

# BUFORA SUMMER NEWSLETTER

August 1998

## EDITORIAL

In BUFORA BULLETIN number 2, John Spencer presented the Council's view on the way forward for BUFORA. In that he said BUFORA should get out a publication every six weeks. If you divide six into 52 (the number of weeks in the year) you get an answer of eight with four weeks left over!

The Council intends to issue eight editions of the new series BUFORA Bulletin each year. The Summer Newsletter is designed to be a ninth communication from BUFORA and cover the odd four weeks.

The summer period is usually silly season for the newspapers and the other media. During this period with most of our politicians on holiday, the media need to find somebody else to make fun of, and UFOlogists are often prime candidates. All the stories that people have tried for months to get published

suddenly become hot news. This year seems to be somewhat different. The press are still carrying stories about UFOs but the silly season is much quieter than usual.

And this summer we see the release of the X-Files film. You would have thought that would have increased the call for UFO and paranormal stories. Over recent years journalists have tried to cash in on interest in the X-Files. How many times have we seen stories where the investigator has been described as the local answer to Mulder or Scully. Better still if the journalist could find a case investigated by a male and a female investigator as they can have both Scully and Mulder.

Still, if the X-Files bubble has finally burst perhaps we can get back to serious research and investigation. Maybe the end of the silly season this year will be the end of this silly nonsense.

## CONTENTS

EDITORIAL .....	1
TRUST NOBODY! .....	2
INVESTIGATIONS DEPARTMENT NOTES.....	3
SHORT ITEMS .....	3
BOB'S NEW JOB.....	4
MOD FIGURES.....	4
BARLEY BELIEVABLE! .....	5
WHATS ON .....	6
EARLY UFO REPORTS .....	7
BUFORA LECTURES .....	8

Published by The British UFO Research Association (BUFORA Ltd). BUFORA is limited by guarantee. Registered office 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 9ST. Registered in London 01234924.

Views expressed in submitted contributions do not represent the views or policies of BUFORA or the Editor, except where specifically identified as such. BUFORA Summer Newsletter is copyright BUFORA 1998 and may not be duplicated without express written consent of the publisher.

## TRUST NOBODY!

**Jim Smith**

"Trust Nobody" is frequently the advice given to people who watch the TV programme "The X Files". I know that the X Files is just fiction but maybe it is good advice anyway.

About a year ago David Percy stirred up a great deal of controversy with an article published in Fortean Times which questioned whether the Americans had actually gone to the Moon. I think the balance of probabilities is that the Apollo Moon landings did take place and that Percy's basic hypothesis is wrong, but either intentionally or by accident he does raise a number of interesting questions.

The points that Percy raises about the Moon landings are more or less the same points that the disbelievers raise when talking about UFOs. The first point to raise is that we only have the word of the astronauts and the US Government that the landings took place. Where are their independent witnesses? Unless, of course, there were any real aliens present.

Percy's main evidence is that there are what he believes to be 'faults' or inaccuracies in the moon landing photographs. The best way to summarise this is that he thinks in a number of photographs the lighting is not consistent with

the scene it is supposed to show. How many times have you heard some dis-believer say that this or that UFO photograph must be a fake and see the hoaxers didn't even get the lighting right?

There are wider implications of this. What do we know about any events in the world? About most events what we know is what we read in the newspapers or hear on radio or TV. But what is the source of much of this information? The source of this information is the very same 'authorities' that are often accused of covering up UFO incidents.

I do not normally subscribe to conspiracy theories as the only evidence there is for most of them is the absence of evidence. But the above starts you wondering if there is some truth behind some of these theories after all.

The US Air Force gave explanations for many UFO reports from the 1950s and 1960s that were plainly stupid and bore no resemblance to what had been reported. Last year the CIA published a report saying that many of these UFO reports with stupid explanations were actually early test flights of US spy planes. If they were telling lies then, and managed to cover them up for forty years, how do we know that we are being told the truth now?

So far the incidents I have quoted have all been in the United States, but it would be wrong to think that the United

Kingdom government is any better. One of the major pieces of evidence for the Rendlesham Forest incident is a memo written by US Air Force officer Colonel Charles Haut. This was obtained by investigators from the US Air Force's copy. The MOD seemed to deny knowing anything about this case.

The MOD say they only investigate UFO reports for defence implications. And they imply that they have never found any with defence implications. In that case why do they not make the reports they have available to civilian UFO groups?

In October 1996 there were many reports of strange fast moving lights seen over East Anglia and moving up the east coast. Some of the press reports mentioned that the objects might have been tracked on radar. A few days later the MOD came back with the explanation that the lights had been meteors and the radar image had been of a church tower at Boston. A church tower that moves at several hundred miles per hour and meteors that change and reverse direction? Yet most people will accept the official explanation.

That is just one case where the government has been found out. How many other cases are there where they have got away with it? There have been several reports over the years where people say that a UFO has crashed. Any time some investigator has asked the

MOD about these cases they have denied knowing anything about it. So who is mistaken, the witnesses on the ground or the men from the ministry? The men from the ministry who said they knew nothing about the Rendlesham Forest case and who think church towers move at 250 plus miles per hour?

The real trouble has come because now I have come to disbelieve what the government tells me about UFOs I have also started to question everything else that the government tells me. How many times have you seen on the news that this road or that road is closed because of flooding or an area is cordoned off because a light aircraft has crashed. We only have their word for it, how do we know they are not 'up to something'?

And when NASA says that they have taken new photographs of the Face on Mars that show that it is just a group of rocks - well we only have their word for it!

---

## **UFO Books or Magazines required**

**Best Prices Paid**

**M Hudson  
PO Box 471  
Canterbury  
CT3 1GU**

## **INVESTIGATIONS DEPARTMENT NOTES**

### **NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Saturday 10th October 1998  
Time 2pm - 6pm  
Venue :  
University of Westminster,  
35 Marylebone Road,  
London NW1 5LS

Please inform me if you are able to attend and I look forward to seeing as many investigators as possible. There are several items on the Agenda for discussion at this stage, but should any investigator feel there is anything they would like as an additional item please feel free to contact me.

**Gloria Dixon  
Director of Investigation**

**The Postal Training Course (PTC)** is compulsory for members requesting to become an investigator for BUFORA. All enquiries pertaining to the Postal Training Course should be addressed to

**David Pointon,  
5 Chapel Street,  
Mount Pleasant,  
Mow Cop,  
Stoke-on-Trent,  
Staffs., ST7 4NP**

**(No personal visits)**

**Phone (01782) 522620  
email:  
spibufora@aol.com.uk**

---

## **SHORT ITEMS**

### **WATCH THIS SPACE**

On the night before the last two BUFORA Council Meetings in June and July the UK has witnessed spectacular Bolides. These have both generated a number of UFO reports. The next Council meeting will be on 12<sup>th</sup> September - will there be another Bolide on the 11<sup>th</sup>?

### **HOVERING OBJECTS**

On Sunday, July 12, 1998, at 7:10 p.m., a man driving on the A505 approaching its junction with the A10 at Royston, Hertfordshire reported "eight to ten UFOs" hovering over a field. He saw these objects, which appeared to be hovering over the peak of a hill, for about 2 minutes.

This is close to the Harston area where a number of strange lights have been reported over a number of years. These reports are part of an on-going study by the Cambridge UFO Group.

Thanks to Roy Hale of ELUFON who posted the original story to UFO UPDATES

### **WELL WISHES**

Former Council member Sue Mantle has been suffering from poor health recently. We send her get well wishes and hope for a speedy recovery.

## Bob's new job.....

BUFORA Treasurer Bob Digby has been appointed to the Editors job at Quest Magazine. The magazine is published by Top Events and Publications Ltd., based in Chester. Clearly all the training he received whilst working on various BUFORA publications has paid off.

Quest was originally known as Amateur Astronomy and Earth Sciences. When the magazine started it carried a UFO page written by James Hockney who was a member of my local group in Cambridge. It regularly carried plugs for CUFOG and for BUFORA (I hope this something the new editor won't want to change!).

A new Editorial office has been set up in Beaconsfield and this is where potential contributors would send their material.

The new Quest Editorial address will apply from the 12th August 1998 :-

Quest Editorial Office,  
P.O. Box 633,  
BEACONSFIELD,  
HP9 2GL

However, Bob commented that in the modern age of communications he expects most of his correspondence to be done via e-mail which makes things very much more quick and efficient.

The wide ranging subject matter of Quest magazine includes UFOs but embraces Ancient civilisations, lost knowledge and all the stuff of Indiana Jones Films. Bob says that he is keen to expand the



scope of material that the magazine covers. For example, the current edition carries items on Astrology, Remote Viewing, Ecology, Spaceflight and Pre Columbus history to name a few.

Bob says he cannot believe he gets paid for doing what he likes. But what happens if the publisher cannot believe he has to pay Bob ? (He could have had a job here at BUFORA Newsletter where he definitely wouldn't be embarrassed by being paid)

There is also a new deputy editor - BUFORA Vice-President Lionel Beer ! The current issue also contains material from both Richard Conway and Steve Gamble - so it looks like Bufora is taking over.

The current edition (Number 11) is available from Lionel Beer at Spacelink Books, 115 Hollybush Lane, Hampton, Middlesex, TW12 2QY for £3 including post and packing.

---

## MOD FIGURES

Our friends at the MOD produce figures of the number of UFO reports they deal with each year.

For 1996 they received 609 reports, in 1997 reports fell to 425. Latest indications are that so far this year the number of reports is down further.

However, if you look at the figures they have published in the past - throughout the 1980s and early 1990s they received about 250 to 300 reports per year. So last year's figure of 425 is still substantially up on the figures in the previous decade.

This downward trend in reports received by the MOD may be due to the general fall off in interest in the paranormal that has also seen many of the popular UFO magazines disappear from newsagents shelves.

On the other hand perhaps both investigators and the public have woken up to the fact that all you get out of the MOD is 'we only investigate for defence implications and the nature of our enquiries is such that we cannot tell you the outcome.



---

## BARLEY BELIEVABLE!

Robert Bull

---

(The village of Harston is on A10 just south of Cambridge. Over a number of years there have been many UFO reports from the area. Further south along the A10 lies Royston, site of another recent report mentioned elsewhere in this issue. Almost due south of Harston and east of Royston is the small village of Barley. Barley has been the location of a couple of interesting incidents. Are they related to the UFO activity around Harston? Robert Bull, BUFORA RIC for Cambridgeshire examines these cases.)

1 October 1979. Michael Bradford, landlord of the Old English Gentleman public house at Harston, and his wife Gwen, are driving down the B1368 from Flint Cross south to Barley, Hertfordshire. It is about 8:15 pm.

About ¼ mile ahead and slightly to the right they see what appears to be a two-coach train - but no railway is (or ever has been) in the area. The 'train' passed in front of them as though crossing a bridge over the road. It continued on for a while, then was lost to view as if it had passed behind an embankment. There was no sound.

The length of the 'train' was estimated at about 100 feet. The 'windows' were regularly spaced and were comparatively large, taking up most of the height of the 'carriage'. It moved slowly, seemingly at about 30 mph.

The duration of the sighting was about one minute. The Bradfords had pulled over and had got out of their car to get an uninterrupted view. Two or three cars passed at speed, seemingly without noticing or caring about what was in view.

The investigator's, Norman Oliver, written report of this sighting puts the Bradfords 'about a mile beyond Flint Cross' which would put the object as passing along the path of the Icknield Way historic road. UFOs and ancient sites? Spooky! (Further examination of the original report, and Michael Bradford's own OS map grid reference, puts the sighting about a mile further to the south of this feature though, almost exactly on the Cambridgeshire/ Hertfordshire border.)

Michael Bradford went on to become one of the principal witnesses to a spectacular series of UFO events a few miles to the north in and near Harston, later the same year.

9 October 1997, 18 years later, almost to the day. Mrs D's husband is having a restless night at their cottage in Barley. It is about 5 am. He lies awake, looking out at the stars through their curtain-less

French windows, when he sees a three close-set rows of bright white lights come in quickly from the right, which stop suddenly above and beyond some trees at the bottom of the garden.

He awakens his wife, and they both move to the French windows. The lights, which now seem to incorporate six or so red ones, hover motionless, partially hidden by the trees, which are being lashed by a strong wind.

After about a minute the lights get smaller and smaller, moving directly away, but without changing height, and are soon lost to sight. No sound is heard.

The lights move off in the direction of three tall radio masts, situated on high ground near nearby Barkway. This is RAF Barkway, the base of the 10<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron. Spooky! This case is still under investigation.

### EDITORS NOTES:

This article originally appeared in the CUFOG News, newsletter of the Cambridge UFO Group.

John Ryder of CUFOG has found some evidence which suggests that at least some of the incidents in the area could be caused by mirages. This theory is being further researched.

Unfortunately Mr Bradford died several years ago, before the present study began.

---

## WHATS ON

A brief look at some forthcoming events.

- |  |        |                   |
|--|--------|-------------------|
| Saturday 5th September   | 2pm    | London            |
| BUFORA, please see back page for details.  |        |                   |
| Friday 11th September  | 8pm    | Cambridge         |
| Cambridge UFO Group, Family Room, Unicorn Public House, Church Lane, Trumpington, Cambridge  |        |                   |
| "Close Encounter Postscript"   |        |                   |
| Admission £2   |        |                   |
| Saturday 19th September  | 1:30pm | Northampton       |
| Northampton UFO Research Centre, Friends Meeting House, Wellington Street, Northampton       |        |                   |
| "Fishing For UFOs" Robin Lindsey discusses recent reports of rod shaped UFOs from New Mexico |        |                   |
| Admission £1-50  |        |                   |
| Sat/Sun 19th/20th September  |        | Various locations |
| Skywatch, see Bulletin 5 for details   |        |                   |
| Saturday 3rd October   | 2pm    | London            |
| BUFORA, please see back page for details.  |        |                   |
| Friday 9th October   | 8pm    | Cambridge         |
| Cambridge UFO Group joint meeting with BUFORA (details as CUFOG above)                       |        |                   |
| Speaker : John Spencer   |        |                   |
| Saturday 17th October  | 1:30pm | Northampton       |
| Northampton UFO Research Centre (details as above)   |        |                   |
| Speaker : tba  |        |                   |
| Saturday 31st October  |        | Liverpool         |
| Merseyside UFO and Paranormal Conference   |        |                   |
| For details contact: MARA, 52 Hawthorne Avenue, Halewood, Liverpool, L26 9XD.                |        |                   |
| Saturday 7th November  | 2pm    | London            |
| BUFORA, please see back page for details.  |        |                   |
| Friday 13th November   | 8pm    | Cambridge         |
| Cambridge UFO Group ( details as above)  |        |                   |
| Research Evening including look at Rod Shaped UFOs.  |        |                   |
| Sat/Sun 14th/15th November   |        | Blackpool         |
| "Saucers, Secrets & Superpowers" conference  |        |                   |
| For details contact: LAPIS, 15 Knaresborough Avenue, Blackpool, Lancs. FY3 9QW               |        |                   |
| Saturday 21st November   | 1:30pm | Northampton       |
| Northampton UFO Research Centre (as above)   |        |                   |
| AGM and Members Reports  |        |                   |

## Early UFO Reports

Steve Gamble

BUFORA has been conducting a project to collect pre-1895 UFO reports.

If we look at current reports, around 40% of all UFO reports are explained with varying degrees of certainty as being aircraft. Add to that the small percentages of reports that are man-made satellites, rockets and balloons and we soon find that half of all UFO reports turn out to be man-made rubbish. And that is before things such as lights on transmitter aerials and car lights are included.

If we look at earlier eras most of these man made sources will be eliminated and a purer sample of UFO phenomena will be obtained. However one of the drawbacks at looking at older reports is that often they contain less information than more modern cases. As John Spencer states in *The UFO Encyclopaedia* (referring to the Ampleforth manuscript, which contains the Byland Abbey report) '...the apparent nature of the event at a time considerably before man-powered flight, these reports must be regarded as thought provoking, to say the least'.

Of course, even amongst these older cases there are mistakes and hoaxes. Science fiction author David Langford in 1979 wrote a book called "An Account of a Meeting With

Denizens of Another World" (David and Charles). This was supposedly based upon a manuscript written by William Robert Loosley and describes his personal experiences. Loosley supposedly lived near Wycombe between 1838 and 1893 and had a couple of UFO experiences. Later it was revealed that the whole thing was a work of fiction by Langford.

I have taken 1895, when the age of the great airships began, as being the cut-off point. Some authors hold that a number of events described in the Bible would nowadays be recorded as UFO incidents. I have tried to avoid using religious texts, apart from the potential for controversy, many of these have been reinterpreted over the years.

The project is on-going . Before closing lets look at some of these earlier cases.

**Date:** 1207

**Location:** Tilbury

Gervase of Tilbury writes in *Otio Imperialia* about an aerial ship which caught its anchor on a pile of stones. An occupant came down from the ship and managed to free it, however he was asphyxiated by the atmosphere. The similarity to the Cloera story from 1211 is striking.

**Date:** 1211

**Location:** Cloera, Ireland

Strange object in the sky dropped an anchor which caught on a church roof. Witnesses describe a man descending the rope to cut free

the anchor. The villagers attempted to capture the man, but the bishop forbade this and the man escaped back up the rope.

**Date:** 1254 January 1

**Location:** St Albans

Monks saw a 'kind of large ship, elegantly shaped, and well equipped and of marvellous colour'.

**Date:** 1290

**Location:** Byland Abbey, Yorkshire

Monks recorded that a large silver disk flew slowly over them.

**Date:** 1320

**Location:** Durham

After the abbot of Durham Abbey died and was buried, a strange light was seen to descend from the sky and move about over his grave.

**Date:** 1520

**Location:** Erfurt, Prussia

Two burning suns were observed. The report says that a great burning beam then landed, took off again and then became circular in shape.

**Date:** 1561 April 14

**Location:** Nuremberg, Germany

A number of cylindrical objects were seen in the early morning sky. Red, orange, black and blue-white spheres and disks emerged from these cylinders.

**Date:** 1566 August 7

**Location:** Basel, Switzerland

Many black spheres were seen moving through the sky at great speed at around sunrise.

**Date:** 1619  
**Location:** Fluelan,  
Switzerland

A witness saw a long bright  
object flying along a lake.

## **BUFORA LECTURES**

Meetings are held at the University of Westminster, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LS starting at 2pm and lasting until approximately 5pm. There is a short break in the middle of the afternoon. Please address all enquiries to BUFORA at the address below.

Admission charge is £1-50 for BUFORA members, £3-50 for non-members.

**SATURDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 1998**

**SPEAKER :** Philip Walton  
**TITLE :** Is Seeing Believing?

Philip is a member of the BUFORA Research team, a former BUFORA Council member and head of research for ASSAP. Any scientific study, be it of UFOs or any other subject, relies upon having access to reliable data. Philip has carried out extensive studies in methods to obtain reliable data of UFO and other paranormal events. He will share some of the results of his recent studies.

**SATURDAY 3rd OCTOBER 1998**

**SPEAKER :** Tony Eccles  
**TITLE :** Merseyside UFOs

Tony is a BUFORA accredited investigator and a member of the BUFORA Council. He is also a leading member of MARA. He will discuss some of the reports he has investigated on Merseyside.

**SATURDAY 7th NOVEMBER 1998**

**SPEAKER :** Bob Digby  
**TITLE :** to be advised

Bob Digby is a member of BUFORA's research team and a past Chairman of BUFORA. More recently he has become editor of Quest magazine. He promises to open an Aladdin's Cave of strange events.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Whilst it is not anticipated that meetings will have to be changed or cancelled without prior notice, BUFORA reserves the right to do so. In event of any change, BUFORA will give as much notice as possible.

For information about other events, please see page 6.

---

**Published by :** *BUFORA, 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 9ST*