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**The "Linda Cortile" Abduction Case**  
By Budd Hopkins

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## CONTENTS

THE CIRCLES OF SUMMER.....	Dennis Stacy	3
THE LINDA CORTILE ABDUCTION CASE .....	Budd Hopkins	12
THE UFO PRESS .....	Dennis Stacy	17
READER'S CLASSIFIEDS .....		18
LOOKING BACK.....	Robert Gribble	19
LETTERS .....	James Oberg	21
THE OCTOBER NIGHT SKY .....	Walter N. Webb	22
DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE .....	Walter Andrus	24
Cover Photograph.....	Ansen Seale	

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# THE CIRCLES OF SUMMER

Article & Photographs  
by Dennis Stacy

(WILTSHIRE, ENGLAND) — Michael Chorost, director of Project Argus, will be contributing a detailed report of the Project's activities in England this past summer in a future issue of the *Journal*. A joint international venture involving scientists from several countries, Argus was supported by financial contributions from MUFON, the Fund for UFO Research, the Centre for Crop Circle Studies and Robert Bigelow of Las Vegas. I'll confine my own remarks here to a summary of what I saw while in the field with Argus, and while attending the Centre's weekend conference on crop circles in Winchester, Hampshire.

Argus was headquartered in a 300-year-old thatched-roof cottage near the small village of Alton Barnes, the approximate "heart" of crop circle country. From the cottage's small backyard you could see one of the Vale of Pewsey's several white horses carved in the chalk hillsides which slope gently to a height of about 600 feet. Both Stonehenge and Avebury were but a few miles away by winding paved roads. Several major "pictograms" had appeared in the immediate vicinity last summer, including ones at Alton Barnes proper, Lockeridge, The Firs, Milk Hill, Froxfield, Clench Common and other numerous nearby sites. The central location, assuming the crop circles cooperated again, would make the gathering of soil and crop samples by Project Argus personnel relatively easy. The laboratory where some of these samples would be analyzed was in High Wycombe, just under two hours away by car. Other samples would be labeled and sent back to the United States or other locales for analysis.

I arrived at Gatwick Airport on Thursday morning, July 16, just in time to miss the first train that would have taken me to Swindon, with the consequence that I didn't get to the Alton Barnes area until about four that afternoon, slightly bedraggled but not too "jet-legged." Michael and most of the other people then staying at the cottage were in the field, so I stowed my gear and freshened up. The ever-genial Ralph Noyes, the Centre's former Honorable Secretary and now chief liaison person, who had met my train in Swindon, filled me in on recent events.

Activity was fairly steady, if unspectacular. As it turned out, however, a new formation shaped like a snail had appeared in one of the ripening wheat fields just down the road. It would be a good chance for me to unlimber my legs while Ralph caught up on phone calls and coordinated other activities. So I did what any good American cereologist just



The heart of crop circle country

arrived would do: I changed out of blazer and slacks into jeans and Banana Republic vest, grabbed my camera, and set out into the English summer sunshine. It was a gorgeous afternoon, a welcome relief from the heat and humidity I had left behind in San Antonio the previous day.

Crop circles aside, it was great to be outdoors in this enchanted countryside again, striding past white-washed cottages or red-brick houses, thick fields of waist-high wheat and even an occasional corn crop stretching away on either side of the narrow two-lane road. The "Snail," as it was being called, had been found on the ninth of July, a week before my arrival. The farmer in whose field it appeared had set up a small caravan or house trailer beside the road, and hired some unemployed young people — referred to by everyone as "dredlocks" for the way they plaited their long hair — to watch over the site. Since they were also collecting a Pound a person (about two dollars) to enter the field, there obviously wouldn't be any need to secure the farmer's permission before entering his property, as was standard Centre procedure.

Entry was easy enough along one of the tramlines, the parallel tracks made by tractor wheels in the course of spraying and fertilizing the crop. The Snail itself was a couple of hundred yards into the field, visible from the road only as a horizontal slash in the otherwise undisturbed crop canopy. It was a monster snail, some 440 feet from end to end as charted in the excellent plan drawing already prepared by John Langrish.



Ordinary lodging caused by wind and rain damage  
Note the highly irregular flow of the "floor plan"

The tramlines here pointed directly at the green ridge of east-west running hills which formed the far horizon. From their heights sailed a hang-glider or two, catching the late afternoon summer currents. Three people with tape-measures and a camera atop a tripod were already in the great central "shell" of the Snail, a flattened circle 122 feet across, laid down in a counterclockwise direction.

My expectations of being able to learn much from the ground at this late date were not high. Circle formations deteriorate rapidly once word of their location gets out and the public starts pouring in. The pleasant young girl at the dreadlock caravan told me that some 200 people had already visited the Snail. And what a mess they had made of it. I entered at the "head" of the thing, which consisted of another anticlockwise circle 44 feet in diameter, from which protruded two "antennae." From here a more or less straight path ran into the lower curve of the larger "shell" circle and continued onwards another 50 feet or so before culminating in yet another counterclockwise circle, or "tail," 41 feet in diameter. The long pathway itself was over ten feet wide, the wheat stalks flattened toward me as I approached the central circle, and away thereafter. A short distance away were two



An arrowhead pointing to the Lockeridge formation  
Obviously added after the fact by human hands

small "grapeshot" circles.

The condition of the whole was deplorable. So many feet had already trampled the flattened wheat that there was no hope of its ever recovering as happened in undisturbed circles. For the most part the plants were long dead, having turned a brownish-yellow in contrast to the surrounding sea of green stalks. Severed seed pods, broken off by boots and tennis shoes, were scattered everywhere. The 200 Pounds collected thus far would hardly compensate the farmer for his loss.

I turned away, disappointed in more ways than one. I didn't like the Snail. For one thing, the basic floor pattern was ruined almost beyond recognition. For another, the general outline itself was simply too nice (or crude) a representation of an actual snail when seen from the air, a feeling reinforced from several subsequent conversations in which I learned that a similar snail was a character in a popular BBC children's program. This particular Snail had the smell of a bad joke.

But that didn't stop it from drawing attention. An ultralight had already circled overhead, as had three private planes and two civilian helicopters. As I reached the road, more people were pulling into the field opposite and parking by the caravan prior to paying their Pounds. And as I walked back toward Alton Barnes, a British military chopper approached, obvious



Michael Green, chairman of the Centre for Crop Circle Studies, in a dumbbell in barley outside Winchester

by its camouflage color scheme. I stopped to watch its flight path. The chopper not only came lower than the ultralight had, it actually circled the Snail twice before flying away over the rolling hills and out of sight. Were the military really keeping track of the crop circle phenomenon, as many local cereologists suspected? Perhaps. My own impression, however, was that the pilot was simply on his way back to base when he came across the sight. I figure he and his crew were merely curious like everyone else and had only stopped to take a free peek. The Snail, after all, hadn't moved in more than a week.

I got back to the Project Argus cottage just after 6 p.m., the sun it seemed, having barely begun its slow descent. At Latitude 51 degrees and 21 minutes, roughly on a par with that of Calgary, Alberta, the English twilight could drag on for hours. Michael and the others had not yet returned, but several people were crowded into the cottage's main room with its low, wood-beam ceiling where visitors (particularly Texans) were in perpetual danger of bumping their heads.

The phone rang, Busty Taylor ringing in from the airfield at nearby Axton where he had just landed after his regular afternoon surveillance flight. Busty, a private pilot and photographer (if you've read almost any book about crop



A small, undisturbed grapeshot circle with a standing "corn doll" in the center. Near Alton Barnes

circles, chances are you've seen his pictures), was one of two aerial spotters passing along the location of new crop circles to Project Argus. The other was Jurgen Kronig, a political correspondent for the German newspaper *Die Zeit* and editor of *Spuren im Korn*, who routinely rented a helicopter for similar overflights of the Alton Barnes area.

Ralph took the call and began taking notes, interrupting with an occasional question. Almost before we could unfold the ubiquitous Ordnance Survey map and pinpoint the new sighting, Jurgen also rang up. Apparently he'd seen the same formation as Busty — a complex of five circles beneath one of the Pewsey white horses — but there was some confusion as to *which* white horse. (I remember thinking to myself that we wouldn't have that problem back in Texas; but of course we wouldn't have any crop circles, either.) All we were really certain of was that the formation hadn't been there the day before.

Fresh game was afoot. All we had to do was figure out under which set of horses' hooves. Attempts to call both spotters back at their respective airports were fruitless. We decided to act on Busty's directions first, because his white horse was the closest. Ralph put in another call to Una Dawood, who was in charge of contacting the local farmers and securing



This particular circle, located in the field to the right, just happened to be "conveniently" visible from the well trafficked Red Lion pub in Avebury

permission to enter their fields and collect samples. He gave her the coordinates of the field we thought Busty's new formation was in and we piled into a car to see what, if anything, was visible from the road.

The nearest white horse was on the south-facing slope of Milk Hill, where, a year before, Steve Alexander had videotaped a small, whitish globe of daytime light weaving in and out of a crop circle formation before disappearing over an adjoining hill. Two German students had filmed a similar object in the same area. According to the Ordnance map, a dirt road ran up to a cul-de-sac on the northwest shoulder of Milk Hill. Somewhere en route we should find a good vantage point overlooking the fields below. If we could find the formation it might still be possible to collect samples before the sun set.

This proved easier in theory than in person. Even with precise map coordinates, locating a crop circle in a swaying field of cereal grain from groundlevel can be a frustrating, time-consuming process, unless the field in question happens to run halfway up a hillside. (The next week, in fact, seven of us would spend an entire afternoon in a relatively small, but highly wind-damaged field in search of a dumb-bell formation spotted from Jurgen's helicopter, with a resounding lack of success.)

Climbing the dirt road up Milk Hill did give us a somewhat better perspective, but we were also getting further away from the field in question. We had brought binoculars, however, and we would stop periodically long enough for a brief visual survey. Still we could see nothing, so we continued upward. Rounding the southernmost shoulder of the cul-de-sac, we caught sight of approximately 10 parasailers, suspended a couple of hundred feet high in the warm air current now sluicing up from the downs below. Others were already dismantling

their fragile, brightly-colored craft for the return trip to city or suburb.

We stopped and asked several of these aerial athletes if they had seen any crop circles in the fields below. Everyone new what we were talking about of course, but none were of any help. So much for the theory, espoused by armchair skeptics Joe Nickell and John Fischer in a recent issue of the *Skeptical Inquirer*, that hilltops were the perfect spot for hoaxers' to view their handiwork! In fact, crop circles are hard to appreciate from anywhere, save from an airplane, helicopter or by standing in their very center.

The trip downhill proved more fruitful. With binoculars and the sort of practice that only comes from experience, Ralph was able to

observe several suspect "spots" in the second field over to our left. Even with my younger eyesight and the car completely stopped, I couldn't be certain of anything other than a few separately-spaced slits in the otherwise unbroken canvas of crop stretching out away and below. Ralph was certain we had found it, so we parked and got out.

A serious discussion involving the pros and cons of our situation ensued. Light was finally beginning to fade, and it was obvious that if Ralph's slits were the real thing, we still had a good walk on foot to reach our destination. Did we have enough daylight left to get out and back? Could we be sure of the farmer's compliance? Any circles were getting older even as we deliberated the issues. One of our party fortunately knew the farmer involved. While the prospects for any serious sample collecting were rapidly diminishing, we still had the possibility of being able to confirm the location. If we were right, and if Una could confirm permission, Project Argus personnel could return at first light and collect the necessary controls. To find out whether she had already established contact would require returning to the cottage for more phone calls.

The slits and insatiable curiosity beckoned. We set out along the tramlines, careful to keep single file behind one another and not to tramp through virgin crop. It had been raining prior to my arrival, and the ground was still damp. At the far end of the first field we encountered ruts in which standing water was still pooled. While working my way around one of these in still-squishy earth I brushed my bare arm up against a nettle, carrying its sting for the next half-hour. At this point the east-west tramlines along which we had entered ended, having butted up mid-way against our target field, the tramlines of which ran north and south. This necessitated a detour to our left, back up toward Milk Hill.

and a walk along the northern end of the next field before finding the tramlines that would lead us down into the hoped-for promised land. Having gone this far, we had little choice but to continue.

Once we found the appropriate tramlines and started downhill, the earlier-glimpsed slits suddenly took on a life, a magnetic attraction, of their own. Even in the fading glow it was clear that they were not the random products of wind and rain damage commonly referred to as lodging, but a series of regular, circular cut-outs of which we could only discern the far curve. The closer we approached, the more the circles opened up. Certainly there was no turning back now, even if we were forced to follow the puny beam of a flashlight back to our parked cars.

I asked everyone to be on the lookout for footprints in the tramlines used for our approach from the north, and there were none. Hoaxers would have entered the field either from Milk Hill, now behind us, or from the nearest roads which lay both to our south and east. (As we would discover, the most direct line of access lay to the road due south; however the circles in question were visible from neither road, even when standing atop a car, having formed in a slight but definite hollow. Any hoaxer, in other words, would have had to place them precisely where they were so as to avoid easy observation other than from directly above.)

One doesn't want to wax too mystical or poetic, but there is a certain ineffable moment to be experienced upon being the first person to enter a virgin formation, the feeling that no one has trod here before, save for the hoaxers who may have wrought the damn thing to begin with. The wind had fallen, so that there was a conspicuous stillness in the air. Not yet dark, the twilight's last gleam embued the whole scene with a golden-green light. The flattened and still-standing stalks fairly glowed.

The tramline we were on transected the westernmost edge of the largest of the five circles, the dividing stalks between field and tramline just barely flared over the latter. To have gone further, we would have to trample this delicate overleave, which we chose not to do. We also hesitated about whether to enter the formation itself, or to leave it for the scientists. The fact that we'd already come this far, coupled with a mild case of crop circle greed, decided the issue. Before proceeding, trepidatiously, some of us slipped off our shoes.

These looked much better than the trampled Snail I'd visited just a few hours earlier. By all appearances, the formation was in pristine shape; in fact, what Ralph refers to as the "bloom" was still easily visible on the flattened stalks. Not



Surveyor John Langrish in the largest circle of the second Milk Hill set. In the foreground is one of several standing "hutches" scattered throughout the formation

being a botanist, I'm not sure exactly what the bloom is, but my guess is that it probably consists of pollen, dust and perhaps even plant fertilizers and pesticides. It appears like a thin bluish film that can be easily rubbed off the stalks by touch, revealing a bright green plant surface underneath. I had a hard time imagining how a human hoaxer could lay down the plants like this without so much as scratching the bloom on the top sides of the stalks.

The first circle we entered was approximately 40 feet across and represented a perfect example of what cereologists refer to as the "flow" of a circle, that is, the plants aren't laid down in a series of short straight lines to effect a curve, as one might expect, say, from a handroller, but in a gently spiraling continuous curve from the center outwards. It's usually best recognized by examining the seed heads themselves, as they serve as ready directional indicators. I knelt and lifted up a part of the top layer of the floor to see if there were any dislodged seed pods lying underneath, again an indication that brute human force might have been used to manipulate the plants, but there were no obvious signs of any. The outer perimeter of the circle was sharply delineated from the still standing crop. Some of the stalks along this outer wall were broken over approximately four to six inches above the ground. One would expect them to be broken at ground level if a rolling instrument had been used. A search of the center of the circle revealed no obvious hole where a stake or stick might have been stuck, and certainly there was no mud visible anywhere on top of the flattened plants.

It should also be admitted at the outset that many of these signs of authenticity are judgment calls, and that different experts have different views about the genuineness of any individual circle or formation. Some aspects once thought "impossible," or at least extremely difficult for humans to

duplicate, were indeed replicated to a fairly convincing degree at a now famous hoax contest held the weekend before my arrival, which was sponsored by the Koestler Foundation, the Centre, the Guardian and the German magazine *P.M.* The 3000-Pound first place award went to a team of three engineers from Westland, a helicopter company. An American crop circle skeptic living in England, James Schnabel, duplicated the same complicated "pictogram" at night and on his own, taking second place. Most of the cereologists I spoke to who had been at the hoax context, some as judges, were suitably impressed. What the contest "proved" depended on who you talked to, although it's now obvious that many features of many formations can indeed be done by human hoaxers.



(l-r) Chris Talariski of CUFOS, John Langrish, Michael Chorost, Project Argus director, and scientists Greg Kennedy and Marshall Dudley

**H**ad humans carved out the circles we were now standing in? If they had, they were very, very good indeed, almost painstakingly professional, in fact. They looked absolutely real to me, but I had to agree with one of the Project Argus personnel who admitted later that "if these were faked, then anything could be faked." In fact, the reason for Project Argus being in the field this summer was to try to determine some instrumented yardstick that would allow cereologists to easily separate the wheat from the chaff, assuming there was any real wheat to begin with.

At the northeast quadrant of the first circle a four-foot-wide path of flattened plants ran for four feet before entering another large circle 42 feet across. Here, a single plant at the very center of the circle lay entirely out of the ground, a clump of earth still attached at the roots. The eastern edge of this circle lay completely across the next set of tramlines, and here we found another feature often thought to indicate authenticity: a single line of standing plants along the length of the tramline, on both sides of the track, that is, about ten inches or a foot apart. Again, I won't argue that such a feature is impossible to duplicate, only that someone would have to have been very articulate with a hand roller in the dark.

From the northern edge of this circle ran another four-foot-wide curved path which ended abruptly, a foot short of the southern edge of a 16-foot diameter circle. A short distance away lay a fourth circle, 33 feet in diameter, connected by a winding path approximately 10 to 12 inches wide. Again, this path was gently curved in several places instead of being formed of short straight lines as one would first expect had it been simply walked out. Impossible? Who's to say for sure?

From the north end of this circle ran a short straight path which turned west at a right angle for a few feet and then north again, ending in a notched edge. A few feet beyond was a fifth circle, another 16 feet in diameter, lying entirely

in untouched crop, i.e., with no visible signs of entry into the circle through the surrounding crop. We declined to break through the crop and went back the way we had come.

I checked both sets of tramlines north of the formation, running back toward Milk Hill, and couldn't see any obvious footprints although there were few plants growing in the actual tracks. In one of the tramlines south of the formation, pointing toward the nearest paved road, I did find a single set of tracks. The impression was that at least one person had been there before us (not being a Sioux scout, I couldn't tell *when* they were made), either the intrepid individual hoaxer himself, or perhaps the farmer or someone else had stumbled across the formation earlier the same day.

On Friday morning we drove up to Winchester, where the Centre was holding its first international conference, "Crop Circles, the Enigma for the Nineties," at King Alfred's College. A press conference was sandwiched in between registration and afternoon tea. Only two official talks were scheduled that day, by Professor Archie Roy and Dr. Rupert Sheldrake, one of the hoax contest sponsors who spoke on the results. That evening participants were bussed downtown to the Guildhall for a banquet and after-dinner talk by the Centre's patron, the Earl of Haddington. Both Saturday and Sunday saw a full slate of speakers, including reports from the various Centre research panels on physical properties of the formations, physiological and psychological effects on humans, area by area reports of this year's crop circle activity, and so on. Michael Chorost gave an overview of Project Argus, videos by John Macnish of Circlevision were shown, including aerial footage of the hoaxing contest, and Jurgen Kronig addressed the political perspective of the phenomenon, warning the audience against the dangers of overcommitment, should the crop circles turn out to be only





The author, in a relatively unvisited dumbbell formation with the village of Alton Barnes in the background. Photo by Chris Talarski

hoaxes. Sage advice, but I'm not sure how well or easy it went down with the faithful.

Figures familiar to American cereologists also spoke, including George Wingfield, now the editor of the Centre's *Circular*, who is just mounting a new lecture tour of the States, Colin Andrews, who is apparently moving his own newsletter operation here, John Michell, editor of *The Cereologist*, Busty Taylor and Richard Andrews of course, Montague Keen, just back from the MUFON symposium in Albuquerque, and Ralph Noyes on the crop circle-UFO connection. I had an opportunity to briefly address the conference on the same subject late Sunday afternoon and also joined the speakers' panel in answering questions from the floor. The person who impressed me most who I hadn't heard talk or met before was Diana Clift, who chairs the Centre's research panel, with Lucy Pringle, on possible physiological and psychological effects of the circles on humans. She was constantly calling the other panelists to account for their unsubstantiated statements about this or that presumed property, ability or interpretation of the phenomenon. In fact, it must be said that there is a good deal of New Age nonsense swirling around the circles in England, just as there is around UFOs and related subjects in this country, a sort of "anything goes" attitude. Some cereologists seem to have been slightly sobered by the impact of the news coming out of West Wycombe, where the hoax contest was held, but its trickle-down effect on the crop circle community as a whole remains to be seen. And of course set against the cereologists of whatever stripe are the active skeptics, who chalk the whole thing up to human hoaxing and human hoaxing only, plus a strong will to believe in the paranormal in spite of any contrary evidence.

Needless to say, I wasn't the only American tourist who had come to see the phenomenon first-hand for themselves. (Actually, I'd initially been over in the summer of 1990.) Linda Moulton Howe arrived later in the week, as did Dr.

Steven Greer of North Carolina, director of the Center for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence, who promptly took to the hills in an effort to stage a close encounter of the fifth kind — human-initiated contact with the UFO intelligence(s).

We returned to the cottage Sunday afternoon. Monday it rained. And rained. Intermittently, but accompanied with bouts of thunder and lightning all day long. George Wingfield and a couple of other fellow travelers, including a visiting Soviet geophysicist, dropped by the cottage soaking wet, having been caught in a sudden downpour while studying the Milk Hill formation we had visited Thursday evening. (The farmer had affirmed his permission, and crop and soil samples

had already been taken.)

At the Winchester conference I'd also met an eager Chris Talarski of Chicago, with the Center for UFO Studies, who was staying in nearby Marlborough. Like me, he'd already seen the Snail but was in search of something better and I had promised to show him the Milk Hill circles. Taking a cue from our dripping wet visitors, I said I'd drive out the road with him and show him how to enter the formation, but I'd like to stay dry if I could. The plan was for him to drop me back at the cottage and enter on foot alone, as he had a good raincoat. Instead, we wound up getting his front-wheel-drive rental car stuck in a field, where it remained unmolested overnight, and having to walk back in the rain. Fortunately, a farmer pulled it out for us the next morning.

Tuesday, Steven Greer arrived. That night he would initiate the first of a series of attempts to contact alien intelligences by flashing half-million-candle power lights into the sky from atop Woodborough Hill. These are something like the hand-held semaphore lamps used to flash messages between destroyers and battleships in old WWII movies. We didn't make it up the hill that night, but from the cottage below we could see his searchlight-like beams extending into the night sky.

Wednesday brought another sighting of a formation from Jurgen, who described it as a "dumb-bell with numerous additions." Six of us found the target field that afternoon, on the far side of Marlborough, near where the so-called Froxfield "Brain" squiggle had appeared last summer, but try as we might, could never locate the formation, despite dividing into teams and walking out all the tramlines. The waist-high wheat had been heavily damaged by natural lodging — when the crop falls over from the collective weight of water and wind — and it proved impossible to recognize anything remotely resembling a crop circle. Nor were there any hills nearby from which hoaxers or skeptics could view

their handiwork (although I suppose they could have climbed one of the trees lining the field on three sides.) Again, this points out the difficulty of locating some circles from the ground, even with the advantage of helicopter surveillance on our side. We broke for lunch in Marlborough, then Greg Kennedy of Argus and I returned to try again. We still couldn't find anything resembling a dumb-bell, even after extending our search to include several adjoining fields.

On the way back we stopped at a Lockeridge dumb-bell which was now about two weeks old. Set on the side of a sloping hill near Adam's Grave, it was visible from a paved road and several other cars had already pulled over on the virtually nonexistent shoulder. Greg had visited the site earlier and noted that it had immediately been added to. The new addition consisted of a curved pathway leading off one of the approaching tramlines below the formation, ending in an arrowhead pointed at the lowest circle of the dumb-bell. The dumb-bell itself had been pretty well trampled by this time, but it didn't take a V-2 scientist to figure out that the new arrow pointing to the formation had been added by human hands. At the triangular corners of the arrowhead itself, for example, the wheat had been rudely snapped at right-angles between nodes.

That night we did visit Greer's experiment atop Woodborough Hill, where we were joined by Linda Moulton Howe, Colin Andrews, George Wingfield and other visiting participants. Numerous still and video cameras were already mounted on tripods, and 30 to 40 people, many with binoculars around their necks, were milling around in the gloaming light. The hilltop proved a perfect lookout, providing a sweeping 360-degree view of the surrounding terrain.

Away to the northwest shone the white horse on the side of Milk Hill. Several cameras and binoculars were trained on this area as we arrived, the scuttlebutt being that someone had just seen a glowing light moving around in the field where Alexander had filmed his small glowing globe a year before. Other people in the crowd claimed to spot the light for a brief moment before it blinked out, but I was never so fortunate.

An hour later it was nearly completely dark. The sky was clear of clouds and stars sparkled overhead like so many shiny diamonds spilled on black velvet. Chris, who had grown up in Chicago, remarked that he had never seen the Milky Way before. The latter now stretched from horizon to horizon like a jeweled necklace. I had the sneaking impression that a lot of the other assembled sky-watchers hadn't spent much time out of doors in the country at night, either, since several oohs and aahs went up everytime a satellite passed overhead. Obvious airplanes drew a similar response. From what I could judge, and going by the frequency, we were looking at the flight-path of planes taking off or landing at Gatwick or Heathrow, just over the Eastern horizon. Once the landing lights were turned off, most of these "UFOs" were quickly resolved.

The military air traffic was somewhat more problematic. On Tuesday night Greer's group had indeed been buzzed by

several British military helicopters, either confused by his powerful flashlights or simply curious about same. As it turns out, Wiltshire, England's largest county, is approximately 30 to 35 percent "owned" or controlled by the British military, who obviously don't have the vast desert expanses of New Mexico and Nevada with which to play around with as we do here. In fact, the Salisbury Plains, site of Stonehenge and just to our South, is the equivalent of Camp Bullis outside San Antonio, with the proviso that British military authorities are even less answerable to civilians than their American counterparts.

Not only were we buzzed by several helicopters, then, but we were also treated to the spectacle of a C-130 Hercules transport zooming by *below* our hilltop position in the dark dusk and without any running lights. "Isn't that against the law?" an American asked. "Not here," answered a British accent. "The military make the laws as they go." And although I didn't see it personally, someone following the Hercules in binoculars said it later turned on its lights just before dropping out of sight over the northern horizon.

More military treats were in store. At periodic intervals parachute flares shot up over the plains to the south and slowly descended to the ground. A repeating search-light beam also swept the sky. Discussing the situation with some local land-owners later, I learned that such activity was standard operating procedure. In other words, unless one is of a particularly paranoid or egocentric frame of mind, the English military was probably simply going about its routine business. We just happened to have set up shop in the vicinity of their regular traffic lanes.

There were two isolated incidents worth mentioning, however. One "airplane," when its blinking red lights were viewed through binoculars, seemed to be skipping through space in an erratic fashion. Instead of following a horizontal track between blinks, it would jump this way and that, left, right, up and down, although it maintained a generally east to north direction. Several observers were able to note this erratic behavior and audibly comment upon it.

The second incident didn't really "occur" until the following day. Project Argus received a report of another formation beneath Milk Hill, this time in the field just west of the one in which the five-circle formation had appeared the previous Thursday. Permission to enter the property was promptly obtained, and we set about labeling the bags for the various soil and crop samples to be collected and analyzed.

We had no trouble finding the formation this time, a basic dumbbell with additions, which lay a hundred yards or so east of the dirt track leading up to Milk Hill. Presumably we were the first people on the scene, although a young couple arrived while we were still collecting samples. While not as precisely neat in appearance and execution as their earlier counterparts in the next field over, the new circles nonetheless had a few features which would have been time-consuming to hoax. One of these was the now proverbial single line of standing crop one either side of the tramline. Another feature is what I refer to as a "hutch," a standing clump of stalks that should

have been flattened had a wide roller been employed (see photo). Again, I don't argue that such a feature would have been positively and absolutely impossible to hoax; only that it would have required considerable ingenuity and dexterity to create. Not only would a human hoaxer have to have saved the upright (and interspersed) stalks from initial flattening in the first place, he or she would then have to have seen to the fact that the overall flow of the formation was similarly directed. The effect is hard to describe in words, but what it amounts to is this: instead of continuing in the straight path lay-down that might be expected had a hand-roller been used, the flow of the photographed formation swirled, or angled in, behind the standing hutch; in other words, each standing hutch would have to have been hand-held (or otherwise supported) while the crop stalks on either side were flattened at a flaring angle and then repositioned so as to come together in a unified flow *behind* the standing hutch.

This might seem to be an extraordinary claim demanding extraordinary proof; but in this case the skeptics are also beholden to the cereologists: in other words, any feature that can be documented by the former should be demonstrable by the latter.

And now a second unusual feature of this particular formation became evident: It was exactly where the fleeting light had been seen the night before from atop Woodborough Hill! What was the "light"? I don't know, since I never saw it. Presumably, it *could* have been the same sort of small flying globe Alexander had filmed. But might it also have been a human being in a light-colored T-shirt, seen at a distance of just over two miles in fading light, bobbing up and down in the wheat, or perhaps merely bicycling down the dirt road that ran up toward Milk Hill? All I do know is that the eye can certainly play tricks when expectations are as high as they are in the crop fields of England.

More circles were seen than I've enumerated here, and of course there were more conversations about the nature of the circles, both pro and con, than I have time to recount. The above are simply the highlights of my own visit. I'm sure others will have their own to report in these pages or elsewhere. Before closing, I would simply urge that you take reports of British military surveillance of crop circles (and cereologists!) with a grain of salt, if not an entire salt lick. They may simply be as curious about the ground markings as we are.

Finally, it was Friday morning and time to begin the long trip back home to the waiting workaday routine. Chris Talariski was returning the same day so we rode down to Gat-



Marshall Dudley walking out the larger of the two Lockeridge circles

wick together, but not before checking out one last report. Another huge crop circle escargot had been found in a field west of Stanton St. Bernard, just south of the paved road running into Devizes, less than a mile from yesterday's Milk Hill circles. As we drove up, a small crowd of 10 or so people were patiently waiting for Project Argus to arrive and take samples before entering the formation, which had been discovered at about 5:30 that morning. We didn't have time to enter on foot, so had to content ourselves with just driving by on the way to Gatwick. But I still thought there was something fishy about the snail formations in general, and I heard later that this one was indeed suspected of being a hoax.

So what are the circles, snails, whales, brains and other images appearing in the English cereal grain fields? I wish I knew (so I could stop spending my own time and money on them, if nothing else!). I do know that only the most self-deceiving cereologist can continue to argue that human hoaxing isn't widespread, when the evidence suggests otherwise. It's just conceivable that others are the byproduct of some sort of natural weather phenomenon, perhaps the plasma-vortex Dr. Meaden has been arguing for, for almost a decade. And it's just conceivable, if barely, that some third unknown party is at work here, although tangible scientific evidence of its existence remains elusive.

Perhaps all three parties are collectively responsible. What is known is that human hoaxing has vastly confused the current status quo of the crop circle phenomenon. And the situation on the ground isn't likely to improve until Project Argus or some similar group comes up with a definitive technique for separating the real thing from increasingly clever hoaxers.

## The Linda Cortile Abduction Case

by Budd Hopkins

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The celebrated "case of the century" has everything — from multiple independent witnesses to a major political figure.

In late November 1989, I received a phone call from "Linda Cortile," a woman with whom I had been working since the previous April. She had written to me at that time after reading *Intruders*. Certain details in my book had led her to suspect that she might have undergone partially remembered UFO abductions, and subsequent interviews and hypnotic regression sessions apparently confirmed her suspicions. We had explored several UFO experiences from Linda's childhood, her teenage years and her twenties, but in November of 1989, she believed (hoped) that these encounters had ceased. However, the purpose of her call to me that November morning was to describe what she felt was an abduction that had occurred only six or seven hours earlier. Under the circumstances, she was more than a little agitated.

Linda's husband normally worked nights, but this particular week he had jury duty and so was home that evening. She explained that he had gone to sleep in the master bedroom, while she — never an easy night-time sleeper — took care of the family laundry. "It's a four-part job," she said, "washing, folding, ironing and putting away." She joined her sleeping husband in bed a little after 3:00 a.m., and within a very few minutes began to feel a disturbingly familiar sense of numbness moving from her feet up her body. She sensed a presence in the room and tried desperately to awaken her husband. Then she saw a small creature — large-headed, with huge black eyes — approaching the bed. Her arms and upper body were not completely paralyzed, so in panic she seized a heavy decorative pillow and threw it at the figure. She was instantly unable to move her arms, and was suffused with fearful regret: "I've made them mad. Now they'll take my children." Through her confusion and worry she told me that she had a few other memory fragments. In one she recalled being seated on a table while small hands or instruments pounded gently up and down her spine. In another she remembered seeing white fabric moving up towards her eyes and then moving down again. I calmed her as best I could and we arranged for a meeting three days hence to explore these recollections under hypnosis.

In that session, she recalled three or four small figures approaching her bed, moving her into the living room, and then



"Linda Cortile" at Albuquerque (photo by W. Andrus)

taking her outside, through a *closed* window, into a bluish-white beam of light. She was now vertical, standing in space, 12 stories above the ground! Somehow she then floated upwards, passing through a circular opening and into a large object hovering just above the building. The rest of the experience was what we have come to expect — a physical examination on a table and so forth, including the soft, methodical pounding of little alien hands along her vertebra.

Her return was shocking: she felt herself being dropped on her bed from what seemed to be a foot or two above it. She immediately tried to awaken her husband but he was as still as death. Fearing the worst she rushed into her children's room, and they, too, were completely unresponsive. "They've killed my family," was her horrified thought. Thinking as clearly as she could in this emergency, she managed to find a small hand mirror and thrust it under the nose of one of her sons. Moisture formed; he was alive. Instantly her other boy stirred and began breathing audibly, and from her bedroom a moment later came the now-welcome sounds of her husband's snores. The apparently switched-off family members were all returned to

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**Why is the Cortile case exceptional? I believe it has to do with the presence in Dan and Richard's car of the Third Man — an important political figure. In fact, it would appear that the abduction was staged for his benefit.**

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normal sleep-states at almost the same instant.

I again calmed Linda as best I could, and after the session ended we discussed the meaning of these recollections. She felt that, in addition to the terror of her abduction, she may have also suffered the indignity of being naked outside the building as she hovered 120 feet up in the bluish-white light. She guessed that the white cloth she saw coming up and then moving down was her long, floor-length nightgown. Above all, she felt the aftershocks of the desperate fear she had experienced when she assumed the aliens had killed her husband and sons.

The months passed and other cases unfolded, involving other people in UFO abductions in and out of New York City. Linda and about 35 others regularly attended my support group meetings, held about every three weeks. My work load never lessened, and I was still unable to get caught up with my mail. But then one day in early February 1991, about 15 months after Linda's 1989 abduction, I received a typewritten letter addressed to my home, and signed with two first names — Richard and Dan:

*Dear Mr. Hopkins:*

*My partner and I are police officers ... we have been in a serious dilemma because of our strict profession. One early morning, about 3:00 to 3:30 a.m. in late November 1989, we sat in our patrol car underneath the underpass of the FDR Drive on (address details deleted - BH), observing the surroundings ahead. Sitting on the passenger side of our vehicle, I reached into my shirt pocket for a stick of gum. As I opened it, I looked down at the silver wrapping that was left in my hand and saw it reflecting a firelight type of reddish glow. I looked up through the windshield to see where it was coming from, and there it was — a strange oval hovering over the top of an apartment building two to three blocks up from where we were sitting. We don't know where it came from.*

*Its lights turned from a bright reddish-orange to a very bright whitish blue, coming out from the bottom of it. It moved out away from the building and lowered itself to an apartment window just below. I yelled for my partner who was sitting beside me, behind the wheel of the patrol car, and he was just as excited as I was. I had to be sure of what I was seeing so I went into the glove compartment to get a pair of binoculars. We grabbed hold of each other and were going to get out of the car, but what could we do for*

*that poor little girl or woman wearing a full white nightgown? She was floating in midair in a bright beam of whitish blue light, looking like an angel. She was then brought up into the bottom of that very large oval (about three quarters the size of the building across).*

*This poor person was escorted out of her window. I don't know if she was willing or not. I don't think so, because it seemed as though she was being escorted up into this thing by three ugly but smaller human-like creatures, one above her and two below. They seemed to be in charge.*

*On top of our fear of getting involved, we were also carrying a load of guilt because we didn't help her and we don't know what's become of her. After she was escorted up and in, the oval turned reddish-orange again and whisked away, coming in our direction, above us. It must have flown over the FDR Drive while we were sitting underneath it. It then plunged into the river behind us, not far from Pier 17, behind the Brooklyn Bridge.*

*Someone else had to see what happened that morning. I know what we saw, and we'll never forget it.*

*Mr. Hopkins, the oval never came up from under the river. It's possible that it could have, after we drove away about 45 minutes later. We would have stayed longer but we couldn't ignore our radio call any longer. The guilt is brutal, more so than the fear we felt when we witnessed this terrible encounter. The guilt has lingered into today and we find it difficult living with ourselves.*

*My partner and I have been debating for 14 or 15 months if we should seek her out. We know the building and we know which window she came out of. Perhaps she was just a figment of our imagination. If she isn't, is she alive and well? We have to know.*

*We're feeling better now that we've had the chance to tell someone else other than ourselves. We wish to stay anonymous for the time being on account of our profession ... If we should decide to seek this person out (and she may very well value her privacy as we do, and we respect that), we'll contact you again with further information if we do find her, and I hope we do.*

*Many thanks,  
Police Officers Dan and Richard*

My astonishment at reading this letter was all the more profound because I immediately realized that the person in the long white gown was, of course, Linda Cortile. The policemen's account corroborated, among other things, the time and date of her abduction, the location of her building, the colors of her nightgown and the beam of light that lifted her up into the UFO. But this was to be only the beginning of an extraordinarily complex saga. In the next year and a half I would receive three more letters from Dan and seven more letters and an audio-cassette tape from Richard. In April and again in October 1991, Linda would suffer hours-long forced confinements and interroga-

tions at the hands of these confused frightened "law-enforcement" officers; she would be struck by a car during a chase through the streets of lower Manhattan; and one of the two officers would suffer a serious psychological collapse.

In the fall of 1991 another extremely important development occurred: a third unrelated witness came forward and described the UFO abduction as it appeared from her vantage point on the Brooklyn Bridge. But even this list does not begin to include all the testimony — nor all the witnesses — in support of the fact that Linda Cortile was in fact taken through a window of her twelfth floor Manhattan apartment building by three diminutive, large-headed creatures; the four floated in a bluish-white beam of light and then rose effortlessly up into a hovering UFO.

After Dan and Richard's original February letter to me, I telephoned Linda and asked her to sit down, that I had something I wanted to read to her. Her reaction to the letter was one of shock. In my experience, whenever abductees receive what they regard as confirmation — evidence establishing the physical reality of UFO abductions — their reaction is always one of shock and depression. No one really wants these events to be true. When Linda had composed herself and we began talking about the situation, I asked her to be prepared for a visit from Richard and Dan, since their letter implied that they would probably try to find her. They seemed determined to learn if she had, indeed, survived the abduction they had done nothing to prevent.

A few weeks later, Linda phoned me to say that they had just left her apartment. When she let them in, she explained, they had been astounded that she was expecting them, and that she and I had been in touch. Dan's reaction had been powerful; he sat down on the couch, put his head in his hands, and said, "My God, it's really her." Richard, with tears in his eyes, hugged her with relief that she was alive and well. Each man in turn went to the window to look down and see where their car had been parked.

Each then asked her to tell them what she remembered about the encounter, but she declined as I had asked her to do, since I naturally wanted to hear for myself any independent verification of this "unbelievable" event. The officers said they could not come forward, nor would they meet me face-to-face; I was, after all, known to them primarily as a published writer on the subject. Their hard-won professional reputations, they felt, would be severely damaged if their names were made public along with their UFO account. As they later explained, they had contacted me partly because they wanted the *event* to be known, but not their identities, and felt that they could trust me in this matter.

Their dilemma became even clearer some weeks later when Dan informed me by letter that there was a major extenuating circumstance behind their need for absolute anonymity. They were not, they admitted, New York City police

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***Their automobile engine had inexplicably died, their headlights had gone out, and their radio and car phone had ceased working.***

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officers, nor were they alone in their car that fateful November morning. They were, in fact, security agents escorting an important political figure to a downtown heliport. They had not been "undercover" when the UFO incident occurred. Their automobile engine had inexplicably died, their headlights had gone out, and their radio and car phone had ceased working. While Dan steered, Richard pushed the car under the elevated FDR Drive so that they were in a safer security position. It was in this circumstance that they saw Linda's abduction unfold.

Months later I heard from another witness who had seen the same event from her location on the Brooklyn Bridge; she told me that her car engine had died and her headlights, as well as the lights on the bridge's roadway, had temporarily failed. Though the entire abduction procedure may have taken less than a minute, more than these two cars were apparently involved; Richard, Dan and the woman on the bridge have all mentioned other witnesses. For example, another independent witness — a woman ignorant of the details of Linda's abduction — has told me of having seen a reddish-orange object in the sky in that general area at what turned out to be the same time and date. I fully expect other witnesses will eventually surface, and so I am keeping certain details of the event secret. Obviously, I need to be able to check the veracity of anyone who might in the future come forward claiming to have seen the Cortile abduction.

In the audio cassette tape Richard sent to me in which he recounted his version of the November abduction, he described Linda and the three aliens as coming through the window "in a fetal position." (The woman on the bridge phrased it slightly differently: "They were all rolled up," she said, when they first "tumbled out of the window.") Neither the woman nor Dan and Richard ever described Linda as being naked, as she had feared when she recalled the white cloth of her nightgown coming up towards her face and then going away. But Linda also did not recall ever being in a fetal position. This apparent discrepancy evaporated when I realized that the white cloth Linda saw approaching her face and then receding was most likely her own fabric-covered knees as she went into, and then out of, a curled, fetal position. The altered state she was apparently in when she floated through the closed window precluded, it would seem, clear, precise recollections.

In future articles I will discuss other facets of this case, and I will present, among other things, a full account of my interviews with the witness on the bridge. The case is extraordinary for many reasons, but one of the central issues

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**The importance of the case can hardly be exaggerated. It establishes the physical reality of the UFO abduction experience and the deceptive behavior of the UFO occupants at the highest levels. It is the strongest evidence yet for the reality of UFOs, their occupants, and their program of systematic abduction of human beings.**

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has to be with the fact that there were other witnesses in the first place. One of the most puzzling aspects of the abduction phenomenon is its seeming invisibility. From the beginning we know that the abductees "disappear" from the normal world, are often searched for by family, police and others, and then magically turn up, their bodies often marked by the signs of their abduction experiences. One would think that they could not have been taken without witnesses, and yet this is almost always what the evidence suggests. The occasional exceptions to this non-witness enigma are most often family members or friends, whose testimony is therefore not as independent as one might wish. So why is the Cortile case an exception? It has to do, I believe, with the presence in Dan and Richard's car of the third man, the important political figure. It would appear that the abduction was *staged* for his benefit, as a demonstration of alien intentions and power. I cannot get into the evidence at this time which supports this unusual hypothesis; let me just say that the evidence does exist, and that this conclusion seems inevitable. The aliens *wanted* him to see what they could do.

It follows, then, that we do not know if this staging involves any more witnesses with present-day conscious recall. It is possible that, for some reason, Dan, Richard and the woman on the bridge were "permitted" to see and to remember as support for the third man's recollections, and that other potential witnesses in the vicinity were not; that their powers of observation and/or recollection have been blocked. Time will undoubtedly answer this thorny — but not at all unusual — question.

The evidence for the reality of these events is extraordinarily rich and varied. It includes letters, taped statements, drawings, and verbal testimony. Apart from Linda, with whom I have done six hypnotic regressions on related issues, I have interviewed at length seven other witnesses to various aspects of this case. Videotapes have been made, relevant license plates have been successfully checked out, and an enormous amount of miscellaneous investigation has been conducted. Some of this work has been accomplished with the help of a law enforcement officer with special knowledge of particularly relevant material. I have availed myself of the expertise of two psychiatrists and two psychologists in the analysis of different aspects of the case: Dan's deteriorating emotional state as demonstrated by his letters, Linda's emotional stability and truthfulness, and the reactions of Richard, the third man, and

Linda's family, as revealed in letters and interviews. Videotapes of two interviews exist for future study by mental health professionals. The unanimous conclusion of those who know the extent of the evidence is clear. In this, as in so many other UFO cases, a straight line turns out to be the shortest distance between two points; the witnesses are simply relating what happened to them. These events actually occurred.

One of the most fascinating pieces of evidence involves the two sets of witness drawings I have been given — Richard's and those made by the woman on the bridge. The style of the drawings is quite different. Both witnesses used crayons — probably Crayolas — so the colors are similar, but the woman on the bridge is less skillful than Richard. Since she was farther away from Linda's building than he and she did not have the benefit of binoculars, her images are more panoramic and include details from the bridge's structural members as well as nearby apartment buildings. Her attempts at perspective are quite awkward, and she commits a common error among untrained artists, that of combining different points of view in the same image. For example, the highway below is rendered as if it were *parallel* to the bridge — in fact, it passes under the bridge virtually at a right angle — and it is presented in a flat, *top view*, whereas the buildings abutting the road are presented in a *side view*. (The contradiction is similar to that commonly found in primitive portraiture, where a wide, *frontal eye* is placed in a strictly *profile head*).

Richard, on the other hand, renders the UFO in much more accurate perspective and his drawing style is far more sophisticated. In his image showing the fetally compacted figures floating upwards toward the UFO, he attempts a degree of dark and light modelling in the craft's underside and presents the figures in a somewhat complex three-quarter pose. The bridge witness, on the other hand, renders them in a much more primitive manner: they are shown in strict, simplistic profile, their little stick-figure feet pointing out to the left. As one might expect, there are other subtle differences between the two sets of drawings. Richard, being closer, saw a dome-like bulge on top of the craft which the bridge witness does not include, but essentially the drawings strongly support the accounts of all the witnesses.

I've used my years of experience as an artist and writer to study the many technical and stylistic differences in the drawing and writing styles of Linda and the four witnesses. In an examination of typefaces, for example, I found that Richard has used two different typewriters, the one used in his first joint letter with Dan appearing only twice — that first time and then again in the note he sent me to accompany his cassette tape. All of Richard's subsequent letters are justified on the right and have the same typeface as all but one of Dan's letters, suggesting either that they were produced on the same sophisticated typewriter or that both agents owned identical general-issue machines. The sole letter of Dan's that was written on another machine was apparently composed while he was

being treated in a rest home in December of 1991. Aside from that one letter, Dan consistently uses 9" x 6" paper, while Richard usually prefers regular 11" x 8½" sheets.

The Third Man's letter to me was typed on yet a fourth machine, using sheets 10½" x 7¼", and unlike most of Richard's and Dan's, his sentences were not justified on the right. The typewriter used by the woman on the bridge has still another typeface, and Linda's yet another, neither of which justifies the paragraphs on the right. All in all, at least six different machines were used to produce the various letters and notes sent to me about this case.

This is not the place for extensive analysis of the different literary styles, vocabularies, paragraphing or characteristic grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors, but the differences among the five writers are quite consistent. Dan's and Richard's literary styles and paragraphing are most alike, perhaps a reflection of their similar training in report construction and their close professional partnership. It is highly possible that, over the years, they have jointly written many official reports so that their styles blend. For example, neither indents at the beginning of a paragraph, and both separate paragraphs by the device of double spacing. Both use short, succinct paragraphs. For his part, Richard has one idiosyncrasy not shared by any of the other four writers, and which appears in roughly half of his letters. In these he indents the whole of alternating paragraphs, presumably to separate them visually from one another.

Unlike Richard and Dan, the third man uses a six-space indent at the beginning of the first line of each paragraph, and then separates them further by double spacing. I've obtained a copy of another letter sent by the third man on an unrelated official matter, and the same six-space indentation and double spacing between paragraphs is used.

In the hundreds of pages of notes I've received from Linda I've observed that she also indents six spaces in the first sentence of each paragraph, but she does not double-space between paragraphs. The woman on the bridge also uses an indent in the first sentence of each paragraph, but, like the third man and unlike Linda, she uses a double space between paragraphs.

When it comes to grammar and punctuation, Richard consistently makes a common but egregious error that his partner avoids: placing quotation marks around words or phrases that he means to emphasize, rather than underlining them. Dan employs quotation marks correctly to establish a direct quote or, occasionally, to give an ironical spin to a word or phrase (a usage writers refer to as "scare quotes"). Richard also frequently places an apostrophe in the wrong place, as in "would'nt," a punctuation problem Dan does not share. Overall, Dan's mastery of grammar, spelling, syntax and other simple writing skills is superior to his partner's.

Many other consistent stylistic elements exist in the material I've received from each writer, too many to mention here. But the third man's suppler sentences and more

sophisticated vocabulary provide an especially clear example of the different cultural, educational and literary backgrounds of these five people. Beyond these issues is another of extreme subtlety. Since the letters I've received from the third man, Dan and Richard span a period of a year and a half, the relationships among them and their various attitudes toward Linda and the UFO phenomenon itself have remained anything but fixed. There is a dynamic to the thinking and behavior of each witness which can be felt as an undertone in each succeeding communication. Dan's clearly deteriorating mental state is fixed on the idea that Linda in some way is an alien herself, or at least a "halfbreed," to use his denigrating term.

Richard's attitude towards Linda is the most consistently supportive, yet he often despairs of what he calls her "stubbornness," and like his partner, he also occasionally accuses Linda of being part alien. In fact, when one reads Linda's notes and the letters of Dan, Richard, the third man and the woman on the bridge and compares their many pages with the work of even so famous an epistolary novelist as Laclos, one finds these contemporary letters just as nuanced and clear in their revelation of character. And despite the bizarre nature of the events they disclose, they are even more believable in their subtle revelation of particular behavior and response.

The importance of the Linda Cortile case can hardly be exaggerated. It established the physical reality of the UFO abduction experience, and, as a full discussion of the case will finally reveal, the deceptive behavior of the UFO occupants at the highest levels. Publicly, this case will be severely attacked by the professional debunkers who will see it for what is — the strongest evidence yet for the reality of UFOs, their occupants, and their program of systematic abduction of human beings. This they cannot tolerate. And if rumors are true and there are officially sanctioned intelligence agents within the various UFO investigative networks, these people will also be mobilized to subvert the case from the inside, even before its full dimensions are made known to the public at large. The stakes are that high.

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## The UFO Press

**A John Keel classic gets a paperback update and Salvador Freixedo his first English translation**

Whether you love John Keel or loathe him, the one thing that almost all people agree on is that the man is rarely dull. Here, for example, is the opening sentence to "Beelzebub Visits West Virginia," the first chapter of Keel's recently reissued classic, *The Mothman Prophecies*: "Fingers of lightning tore holes in the black skies as an angry cloudburst drenched the surrealistic landscape."

This is gothic prose at its purplest, but the man certainly knows how to grab the reader's attention. And he doesn't let it go until some 270 pages later, after 46 people have died in the collapse of the old Silver Bridge over the Ohio River at Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

Keel also knows how to tell a story, and what stories are in store for the unwary reader of *Mothman*, first published in hardback in 1975 by the Saturday Review Press. The red-eyed, winged monster, the "Mothman" of the book's title, is only the half of it. Before the 700-foot-long Point Pleasant bridge takes its fatal plunge, readers are regaled with almost every element of the modern UFO horror story, from well-meaning contactees and big dark American sedans with Men in Black inside (and out), to animal mutilations and even aerial vampires giving chase to the local Red Cross Bloodmobile! After awhile, telephone taps and government conspiracies are almost a welcome respite.

But if it's comic relief you're looking for, look elsewhere. Keel takes his saucers and such seriously, wondering at one point if Charles Fort, his spiritual godfather, might not have been right after all. In other words, if there is a universal mind, why necessarily assume it's sane? Perhaps there is some humor in *Mothman* somewhere, but if so, it's as dark as the tail-fins of a black 1968 Cadillac with which the book is laced.

*Mothman* is undoubtedly a thrilling ride, but it rarely stops for documentation or backs up for a footnote. Unlike Fort, who was given to meticulous citations, Keel rarely lets a reference get in the way of a good story. Of course Keel was living this one in the first person, so the omission doesn't loom as large as it does in some of his other works. Keel simply assumes that his readers have already read their Fort and share his unshaken assumptions that the world is a very weird place indeed.

Nor is Keel out to make friends, which, ironically, is probably one of the reasons why so many of his readers find him so endearing. Here he is, for example, in the new Afterword written for this edition, addressing the reception of another of his books, *The Eighth Tower*: "But the hardcore UFO buffs are as baffled as ever by the electromagnetic spectrum, atomic structure and other basics. They are forever

the outsiders, peering through a window made murky by their own belief systems, always crying sadly, 'Why doesn't someone tell us what's going on?' The truth, of course, is that they are incapable of understanding and, worse, it is plainly none of their business anyway!"

If Keel the curmudgeon is your cup of tea, this \$16.95 paperback reprint is available from Arcturus Books or the publisher, IllumiNet Press, P. O. Box 746, Avondale Estates, GA, 30002. (Write for details.) The art is by Frank Frazetta and, if memory serves, once graced the cover of an old issue of *High Times* containing a feature article by Keel.

The same theme is continued in the introduction Keel contributes to another recent IllumiNet publication, Salvador Freixedo's *Visionaries, Mystics & Contactees*, translated from the Spanish by Scott Corrales (\$12.95, 165pp). Unbowed and unmellowed, he claims that "the average UFO reader wants to be stimulated to a fit of irrational anger with tales of conspiracy and government suppression. As a result, you don't need an I.Q. to deal with the material, you just need suspension of disbelief and a naive gullibility. Crashed saucer stories are accepted as blindly as the impossible antics of James Bond in the movies. The padre is not offering this kind of porn. He is trying to jar your thinking apparatus into functioning."

Maybe, John, but unfortunately, the padre tends to read like warmed-over European Keel (or in some cases, Vallee). I'm not saying this is a bad book, mind; in fact, if you're a Keel addict, *Visionaries* is probably a better hit than the former's last collection of essays, *Disneyland of the Gods*. The language, as translated, is certainly vigorous enough, and Father Freixedo proves every bit as opinionated as Keel himself. The main themes are also familiar, namely that religious "miracles" are relatively commonplace, that reality has always been altered, so to speak, and that the claimed interaction of humans with other, non-human intelligences is certainly nothing new and can, in fact, be traced back to the dawn of history.

But Freixedo's faults and shortcomings are also Keel's multiplied to excess. It is one thing to be coaxed or badgered into thinking for oneself, for instance, but it's another to be asked to accept tale after tale of this or that miraculous religious or UFO event on faith alone. And time after time this is what Freixedo asks his readers to do. In discussing a series of other odd events associated with the appearance of the Virgin Mary at Garabandal, Spain, for example, Freixedo writes that "I have been unable to verify any of these events, but if they did in fact take place, they would be in accordance with what has happened elsewhere." Unless, of course, what has reportedly happened elsewhere were equally unverified.

Keel frequently dispenses with documentation himself, but at least he generally names names. Often, Freixedo does not even do that. A typical example: "A young Jesuit died in a car, returning from Garabandal. He died in his seat, without any evident cause beyond shock from what he'd

witnessed. The bishop of the diocese died inexplicably at the wheel of his car. This took place shortly after a note was made public in which he discredited the apparitions. Even more curious is the fact that he died the day of the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, who was one of the apparitions." Moreover, "a German tourist who had gone to Garabandal out of curiosity and who had also asked improper questions of the girls, causing a great deal of anger, also died suddenly."

Freixedo acknowledges the research of one Fernando Calderon for this information, but no works by Calderon are cited in the rather perfunctory bibliography. Again it's all very well to be forced to put one's thinking cap on now and again, but thinking in a vacuum is just that — vacuous thinking. At some point, one has to use facts to think with, facts that can be at least roughly verified, or else one is simply adrift at sea, trying to cling to whatever flotsam is floating by.

What is being attempted here is an overthrow of Catholic dogma and the establishment of a synthesis of religious and UFO-related phenomena to be achieved by new advances in physics, theology and parapsychology. That's a tall order for any book, even one by John Keel, and especially for one without a single footnote.

I certainly don't mean to make light of *Visionaries*, nor am I suggesting that footnotes alone would somehow establish Freixedo's case, although God, after all, is in the details. The thesis is vigorous enough and worthy of consideration. But without verified facts to back it up, it's basically a case of singing to the choir, and in this particular case the choir is clearly Keel's.

Reviewed by Dennis Stacy

## READERS' CLASSIFIEDS

**HUMAN REACTIONS STUDY:** George D. Fawcett's unique four-year study of "Human Reactions to UFOs Worldwide" (1940-83) covers 31 distinct human reactions to UFOs in over 25 countries. Available for \$7.90 (includes p&h) from Arcturus Books, P.O. Box 831383, Stone Mountain, GA 30083-0023.

**UFO SOUNDS:** Researching personal experiences of sounds associated with UFO sightings or recurring anomalous light phenomena. Looking for patterns, old and new cases alike. Send brief description, location and date and any recordings done on audio cassette to: Lindy Tucker, P.O. Box 627, Sebring, FL 33871. Can be kept confidential.

**EUFORA (Experiencers of UFO-Related Anomalies) SUPPORT LINE:** for persons experiencing abduction and other types of encounters. Call professional counselor (abductee/experiencer) Granville Angell, Med, EdS, NCC. 1-800-331-1117. 95¢ per minute. VISA or Master Card only.

**COMPASS EFFECT REPORTS:** I will pay \$35 each for photocopies of all published UFO reports which I don't have which mention that a magnetic compass or a magnetic detector was affected. Because I have already collected numerous such cases, interested persons should first request my list of known reports. Eric Herr, P.O. Box 15044, San Diego, CA 92175.

**SKEPTICS UFO NEWSLETTER:** Published bimonthly by Philip J. Klass \$15/year for U.S., Canada; \$20/year overseas airmail. Sample copy \$2.00. 404 "N" St. SW., Washington, DC 20024.

**RARE UFO COLLECTION:** Collector's dream. Original pre-1948 to present material. Some 100 books, videos, clippings, NICAP journals, etc. \$10,000. Jim Gialpis, 50 Sleepy Hollow Rd., Niantic, CT 06357.

**INTERNATIONAL UFO CENTER, ORLANDO, FL:** has opened up a UFO Museum and Retail store at 7227 International Drive in Orlando, FL. We carry one of the most complete lines of MUFON and other UFO related articles anywhere. If you can't make it to our store, write for your free catalog to: International UFO Center, 11955 S. Orange Blossom Dr., Suite 1144, Orlando, FL 32837. PH: 407-351-4306.

James Greenen, owner of the International UFO Center had the honor of visiting the UFO ENIGMA MUSEUM in Roswell, NM. I would personally like to congratulate John Price on the excellent job he has done on the Museum. If you are in Roswell, NM, please stop by. It's worth the trip. Enjoyed the chat, John, keep up the good work.

**WANTED:** By serious collector. Rare UFO newscippings, magazine articles, memorabilia in good condition. Send information to: Loren Gross, 690 Gable Dr., Fremont CA, 94538. Top prices paid for the right items. Prefer older material.

**CROP CIRCLE LANGUAGE:** Read my book and you can translate genuine, complex pictograms. Independently verifiable theory. Ancient, documented evidence (Sitchin) and UFO links. 8 volumes, 389 pages. \$29 + \$6 p&h. U.S. funds only. Add \$7 overseas, air. Mailed within 72 hours. Steve Canada, Box 1913, Morro Bay, CA 93443.

**READER'S CLASSIFIEDS:** To place your ad in this section simply enclose a check for \$15 for each issue of the *Journal* in which you wish it to appear. Limit 50 words, please. Authors advertising books must make a hard copy available to the editor. Acceptance is at the discretion of the editors and in no way implies endorsement by the Mutual UFO Network, its Board of Directors or the *Journal* itself. Mail ad and check, made out to MUFON, to Dennis Stacy, Box 12434, San Antonio, TX 78212, or to Walt Andrus, MUFON, 103 Oldtowne Road, Seguin, TX 78155-4099.

### Central Texas UFO Mini-Conference

The Austin-MUFON section is sponsoring the Central Texas UFO Mini-Conference on Saturday, September 26, 1992, starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Doubletree Hotel located at IH-35 and U.S. 290 in Austin, Texas. Speakers and their subjects will be George Wingfield, "1991 and 1992 English Crop Circles Update"; Karla Turner, "Abduction Research with Recent Developments"; and Ed Conroy, Author, "Report on Communion Recap and Update." Registration opens at 5:00 p.m. The cost is \$15 to the public or \$12 for MUFON members. For more information call Ellen R. Stuart at (512) 288-0505.

## Looking Back

**Robert Gribble's farewell column looks at the famous Flatwoods "Monster" and other aerial anomalies from Septembers past.**

**September 1952** ■ Early on the evening of the 12th, thousands of people observed a glowing object as it flashed over the state of West Virginia. Among those who saw it near Flatwoods, were Mrs. Kathleen May, her three young boys, and a 17-year-old National guardsman, Gene Lemon. Though they couldn't be sure, they thought they saw something land on a nearby hill. It was dark when they climbed the slope, and Gene Lemon turned on his flashlight. The first thing they noticed was an unpleasant, suffocating odor. As they neared the spot where the object seemed to have landed, two shining eyes were reflected in the light. Thinking it was a raccoon on a limb, young Lemon caught it in the beam. The light fell squarely on a huge figure, at least nine feet tall, with a sweaty red face and protruding eyes about a foot apart. As the light fell on it, the being's body glowed a dull green, then with an odd hissing sound it started toward them.

Terrified, Mrs. May and the boys fled down the hill. While Mrs. May was phoning the sheriff at Sutton, her mother noticed a queer oily substance on the boys' faces. Soon after this, their throats began to swell. Later it was suggested that the being had sprayed the boys with some kind of gas; but in the excitement Mrs. May could not be certain. When the sheriff arrived a fog was settling over the hillside. Twice he tried to get his dogs to lead him to the spot where the being had been seen. Each time they ran away, howling, and he gave up until morning. During the night the Lemon boy became seriously ill, almost in convulsions. His throat, like those of the May boys, was strangely inflamed and swollen. Later, a doctor compared the effects with those of mustard gas.

Just after sunrise, according to a Sutton school-board member, a strange machine took off from the hilltop. When the sheriff and his men searched the area they found tracks on the ground, the grass mashed flat, and bits of what looked like black plastic. There was no trace of the fearful looking being Mrs. May and the boys had described. (*Flying Saucers From Outer Space* by Major Donald Keyhoe)

■ About 8 p.m. on the 13th, George Snitowsky was driving in West Virginia with his wife and 18-month-old son, when the car engine stalled. According to his map they were in Braxton County, near Frametown and Sutton. A faintly sickening odor, somewhat like a mixture of ether and burnt sulphur trailed into the car. The baby, sleeping in the backseat crib, suddenly began wailing and coughing. George's first thought was that something was burning in the car and he

got out fast and raised the hood. There was nothing he could find wrong and the car would not start. The odor seemed to be getting stronger and he got inside the car and closed all the windows. Then a dazzling flash of light flooded the car with a wavering, unsteady beam. It was blinding to the eyes.

George stepped out of the car quickly and slammed the door shut. The roadside dropped into a valley, and when he looked down between the trees, he was able to make out the outline of some kind of luminescent spheroid. It was like a frosted street lamp a couple of hundred times enlarged. It wasn't solidly planted on the ground. Instead, it seemed to float on one end, moving slightly back and forth. The craft was 200 or 300 feet away, behind a few trees, and he started to move closer, fighting back the nausea. About half way to it a hot, tingling sensation struck at his body. It was the same feeling you get when your leg falls asleep, only this was all over him. Thousands of the needle-like vibrations irritated his skin like a low-grade electric shock. He jerked away and began stumbling back to the car.

Then a piercing scream from his wife made his blood run cold. He made a wild rush for the car. On the fringe of the road about 30 feet off to his right was an immobile figure. It was a good eight or nine feet tall and in the general shape of a man, with a head and shoulders and a bloated body. It was sharply silhouetted against the light beam from the spheroid and he couldn't make out any of its features. Snitowsky climbed inside the car and slammed the door, then huddled on the floor with his wife and baby. After several minutes he raised his head up slightly and got a closeup of whatever it was out there. Reaching across the windshield from above, a long, spindly arm was forked into two soft ends. It seemed to be examining the surface of the car. Then, a few seconds later, without making any hostile or aggressive moves toward them, the being started back towards the woods.

The being wasn't walking and George could not make out anything that might be called legs. The lower torso was a single solid mass that seemed to glide across the uneven road surface. The being vanished among the trees. Shortly thereafter Snitowsky caught sight of the iridescent globe ascending over the trees. It rose slowly and made intermittent stops. At 3000 feet it swung back and forth like a pendulum gathering momentum. Suddenly it swooped up in an elliptical arc and with a dazzling trail of light shot completely out of sight. After restarting the stalled engine the Snitowsky's drove to a motel. In the morning when they re-entered their car they noticed a dark discoloration on the hood of the car as though the metal had been singed. The outline was fork-shaped. (*Male* magazine, date unknown)

**September 1957** ■ Richard Holsapple, a member of the Ground Observer Corps, and his father were working near Poughkeepsie, New York on the ninth when they noticed three strange objects in the sky. "They were flying faster

than any jet I ever saw," said Holsapple. "Two were silvery and another was somewhat darker." Holsapple said that strings of flimsy material dropped from the objects and drifted earthward to the south of him. The material descended too far away to warrant a search. (*New Yorker*, Poughkeepsie, NY, 9/10/57)

**September 1967** ■ Mrs. Lynn Henner, a 76-year-old former school teacher, was visiting her widowed sister-in-law at Hadlock, Washington on the second. At 2:10 a.m. she was awakened by something very strange outdoors. She walked over to look out her window and spotted a strange object. "I was apprehensive as soon as I saw it, I wondered why the Devil had picked on me," she said. "It was about 75 feet away. It was disc-shaped, about 20 feet high in the middle and, judging from the length of the pasture fence, about 150 feet in diameter. It was self-luminous, pale yellow, but there was something about that color that bothered me. It wasn't a pleasant color to look at. It didn't light up anything around it, in fact it almost looked as if it was projected the way a colored slide looks on a bare wall. It didn't touch the ground, just hovered above the fence." She returned to bed feeling in her heart that it was something supernatural.

A few days later Mrs. Henner learned about other neighbors seeing strange lights the same morning she had her encounter. Three houses were involved. She talked briefly to the woman occupying the first house who led her into her bedroom where they smelled a foul odor early on the morning of the second. The next house was occupied by the parents of the third house. They told of their daughter's family being awakened by a low flying object giving off a swishing noise. They could hear something dropping on the roof of their house and immediately detected a strong odor like garbage. They also saw lights outside their window and when they went outside saw a kind of smoke or jet trail.

The mother spoke no more of her daughter's predicament because she was so upset over what had happened to her own house. Her husband, 79, had just finished painting their home the day before the strange happenings. They too were awakened by the lights around their house and the next morning found the new paint job ruined. The woman took Mrs. Henner outside to show them the paint. "Why it looked like a house that hadn't been painted for years," Mrs. Henner said. "The paint was all cracked and chipped just like you see on an old house that needs painting. Even under the eaves it was ruined. The worst thing was the smudges. Large discolored areas were all over the house." (*The Bulletin*, Loma Linda, CA, 10/4/67)

**September 1972** ■ A mysterious force that cut through trees like blades of grass and tossed around boulders as though they were pebbles, baffled French scientists. "Nothing in the arsenal of my knowledge enables me to explain this phenomenon," said Professor Guy Turco, a mineralogy expert from Nice University, who investigated the peculiar incident. Turco

said he went to Montauroux after a local farmer reported the bizarre damage. The farmer, Rene Merle, said: "I own about five acres of green oaks and pines. It happened there. I walked into my woods one morning and found many of the trees cut and twisted. A line of them had been sliced as though by a giant blade that would not be stopped. The height of the cuts rose progressively from 18 inches to six feet above ground level. Tree trunks 18 inches thick had been violently twisted, as though by some huge spinning force. And a six foot section of stone wall was demolished. Many of the stones in the wall weighed upward of 40 pounds, but they had been hurled 100 feet through the air, hitting trees and scarring them."

Local Police Chief Paul Monnier said he had no explanation. "All we can say is that there took place in the woods a sort of vertical suction of unimaginable force," Monnier wrote in his official report. And scientists dismissed the idea that a natural windstorm might have created the mystery. "A tornado or whirlwind destroys everything in its path," said Marcel Raoul of the French Atomic Energy Commission. "But the devastated area at Montauroux, several hundred square yards, is too small for that and some of the trees are undamaged. Besides, a tornado always turns in just one direction. And at Montauroux, some of the trees were twisted clockwise, some counterclockwise." A few days before the incident, I saw a glowing light in the hills near the woods," said Gabriel Pascal, a local farmer. "The light was burning, part golden, part orange, part red. Other villagers saw it, too. But the fire brigade investigated and found nothing." (*National Enquirer*, 12/31/72)

**September 1977** ■ At 11 p.m., about the end of the month, Mrs. Ethel Field went out into her back garden in Parkstone, Dorset, England, to get the washing on the line. "There was a vibration in the ground, I thought it was an earthquake. I also heard a humming noise and I looked to my left from where it was coming and I saw this large disc-shaped object flying towards me," Mrs. Field said. "It seemed to be swooping upwards across the gardens as if it had come out of the sea, which is in that direction. It was very bright and shiny and looked to be made of metal. It came close and hovered a short distance away tilted slightly downwards. I could see there was a dome on top around which looked to be windows of some kind. Inside were two figures, one at a control panel and the other pointing at me."

"The light was so bright I remember putting my hands up in front of my face to protect myself. It was all over in a few seconds for the object zoomed off into the sky. But I had seen it long enough to say that the people aboard were wearing silver suits with helmets that came down in a point over the nose. The object was as big as a bus." One week after her UFO encounter Mrs. Field found the skin on her hands was scaling badly. At one stage she was in terrible pain and went to the doctor. "I don't know whether that experience had anything to do with it. I'm keeping an open mind," said Mrs. Field. (*Times*, Bournemouth, Dorset, England, 3/31/78)

## Letters

### French "Flap" A Flop?

The May 1992 *UFO Journal* carried a translation of Jean Sider's report on the November 5, 1990 UFO wave in France. Sider said the wave could be "the greatest UFO flap in France since the Autumn of 1954," as well as "one of the largest possible UFO flaps in French history."

The French space agency CNES, through its UFO study group SEPRA, explained the sightings as being caused by the atmospheric entry of a Soviet rocket (a Proton third stage). Despite Sider's argumentation against this solution, my own further research has confirmed it.

The Soviet satellite Gorizont-23 was launched by a Proton booster on November 3, 1990 (not as per Sider on October 21), into a temporary low parking orbit. The payload was injected toward geosynchronous orbit half an hour later, while the spent third stage fell from orbit within 48 hours. (See for a comparable case the similar Proton [Zond] entry over Tennessee in 1968 described by Klass in *UFOs — Explained*.)

Attached is a ground track map of the booster in the hour before it decayed and burned up. This is based on orbital elements released by the US Space Command. The trajectory took the rocket body right across the northern horizon of France. The exact point of entry could not be tracked by US Space Command sensors (outside of its radar coverage) and only an approximate point on the orbital path can be computed in advance. The west-to-east motion of the fireball in the northern skies of France is completely consistent with eyewitness accounts, connected with the predicted entry.

Sider's rebuttals to the Proton entry explanations are easily refuted:

1) *An astrophysicist at the Lyons Observatory "ruled out" the entry hypothesis.* Well, on what grounds, and what does this person know about entries? The citation is a French TV report, not a follow-up interview that a competent investigator should have done.

2) *An astronomer near Grenoble was on duty at the time and should have seen an entry.* Astronomers don't usually stand on platforms scanning the skies with their eyes, they operate complex equipment from control rooms. Besides, the scattered clouds could easily have blocked view of the fireball low on the northern horizon. The absence of the astronomer's report is no evidence for the absence of a bright entry fireball. The much later sighting appears to be independent.

3) *US Space Command said the impact was expected over the North Atlantic at 2:35 p.m.* I have been unable to confirm this published report (new officials in the press office are uncooperative), but entries can occur within 1 or 2 orbits of the expected time, and the US Space Command

times are usually given as Mountain Standard (GMT-7). The authenticity and relevance of this datum is obscure.

4) *The object was seen below the clouds.* If this means that the object passed along the northern horizon below higher clouds, above it in elevation angle from the ground, this is consistent with the entry. If it means that the sky was totally overcast and the object was seen with clouds as background, that's something else. The former interpretation is consistent with the Proton entry fireball.

5) *A structured object was perceived by witnesses.* This is a classic fireball phenomenon, where bright lights (individual fragments) are mentally integrated by witnesses into illuminated sections of a single craft. The estimates of "enormous size" are worthless since only angular size is directly perceivable. This is basic eyewitness interview technique and standards.

6) *The object's motion was irregular.* Some witnesses did report "alternating slow and rapid speeds" or a "vertical ascent," but these perceptual errors are known to occur with undisputed fireballs and are a characteristic of sudden celestial perceptions.

7) *Many witnesses were "qualified observers."* This is a discredited argumentation gimmick which falsely implies that pilots or engineers or students are more likely to recognize natural celestial apparitions. Experience has shown the opposite: they are more easily cued into unconsciously adding in interpretations from their specialties.

8) *Further investigation of this was done in the US.* My notorious reputation as a "space/rocket UFO debunker" (and genuine expert) seems to have disqualified me from being approached, but other real experts would have told Sider the same thing: the evidence was overwhelming that the sightings were caused by a space entry.

It is distressing that by now, half a century into the "modern UFO phenomenon," leading UFO groups such as Sider's and MUFON cannot recognize such overt IFO's as rocket entries. This French case is one example. Another regrettable throwback surfaced in a recent *Gribble* column on the 1967 "crescent UFO wave" over southern Russia, a wave which my research (published in the *MUFON Journal* in 1982!) showed conclusively to have been caused by Soviet orbital weapons entry tests. Nobody has argued with that solid conclusion: MUFON's editorial position appears instead to just pretend it was never published. This is not a responsible, scientific approach to the issue.

— James Oberg  
Dickinson, TX

*Not all of us can be expected to have Mr. Oberg's photographic memory of each and every article ever published in the Journal, especially of one that dates back a decade or more. However, if it were "MUFON's editorial position ... to just pretend it was never published," we would hardly be printing this letter now.*

# THE NIGHT SKY

By **Walter N. Webb**

October 1992

## • Bright Planets (Evening Sky):

Venus continues to move away from the Sun and is visible at dusk low in the WSW. The radiant planet sets about an hour and a quarter after sunset in midmonth. From October 27 to 29, while Venus slides past and above the reddish star Antares in the SW, the lunar crescent shifts from the lower right to upper left of the planet. The trio is especially pleasing on the 28th, with Venus in the middle of the display. Mercury lurks below them for observers in southern states.

Mars brightens by half a magnitude during the month, from 0.3 to -0.2, as it travels eastward through Gemini (not far from the Twin Stars Pollux and Castor). The red planet rises in the ENE after 10:30 PM daylight time in mid-October.

Saturn (0.6), in Capricornus, can be seen in the SSE at dusk. It is 5° below the Moon on the 5th. The ringed world resumes direct, or eastward, motion October 16.

## • Bright Planets (Morning Sky):

Mars appears very high in the S at dawn. It lies 3° above the quarter Moon on the 18th.

Jupiter (-1.7), in Virgo, rises in the E about 5 AM (mid-month) and can be found low in the ESE at dawn. On October 23 the giant planet and the crescent Moon 8° away make a nice pair.

Saturn sets in the WSW about 1 AM in mid-October.

## • "NASA SETI MOP"

This acronym stands for NASA's Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence Microwave Observing Project, which gets underway at Goldstone, CA, and Arecibo, Puerto Rico, on Columbus Day. Using a radio antenna equipped with a Multichannel Spectrum Analyzer (capable of sampling millions of frequency channels at once), the Goldstone facility begins a long-term sky survey across the entire microwave region of space to listen for possible artificial narrow-band signals indicating intelligent life. The giant Arecibo "dish," fitted with the same device, starts a targeted search of some 800 solar-type stars within 80 light years of Earth. The Puerto Rican receiver will concentrate upon a narrower region of the microwave — the so-called "water hole" or "magic frequencies" between the lines of the neutral hydrogen atom and the hydroxyl molecule. Other antennas will eventually join the project.

## • Meteor Shower:

The Orionids peak on the morning of the 21st. Counts

of about 20 or 25 meteors per hour should be detected toward dawn, although a fat crescent Moon may interfere slightly (after 2 AM). This shower's members tend to be fast and faint. However, it also furnishes the observer with some bright fireballs, about a third of which sport glowing wakes. Lesser numbers of Orionids are seen from mid- to late October.

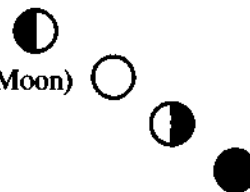
## • Moon Phases:

First quarter — Oct. 3

Full moon — Oct. 11 (Hunter's Moon)

Last quarter — Oct. 19

New Moon — Oct. 25



## • The Stars:

The Big Dipper, following its counterclockwise path around the north sky pole as the Earth rotates, skims along the northern horizon at this season. This popular asterism never goes below the horizon for latitudes above 40°.

While the bright stars of the Great Square of Pegasus and the Summer Triangle still rule the upper half of the southern sky, the lower half is occupied by one of the dimmest regions in the heavens. Here reside the aquatic constellations of (from west to east) Capricornus the Sea Goat, Aquarius the Water Bearer, Piscis Austrinus the Southern Fish, Pisces the Fish, and Cetus the Whale or Sea Monster. Fortunately, two objects liven up "The Sea," as it is called: the yellowish planet Saturn and the white star Fomalhaut (below Pegasus). The latter is the southernmost bright luminary visible from northern latitudes.

## Calendar of UFO Conferences for 1992

**October 10** — 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. - The Berkeley Symposium - Physical Sciences Lecture Hall at University of California, Berkeley Campus. (For information call Rose Cerovski 510-548-2810).

**October 24** — Show-Me UFO Conference IV - Harley Hotel, 3400 Rider Trail South, Earth City, Missouri (Near St. Louis) 63045. (For information call Bruce A. Widaman 314-946-1394)

**October 24 & 25** — 29th National UFO Conference - Holiday Inn, 1302 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, Florida 32301. (For information call Ed Komarek 912-377-7098 or Jim Moseley 305-294-1873)

## MESSAGE, Continued

Southwestern Louisiana. **Robert O. Dean** (Tucson, AZ), Assistant State Director, is also State Section Director for Pima and Santa Cruz Counties. Other new State Section Directors appointed this month by their respective State Directors were **William A. Speer, Jr.** (Hawthorne, FL) for Alachua, Putnam, Marion and Levy Counties; **Eleanor V. Sanini** (St. George, UT) for Washington and Iron Counties; **Lee G. McDermot** (Appleton, WI) for Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Winnebago and Calumet Counties; and **Joseph M. Hammer** (Winslow, AZ) for Navajo County.

### Consultants and Research Specialists

James M. McCampbell (Belmont, CA), formerly Director for Research, became a Consultant in Research Planning. **William H. Boyce**, M.D. (Austin, TX) has rejoined MUFON as a Consultant in Psychiatry. **Michael E. Zimmerman**, Ph.D. (New Orleans, LA) volunteered to be a Consultant in Philosophy. Two new Consultants in Law are **Mark F. Commerford** (Concord, CA) and **James A. Carraway, Jr.** (Memphis, TN).

Six new Research Specialists volunteered their expertise this month. They are **Hirota Murata** M.S. (Fukaya-shi, Japan) in Physics; **Bruce C. Pickens**, M.A. (Denver, CO) in Rehabilitation Counseling; **John S. Crutchfield**, M.S. (Reidsville, NC) in Nuclear Science; **Steven E. Snodgrass**, M.S.W. (Lincoln, NE) in Social Work; **Joseph M. Hammer**, M.S. (Winslow, AZ) in Psychology; and **Patricia A. Hunter**, M.A. (Scottsdale, AZ) in Counseling.

The following individuals offered their services as translators: **Richard A. Kulick**, M.P.A. (Washington, DC) for Spanish; **J. Rudy Ramirez**, M.A. (Redwood City, CA) for Spanish; **Mrs. Katalina G. Bultman** (Oklahoma City, OK) for Hungarian; and **Many W. Terzok** (Essen, Germany) for German.

### Video Tapes of 1992 Symposium

For those of you who were unable to attend the MUFON 1992 International UFO Symposium in Albuquerque, NM, video tapes are now available from MUFON-NM, P.O. Box 7191, Albuquerque, NM 87194. The three Saturday sessions video tapes are \$44.95 plus \$3.50 postage and handling or \$48.45; the two Sunday sessions video tapes are \$34.95 plus \$3.50 for postage and handling or \$38.45, or the complete package for \$86.90 including postage and handling. Please specify VHS or BETA format when ordering and make checks payable to MUFON New Mexico. Please allow three to five weeks for delivery.

### Where Have All The Investigators Gone?

An old but timely riddle that all of us have heard since

we were children is "Was there any sound made when a tree fell in a deserted forest?" Well, of course there was, but no one was around to hear it. I have used this analogy numerous times and compare it to the lack of UFO sighting reports from some areas of the nation. Sightings are taking place everywhere, however, the witnesses have no idea who to call to report their observations, thus none is reported. Obviously, these sightings go uninvestigated and are not part of the vital UFO statistics.

The geographic area of Rhode Island with 1,214 square miles, compared to Alaska at 586,400, provides the extremes in the difficulty of having field investigators conveniently available. Rhode Island has 16 members, whereas Alaska has only 10. On the other hand, we have other large states that are handicapped like Alaska. Significant progress has been made in expanding the number of field investigators in a few of our larger states since my last report. The problem becomes very obvious when these states are listed in sequence based upon member/subscribers as of August 19, 1992: ND - 5, WY - 7, ID - 8, PR - 9, AK - 10, VT - 11, MT - 12, SD - 13, UT and WV - 14, IA - 15, RI - 16, ME - 17 and in 13th place SC and KY tied at 18. It will be noted that ME, UT and WV have improved percentage-wise since the last report. There are others that are literally dragging their feet. Results occur when the state has an active and enthusiastic State Director to provide leadership and inspire their members.

**John Salter** (ND) has been teaching UFO classes to both university students and community adult classes at the University of North Dakota for the last two years. However, he has not secured one new MUFON member. **June Parnell** (WY) and **Leo Sprinkle** sponsored their "13th Rocky Mountain Conference on UFO Investigation" at the University of Wyoming at Laramie on June 25th this year. Both of these endeavors are outstanding as UFO educational programs, but they are not producing new field investigators. Apparently, the sponsors are not promoting the solicitation of potential field investigators in spite of the implication in the conference name. MUFON heartily supports the fine work of John Salter, June Parnell and Leo Sprinkle, however, we must ask the \$64,000 question: where are the investigators that attend these sessions?

### MUFON Amateur Radio Net

80 meters — 3.990 MHz — Saturday, 9 p.m.  
40 meters — 7.237 MHz — Saturday, 8 a.m.  
20 meters — 14.264 MHz — Thursday, 8 p.m.  
10 meters — 28.470 MHz — Sunday, 3 p.m.  
All times Eastern Standard or Daylight

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

### News Around the Network by Walter Andrus

The Mutual UFO Network reached another milestone during August when its membership/subscription surpassed 4,000. We are indeed indebted to the State and State Section Directors who were directly responsible for MUFON having achieved this lofty plateau. Considering that membership in March 1991 was at the 3,000 level, the additional growth of 1,000 members occurred within one and one-half years. Congratulations to everyone who made this possible. As some astute person remarked, "MUFON must be doing something right!"

#### Tribute to Bruce and Anne Morrison

On June 22, 1992, **C. Joseph Barron**, Florida MUFON State Director of Investigations, sent a letter of tribute to **Anne and Bruce Morrison** for their tireless and unselfish work in sky-watching, gathering raw data, accumulating witness statements, examining photos and video tapes, conducting sessions in their home, and for the countless hours spent at their computer. As Joe so aptly stated, "This is symptomatic of how determined you are in bringing this phenomenon to historical significance. It is with profound and deep appreciation that this letter hopefully expresses some of the gratitude that the Florida MUFON organization feels is due you for your outstanding devotion to Ufology."

Based upon the detailed reports and video tapes submitted to MUFON's International Director in Albuquerque, I want to add my endorsement to that of **Charles Flannigan** and **Donald Ware**. To Anne and Bruce — everyone in MUFON wants to thank you for your dedicated work in documenting the Gulf Breeze sightings for posterity.

#### Show Me UFO Conference IV

On Saturday, October 24, 1992, the UFO Study Group of Greater St. Louis and the Mutual UFO Network of Missouri are co-sponsoring their annual "Show Me UFO/IAC Conference IV" at the Harley Hotel of St. Louis in Earth City, Missouri, just west of the St. Louis International Airport on I.H. 70. Speakers scheduled starting at 9 a.m. are **David H. Childress**, **Virginia Tilly**, **Dr. Thomas E. Bullard**, **Dr. John Kasher** and **Dr. Richard F. Haines**, with a panel discussion lasting till 11 p.m. Conference admission is \$30 for the entire day. Advance registration may be secured by writing to the UFO Study Group of Greater St. Louis, P.O. Box 31544, St. Louis, MO 63131 and enclosing a check or money order for \$30.

Hotel reservations may be secured by calling The Harley Hotel at (314) 291-6800 and advising the desk that you are attending the UFO Conference. For additional information please contact **Bruce Widaman** at (314) 946-1394.

#### New Officers

**Robert M. Wood**, Ph.D. (Newport Beach, CA) was elected to the MUFON Board of Directors at the annual corporate meeting in Albuquerque as the Director for Research, replacing **James M. McCampbell**. Dr. Wood, an executive with a major aerospace company, has a doctorate in both physics and aeronautics. He has been a consultant to MUFON since 1973.

The following reorganizational changes have been made in the Colorado team: **James F. Nelson** (Northglenn, CO), presently a State Section Director for Boulder and Denver Counties, has been selected by his colleagues as the new State Director for Colorado, replacing **Ethan A. Rich** (Englewood, CO), who will become State Section Director for Douglas and Elbert Counties; and **Kenyon A. Spencer** (Aurora, CO), State Section Director for Adams, Clear Creek, Arapahoe and Summit Counties has accepted the additional responsibility of Assistant State Director for Colorado. Other new assignments will be announced in the October *Journal*.

**Theodore "Ted" Spickler**, Ph.D. (Wheeling, WV), State Director for West Virginia, has made several new appointments to strengthen his investigative team. **Gregg B. Knight** (St. Mary's, WV) now serves as Assistant State Director and State Section Director for Tyler, Doddridge and Harrison Counties. **Margaret L. Mason** (Vienna, WV) was appointed State Section Director for Braxton, Lewis, Gilmer, Wirt, Calhoun and Roane Counties. **Fred R. Travis** (Williamstown, WV) became the State Section Director for Wood, Ritchie, Pleasants, Mason and Jackson Counties.

**Richard Rowlette** (Albuquerque, NM), New Mexico State Director, made the following new officer appointments: **Carolyn Duce-Ashe** (Corrales, NM) replaced **Eugene L. Nieri** as Assistant State Director, and **Peter A. Limone** (Albuquerque, NM) became State Director for Investigations. Mr. Rowlette also appointed the following new State Section Directors: **Valerie A. Edwards** (Las Cruces) for Dona Ana County; **Gail C. Staehlin** (Albuquerque) for Bernalillo County; and **Edmund T. Tyson** (Alamogordo) for Otero County.

**Sue Van Slooten**, Assistant State Director for Northern New Jersey upgraded the following two gentlemen to State Section Directors: **Tommy Briggs** (Bloomfield) for Essex County; and **Jon Petty** (Newton) for Sussex County. **Walter L. Garner**, Louisiana State Director, chose **David Slay**, M.S. (Lake Charles) as his Assistant State Director for

Continued on page 23