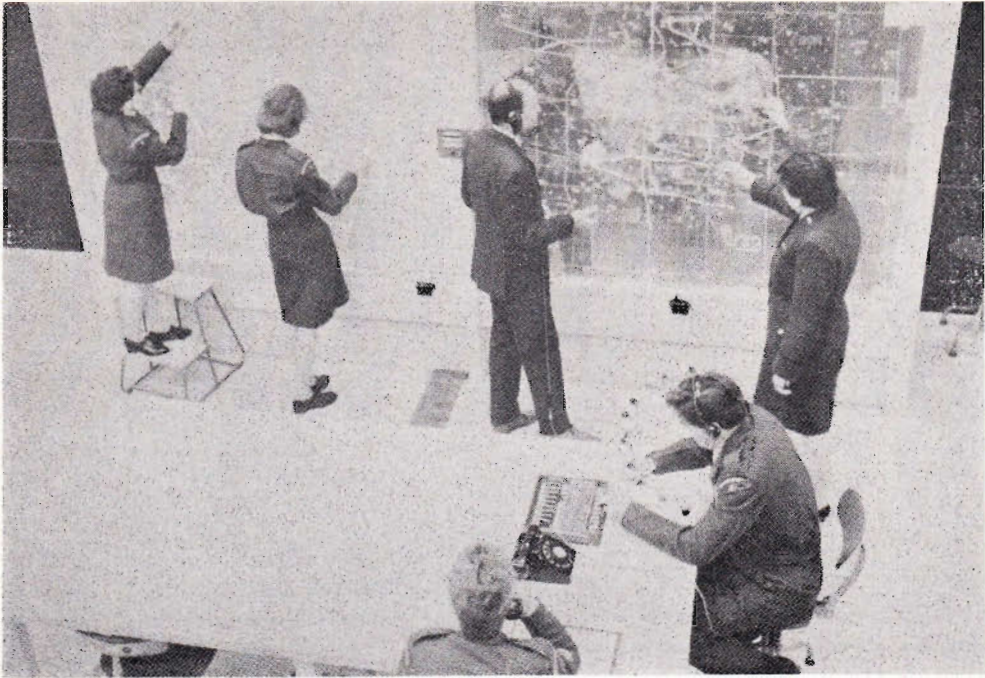
I visited a monitoring post in February. Set in a hill, it is more rightly described as a bunker. There is not much to see on the surface. Just three objects of assorted sizes and shapes. These turned out to be the sources of knowledge for the three Observers, who, in an emergency will be huddled together 20 feet below in a chamber 16 feet long and seven feet wide with a ceiling height of seven feet. It is there that the objects on the surface connect with instruments which record the information so vital to the whole operation, or at least, two out of three do so. The odd one out is a set of four pinhole cameras facing north, south, east and west which when loaded with

sensitised paper record the elevation and bearing of a nuclear burst. Somebody has to go up and retrieve the print paper. The other two instruments record blast pressure and radiation levels from the comparative safety of the bunker. The information from each of the posts in the cluster is fed into Group Control, where by the triangulation method the location of the centre of the blast is pinpointed.

So much for the warning but the monitoring aspects continue in the bunkers with Observers keeping up a continuous supply of information on radiation levels. The three Observers in the bunker, which is designed to withstand blast and fall out, have their own source of power, a supply of food and water but the accommodation could hardly be described as luxurious.

Group Controls, also largely buried under earth and concrete are naturally a good

continued overleaf



Above: typical scene inside a Group Control

From Zeppelins to UFOs

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deal larger, requiring as they do about 50 trained personnel to man them, made up of 40 ROC members and a team of Warning Officers, some of whom would be scientists. Apart from the operations room, looking much like those one sees in films about the Second World War, there are kitchens, toilets and dormitories as well as plant rooms for the generators and air filtration units.

RECRUIT AND TRAIN

The function of the full time officers, is to recruit and train volunteers as well as the obvious task of maintaining the system administratively. Clearly it is a most important part of their job to maintain the morale of the Corps which is preparing to do a job which everybody

hopes will never be required. Needless to say, training a volunteer force means a great deal of evening and weekend working—an average working week of nearly 52 hours. An integral part of the training scheme is the Annual Training Camp, a series of five one week camps which cater for somewhere in the region of 2500 Corps members. It is estimated that the training given in that one week is equivalent to six months of evening and weekend training for the spare time members.

Despite the long hours they are a cheerful and dedicated bunch who contribute much to ensuring that the Royal Observer Corps remains true to its motto 'Forewarned is Forearmed.'

Credit: 'State Service.'

Journal of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants.

Vice-Chairman's Column

by LIONEL BEER

Ancient Astronauts Conference

It is debatable as to whether 'astro-archaeology' has much connection with modern UFO research, but one must recognise that interest in the former topic is increasing. At least 50 books with 'spacemen in prehistory' themes are currently available, by authors such as Jacques Bergier, Charles Berlitz, Robert Charroux, Erich von Daniken, Raymond Drake, Peter Kolosimo, Andrew Tomas and Brinsley Le Poer Trench, to name but a few. It was inevitable that a society would be set up to pursue the theory that the Earth was visited by extra-terrestrials in prehistoric times. The Ancient Astronaut Society was founded by Gene Phillips, a private lawyer of Park Ridge, Illinois, on 14 September 1973, and membership is said to be about 1000. The AAS hopes to explore the possibility that a highly developed civilisation existed on Earth thousands of years ago. Professional archaeologists will probably remain cynical. The Society organised its 2nd World Conference in Zurich, from 29 to 31 May 1975, and the twenty or so speak-

ers included authors Josef Blumrich, Max Flindt, Andrew Tomas, Jacques Bergier, and Erich von Daniken. BUFORA member, Raymond Drake of Sunderland, author of several 'Gods and Spacemen' books represented Britain. Raymond's flowery style "In those glorious days our Earth was young and Nature shone in newness, Celestials winged down . . ." and occasional lack of continuity were probably responsible for his earlier uphill struggle to get his works published. However, this does not belittle his erudition and he has probably researched far more deeply than many of his contemporaries. His books are now being translated and published in several European countries. So it was not for nothing that Raymond's 50 minute talk at the Zurich Conference on 29 May was greeted with a standing ovation.

A procession of the damned

Well that's what the heading on the leaflet* says! "The News is part of an effort to restore a balanced view of the phenomenal

continued overleaf

Annual General Meeting

In accordance with the provisions of Article 8 (d) of the BUFORA Constitution, preliminary notification is given herewith that the Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held on Saturday, 6 December 1975, at 6 pm at the Kensington Central Library.

Nominations for the offices of President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer, also for the eight elective remaining seats on the National Executive Committee, should reach the Hon Secretary in writing not later than Saturday, 25 October 1975. Resolutions to be debated at the AGM should reach the Hon Secretary by that date.

Only members of the Association in good standing, that is, those in possession of a valid membership card, are entitled to be present and vote at the AGM.

Vice-Chairman's Column

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cosmos . . . countering pompous certitude with well-aimed raspberries." Followed by equally well-aimed clotted cream no doubt? As a passive follower of Charles Fort's brand of phenomena and collector of cuttings, I was delighted when Robert Rickard started publishing Britain's only real Fortean magazine in November 1973. *The News* has now reached its tenth issue with anecdotes and case histories packed into its 24 pages. Issue 9 has a look at vanishing dogs, fish, farm animals, children and numerous adults, including former MP Victor Grayson, who disappeared in 1924. Ghost lights and the Surrey puma are also covered. Bob is bound to have covered your personal fascination in some issue, be it animal-antics-curiosities-

ESP, cyclops, sky falls, insect swarms, Atlantis, ghosts, wolf children, curses, comets and fireballs, lunar lights, mysterious fires, Uri Geller, UFOs, pyramids, all permutations of human curiosity, Magonia—and if I carried on further there would probably be a case of spontaneous combustion! When you become familiar with Fortean, the unusual, like a shower of frogs for example, tends to become commonplace, although not necessarily readily explicable. While querying the relevance of all material in *The News*, I feel that this illustrated, closely typed and lithographed magazine deserves wider support.

**Leaflet available on receipt of a SAE.*

Accountant/Treasurer

Pressure of other work for the Association has resulted in a request to the National Executive Committee from Arnold West, that he be relieved of his responsibilities as Hon Treasurer as from December this year.

Members are therefore invited to apply for the post of Honorary Treasurer, commencing in December 1975. Applicants should have a good head for figurework, and budgetary accounting experience, preferably with appropriate qualifications would be an advantage.

The successful applicant would be given freedom to introduce new accounting procedures to comply with BUFORA's new status as a registered company, limited by guarantee.

As with all BUFORA posts, the position would be a voluntary one, but any necessary expenses incurred would be reimbursed.

Applications/Nominations should reach the Honorary Secretary, no later than Saturday 25 October, 1975.

Readers are invited to comment on any article appearing in *BUFORA Journal* or on any other relevant topic. Letters should be kept as brief as possible. The editor reserves the right to publish and to extract from letters where necessary. Letters of some length may be considered by the editor to be suitable as features.

BUFORA reply to Bryan Jeffery

Dear Sir

I would like to reply to some of the criticisms in the feature by Bryan Jeffery (July/August 1975 issue) regarding the French UFO Congress.

As far as I know, BUFORA never received a formal written invitation to attend this conference. To the best of my knowledge Mr Jeffery spoke to a member of the Committee at one of our lectures a couple of months before the conference; word of this trickled through to me some time later (this is the danger of verbal requests at lectures when most officials are fairly busy). However, it was not until some weeks after this that Mr Jeffery wrote to me about the conference by which time, presumably, plans were well ahead with its programme. Despite two or three requests to Mr Jeffery for a programme, none was ever received. And no member of the NEC ever knew what exactly was intended to take place at the conference.

We were preparing to send literature, when it was discovered that one of the organisations invited to take part, was such that I tended to think that the programme would not be of a serious investigatory nature and I therefore asked Mr Jeffery for more information, meanwhile halting plans at this end. Owing to these various delays and still without a programme, those who had hoped either to attend the conference or help in other ways found

that work commitments at the last moment prevented them doing so. I wrote and explained all this to Mr Jeffery, but sending what little literature we had available at that time (we had been awaiting fresh stocks from the printers).

If we had been informed in writing some months ahead, no doubt we would have publicised the event in the *Journal*. We were busy with plans for our own conference at that time, but even so would have been pleased to mention this event and give any assistance possible.

I am pleased that the French UFO Congress went well, but consider that a little more forethought could have prevented the subsequent recriminations and misunderstandings.

Yours sincerely

BETTY WOOD
Hon Secretary BUFORA
6 Cairn Avenue
Ealing, London, W5

Liaison difficulties

Dear Sir

Having read in *BUFORA Journal* the intention to work in liaison with local groups throughout the country, I can't help wondering if you will receive the same reaction as we did in MURO.

Our organisation, full of enthusiasm, began its life in September 1974. And

continued overleaf

as our ideas and research programmes enlarged, we decided to contact other groups in the East Midlands to discuss liaison, after spending quite some time writing to these groups to explain the need for a link-up, exchanging information, sightings and ideas. Also that we would not have to invade each other's territory to obtain sighting reports.

The result amazed me. The only communication MURO received was from a local group trying to sell us their journal. I came to the conclusion that many groups prefer to be left alone to hoard their secret files.

I sincerely hope BUFORA gets a better reaction than we did.

M A TAYLOR
Chairman, Midlands UFO
Research Organisation
36 Bradforth Avenue
Mansfield, Notts.

A plea for help . . . from Bryan Jeffery

Dear Sir

I am currently trying to link-up the various groups in the east of England into some sort of coherent network for investigations.

I am also planning a 'survey' of known and hitherto unreported cases in East Anglia with a view to specific analysis. Therefore may I appeal to all BUFORA and Contact members in this area to get in touch with our group with a view to seeing what could be arranged.

Yours sincerely

BRYAN JEFFERY
Cambridge University UFO Group
St Catherine's College
Cambridge

Gaining Scientific Respect

Dear Sir

After Dr Kuettner's lecture at the Hanley Conference I think many ufologists may have found themselves reappraising the situation in their approach to the subject. I believe a concerted effort has to be made to improve the scientific respectability of the work we do.

There are several ways in which this can be done, without too much effort. Most important, the quality of investigation has to be improved.

To a large extent the simple factor of preparing a good investigation report can do this. Most groups will have several cases on their hands at a time and even individuals will sometimes experience this situation. Obviously one has to be selective and know where to concentrate one's efforts. It is marvellous to be able, as some do, to produce a full analysis of even the most tentative light in the sky with quite conclusive evidence for or against a natural source. However, in normal circumstances one must disregard these and concentrate on cases which intrinsically seem to offer less chance of a normal explanation.

The final report of a detailed case study must contain the following; summary of the case, completed BUFORA report form, BUFORA investigators form, comments on the witnesses, comments on the sighting location (any local factors which could be relevant to the case), details of all checks made for a natural phenomena *and* a final conclusion. In addition certain cases will doubtless merit more, such as analysis of traces, photographs of the area or taped interviews. BUFORA, unfortunately, receive few such reports (even on important cases) but if scientific respec-

Review

ability is to be enhanced then they must do. To this end NUFON has decided to concentrate on detailed case studies of selected cases in its monthly journal.

A suggestion worth considering once reports are prepared, is to send a fully documented and neatly typed copy to your local library. Ask them to file it in their reference section and perhaps Dr Kuettner's scientific friends will not have to struggle quite so hard for first-hand data. One never knows what intrepid scientist may one day bravely approach the local librarian about UFO material. How nice to be able to produce your case studies for him.

Dr Kuettner also advocated a statistical approach to the data we have. Of course BUFORA undertake these projects on a national level, but it is always of value for individual studies to be done in local areas. Within the Northern UFO Network, aside from regular analysis of all northern reports, various groups have undertaken such studies themselves. The smallness of the data is in many ways compensated for by being able to cross refer from one part of the country to another. How about your area? There are ample sources for back checking reports you have not personally investigated (*BUFORA Journal*, *Flying Saucer Review*, local newspaper files, for example). If you feel like doing something positive for ufology have a go at this field, and then publish the results for all to see. (NUFON will do this freely for anyone in the north)

JENNY RANGLES
Administration Secretary, NUFON
48 Park Drive
Manchester M16 0AH

Superminds

by Professor JOHN G TAYLOR, Professor of Applied Mathematics, King's College, University of London.

Published by Macmillan 1975. £3.95 net.

Professor John Taylor of King's College, London, has become very much recognized as a scientist interested in so-called 'fringe phenomena'. This interest has been apparent for a number of years, and he is well known to the public for his speculations on 'Black Holes' and on the mechanisms of the human brain.

Such speculative interest in fringe phenomena does not generally win the approval of scientists used to dealing with phenomena more readily providing hard evidence. So it was that when some members of the scientific community heard that Taylor was working on a book about spoon bending and the Uri Geller controversy, they were eager to criticize.

Taylor's book has now appeared under the title *Superminds*. It discusses and attempts to relate, to known and little-known physical phenomena, various fringe phenomena such as spoon-bending, ghosts, extra-sensory perception and faith healing. He also presents his own 'evidence' for spoon-bending—a number of children who, like Geller, seem to be able to bend metal and other objects simply by stroking. Here, it seems, is an ideal opportunity for carefully controlled experimental investigations. Alas, one does not get the impression from *Superminds* that any have been carried out. Metal bending, Taylor alleged, has been carried out within a 'sealed' glass phial. However, by 'sealed' he means only corked and sealing-waxed. One would surely prefer the use of a heat-sealed glass phial

continued overleaf

which is proof against secret tampering by the subject.

This is just one loophole. There are others, as discriminating readers will doubtless notice. It therefore seems a pity that Taylor could not have approached his experimental subjects using 'conventional' scientific methods and then presented a thorough analysis by means of a paper in a scientific journal, rather than a popularized account in a book containing lots of pretty pictures. At least the former would give other scientists something to work on, and any apparent loopholes and ambiguities could then be excluded.

This is an enjoyable and readable account, but it should not be regarded as an *ex cathedra* scientific report.

MARK STENHOFF, FRAS.

Gods of Air and Darkness

by RICHARD E MOONEY

Souvenir Press 1975. £3.50.

In his introduction, Richard Mooney explains that *Gods of Air and Darkness* expands on ideas presented in his earlier book, *The Fall of Man*. This attempted to prove three things. First, that man arrived from other worlds as a colonist; second, that the civilisation he consequently created was destroyed in a pre-historic nuclear war; and third, that this catastrophe gave rise to the Ice Age theory.

I was impressed with the author's honesty. He freely admits that by the time 'Gods' is available, further new discoveries will have been made, and new evidence "will either support the concepts in this book, or nullify parts, or even all of it".

The book itself is nicely written and the ideas are presented in a clear and logical way. I was pleased that many of Von Daniken's 'theories' have been critically analysed and consequently put into question.

Although 'Gods' comes from the same stable as Von Daniken, Kilosimo, Tomas and Berlitz, it is still to be recommended to all students of prehistory and ufology.

RICHARD BEET

Personal Column

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THE NEWS—bimonthly news and notes on recent Fortean events—falls of things from the sky, mystery fires and lights, teleportation and 'wild talents,' poltergeists, monsters, etc. Single issues: 35p. Annual subscription (including index): £2.10. R J M Rickard, PO Stores, Aldermaston, Berkshire.

UFOs: UNIDENTIFIED UNDENIABLE (2nd Edn.) 100 page illus. report on 1967 Midlands UFO wave by Stanway and Pace. UK: £2.25 inc post; Foreign: £2.50 inc post. From R H Stanway, Oldbrook Cottage, White Cross, Haughton, Stafford.

16mm FILM PROJECTOR with optical sound needed on loan for the BUFORA meeting on 6th December. Your expenses will be paid. Please phone 01-723 0305 if you can help.

DRAKE, Fort, Keel, Le Poer Trench, Michell, von Daniken, etc. Send SAE for Booklist to: 15 Freshwater Court, Crawford Street, London W1H 1HS.

Sighting Summaries

A selection from the Investigation Department files

Schoolboys see silvery saucer

75-024 17 March 1975 21.00.
Higham, Liverpool

Two schoolboys claimed to have witnessed the close approach of a silvery, oval shaped object 'as big as a house,' as they left the local boys club one evening. They rushed to a better vantage point and saw it approach them slowly and fly overhead. It was revolving and giving out greenish rays from its edge. There was one large green light in the centre and whole rows of orange lights round the edges. They could also hear a noise, described by them as a 'soft whistling.' The object accelerated after passing overhead and flew off at high speed towards Tilbury. It was in view for about five minutes.

Red object over Derby

75-014 2 March 1975 02.50
Derby

An insomniac housewife opened the curtains to look outside. She saw a red circular object $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the size of the full moon, moving slowly from left to right. It travelled in an undulating path and seemed brighter when ascending than descending. At its closest approach to the ground, she estimated it came within 50 to 100 feet. It appeared to be about half a mile away. Eventually it disappeared behind some trees.

UFO filmed

75-013 27 February 1975 23.05
Salford

A BUFORA member sent in a claim that he had taken an 8mm movie film of a disc-type UFO from his bedroom win-

dow. The object was allegedly seen for 40 minutes. The developed film does not contain anything of significance, but further investigation is warranted.

75-011 31 January 1975 20.35
75 012 21.00
75-016 7 March 1975 20.30
Southampton

All these observations come from a young astronomer, out star gazing and well equipped with star atlas and binoculars. The first object was red/orange and moved in stops and starts. After 30 minutes it was only visible through binoculars. The second sighting consisted of two hazy white nebulae moving on parallel paths faster than a satellite, but slower than an aircraft. On the second date he saw a swift moving fuzzy white light the apparent size of a pea. It glided through the sky 'like a ghost.' Satellites and other phenomena were all logged by him and he made very accurate measurements of flight paths of the unknown objects.

UFO or aircraft ?

No code 11 November 1967 23.50.
Norwich.

A well respected local government officer and his wife observed an elliptical object pass over their bungalow at an angle of 65 degrees to them. It was first seen from a bedroom window as about one sixth the size of the full moon and of a brightness comparable to the full moon. It was travelling slowly, at a speed later estimated to be 18 mph, about the height of a helicopter. The wife stood on the window sill as the object passed overhead and observed a 'bump' on the top and what seemed to be portholes. The couple went outside the house and saw the object

continued overleaf

Sighting Summaries

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as a disc moving away from them towards St Faith's Airfield. However, much to the witnesses' apprehension, it turned and seemed to head back towards them. Before reaching them it turned SSW and banked revealing a thinner ellipse shape. It also seemed to be lower. It moved at the same slow speed against the wind and two brilliant white lights flashed on and off several times at one to two second intervals. When the object was windward of them, a faint whirring noise was heard. A second similar object was seen to the south and the two objects converged and flew out of sight on parallel paths. Subsequent checks revealed no aircraft movements within the area.

Bowl-shaped object follows car

75-017 20 February 1975 01.45.
Tern Hill, Shropshire.

A young farmer's wife had a frightening experience as she drove home alone in her car. A brightly lit bowl-shaped object appeared behind her and followed her movements for 15 to 20 minutes. She accelerated but it seemed to zoom in closer and swing about from side to side. Eventually she turned off the main road and it was lost to sight.

Pterodactyl over Chard?

75-026 18 February, 1975 08.00.
Chard, Nr Ilminster.

A most unusual UFO was described by a service engineer as it passed briefly overhead while driving along Chard High Street. It was like a huge bird with a wing span of 12 to 14 feet. The edges were alternately shaded. It went out of sight in a matter of seconds over shops and houses.

Cube UFO or hot-air balloon?

No code 25 July 1972 21.15.
Eccles-on-Sea, Norfolk.

A policeman on duty radioed that he had seen a cube-shaped object, transparent like a polythene bag, which had a small yellow candle-like glow flickering inside at one corner. It rose over the village of Hap-pisburgh and travelled towards the policeman, passing to the west and eventually disappearing from view. He estimated its speed as in excess of 100 mph. Local coastguards are also alleged to have reported it.

Telepathic contact

No code September 1961 14.00.
Penmaenmawr, North Wales.

An elderly couple, who have retired from ownership of a Vegetarian Hotel, recall this sighting one summer on the sand hills above the beach. They feel that the 'humming top' which they saw for five minutes would have landed if not for the presence of an unknown woman and child on the beach. The couple claim to have had telepathic contacts at the time. The silent, grey metallic disc which they observed on this occasion appeared suddenly at the sea's edge, sending up spray and disturbing a flock of birds. It cruised over the waves at about 50 feet and appeared and disappeared twice very suddenly. Eventually it vanished from sight.

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