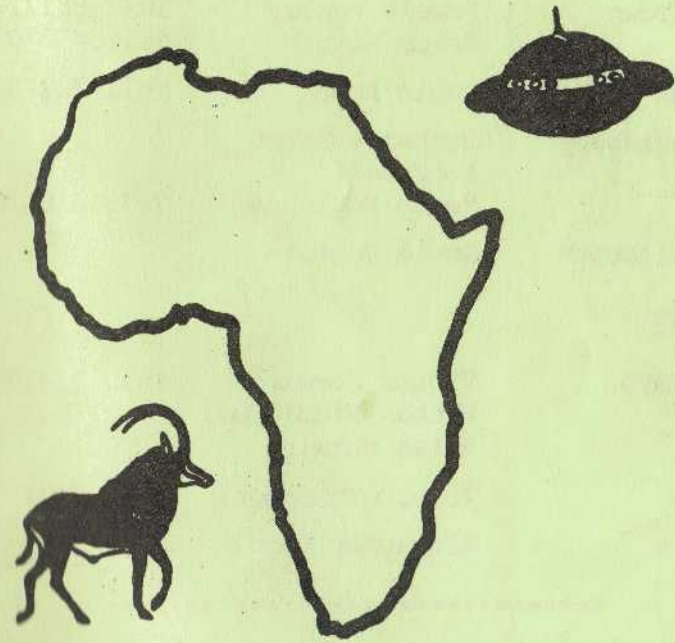


UFO

AFRINEWS



No 8 SEPT. 1993

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PLEASE NOTE : Dates in this Newsletter are given as
the day, the month and the year, e.g. 07:05:92

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EDITORIAL

I think one of the biggest problems one has to face in being a UFO investigator or believer, is one of depression.

You are madly enthusiastic to start with; there are so many books to read which fire the imagination and despite the general disinterest, you know of course that there's something THERE, and come what may, the determination to find out about this international mystery; this fascinating field of exploration; this strangest of all strangenesses in our lives, will support your interest until death do you part!

And the weirdest manifestation of all is that always, even at your lowest ebb, when everything seems to be against you, even your thoughts and solutions to them, SOMETHING happens to start the adrenalin pumping again!

There was a time in my life when I was asked to appear on TV or radio on a regular basis. Every new case, even the most insignificant one of a bright light travelling at speed across our skies (a meteorite, of course!) would give rise to endless phone calls and excited witnesses from all over the land. There would be an instant revival of interest in UFOs; I'd be asked for comments from the press, from the radio and certainly invitations to speak at three or four different organizations.

One could almost smell the nervous anticipation of hearing all about it. Questions were numerous and the room at interval was like a British pub just after they called 'Time!'

In those days I was choosy about my speaking engagements. I always felt the schools at the upper levels were a breeding ground for new UFO enthusiasm and never refused an invitation to address their Science Clubs or the Upper Sixth (17 year olds). I then found that often 12 and 13 year olds would creep in and I had to choose my words and revelations more carefully. Nonetheless, I still received agitated phone calls from parents: 'Since listening to you, Mary won't sleep without a night light on', or 'I don't know what you told our

Chantal, but she never goes upstairs after dark anymore.'

I quickly crossed these schools off my list and refused to speak to them again unless they specifically excluded juniors from the talks. Now, they don't even ask.

There were times in the past when I wrote articles for top level newspapers in southern Africa. I still write articles and have them accepted all over the world so it isn't the quality that has deteriorated.

One of the largest newspaper groups in this part of Africa was explicit: 'It is no longer our policy to publish stories about UFOs.' But they had lied to me: I have seen two tongue-in-cheek, denigrating, bitter pieces written recently, mostly about a woman abductee who has been spoofed by nearly every publication in southern Africa. They did an even better job! As though this was the epitome of UFO reporting, the only result of all the serious investigations over the past 45 or so years.

A magazine with a large circulation, wrote back to me: 'Your article was extremely interesting, but the decision not to print is not mine (it was the Feature Editor's handwriting). Our policy is not to do anything about UFOs. So sorry.'

There is one tabloid type of magazine that has kept up with UFO reporting and I regularly see headlines of 'My Space Alien-baby', or 'We Are Being Attacked from Mars', and articles of that genre.

I have never been particularly keen to go on women's radio programmes, even on the national radio; it meant the appeal for stories reached mostly housewives who were too afraid to tell. A much wider listenership was required to get at the nitty-gritty of the best cases.

I recall a time when a 5-minute interview would appear immediately before the early morning news, or in the analysis of world reports. Ah, those days are now long gone!

I had been asked, over the years, to always let the Head of Women's Radio Programmes in one City know when I was in town. For the first time this year they wrote back, 'Sorry, but you had some exposure a few months ago on commercial radio; we feel that however popular that programme might have been, general interest is lacking.'

Of course, I still travel around the various countries accessible to me and lectures are attended by the 'old faithfuls' and the numbers are still reasonably large. But gone are the days of having to close the doors because there was no seating left.

The dedicated ones are there, but what has happened to the new converts: the youth who have to take over from the older, experienced ones who have so much to teach them? It is like a cry in the dark for we need more than just the faithful.

And what has happened to all those exciting UFO stories? Like Betty Hill, Pascagoula, Travis Walton, and even the controversial Gulf Breeze. Perhaps it is that the public need the sensationalism of the 'great UFO stories' and not the analyses of the experts and the die-hards who plod on with the more prosaic material to try and find out what it is all about.

Is it because the recession has cut too deeply and people's minds are more occupied with paying the rent and finding enough food, and staying in their jobs? Or is it because we are giving them the same old stories, over and over again, and the public has just become too blasé to care?

This is something that each one of us, dedicated to the UFO enigma, will have to think about very seriously indeed!

Me (to Alien just landed): Tell me, do all aliens have those antennae on their heads?

Alien : No, only those who live on Wmzrnke.

Me : And do you all have green skin, slanting eyes without pupils and tiny, thin lips?

Alien : No, only those who live on Wmzrnke.

Me ; and all those who live on Wmzrnke have gold medallions around their necks?

Alien : No, only the Catholics.

ABDUCTIONS IN AFRICA

GAMIDA Case N° 48

(An Addition to her Story in UFO AFRINEWS 7.)

In 1987, Gamida was having some weird experiences with two different forces, one of which she felt was evil and the other good. She also thought that she was hallucinating and therefore did not dare mention this to anyone until she heard me [Ed.] speak on Radio 702 in Johannesburg, South Africa, where I mentioned David Jacobs' book, SECRET LIFE.

Gamida says: 'What happened was that in the early hours of the morning I would feel vibrations and then go into an hypnotic state. In this dream-like state I could feel people standing beside me and they would either be touching me on my face or kissing my forehead or be busy with my mouth. I'd be screaming, swearing, cursing and fighting, but no sound ever came out, neither could my limbs move. I became too scared to go to sleep and too frightened to remain awake. I left my bedroom light and radio on; but it didn't help. I was repeatedly raped. Although I felt it, I never saw anyone. In desperation I went to some spiritualists and they told me it was witchcraft and soon after going to them, the raping stopped.'

'On one occasion they examined my face. They opened my jaw so wide it affected my jaw-bone near to my ear. I now have a click in my jaw and have had medical attention for this although I did not tell the doctor how it occurred.

'During these first encounters, something was inserted in my ear. They also checked out my teeth (I have a few fillings and one bridge). Another time they were busy with my right ear again. They opened it very wide, much wider than the space of an ear-opening. I was dazed by this and kept checking my ear to see if they had stretched it.

'These days, when they come near, all I hear is a buzzing near my face.

'One morning as I came out of the shower, I stood in front of the mirror naked and felt something like a bird fluttering in my chest. I could visibly see the fluttering in the mirror. Shortly after that I had a lumpectomy.

After the operation I was told that it was neither benign nor malignant and it puzzled my specialist as he had never seen anything like it before.

'My last experience was on the 27th October 1991 and I am no longer being raped.'

I asked Gamida if she felt she had gained anything from the experiences or been disturbed by them.

'Well, if it makes people more aware, more open-minded and less judgemental, then it can only help. Winning and scoring points has never been my aim. I have a need for truth to prevail. Whatever happens, I wish to remain anonymous, always.'

COMMENTS:

It seems that Gamida's experiences are on-going. I have not heard from her recently, nor met up with her as she wants to remain totally anonymous – for the time being. I know better than to 'push' a case like this where a great deal of sensitivity is required, but I feel sure that Gamida will eventually see me where we can discuss this whole matter on a personal basis. It might be a long wait, but in the end, I feel it will serve a purpose.

SOUTH AFRICAN ABDUCTION IN 1988 – Case N° 50. Johannesburg, South Africa

Towards the beginning of 1992 there was an interview on M-Net with two ladies from Johannesburg who had allegedly been abducted. The interview was haphazardly conducted and unfortunately, by someone who had no, or very little, knowledge of UFOs. This ensured that he completely missed the importance of the event. Their story was glossed over too quickly and the questions were neither selective nor revealing, so that the true significance of the case was completely lost.

Fortunately, a friend of mine who has a satellite-TV receiving South African M-Net programmes, informed me that there was to be a UFO programme, and I was able to view the segment at her house. I immediately got in touch with Kenny McKinnon (SAUFORA) in Johannesburg and he managed to find out who the two ladies were and where they lived.

As a result of this I have been able to interview them on three separate occasions and spoke with them at a meeting I held in Johannesburg in December 1992.

The case is by no means complete, nor have I obtained all the information I require. Neither of the women has been hypnotized which is an added incentive to the revelation of what might have taken place on board the 'alien' craft. So for the time being, I am going to

give you only a brief outline of what happened to them and the details - which are surprisingly close to those of abductees in the United States who have been dealt with by Prof. David Jacobs and Budd Hopkins - will come later.

I left for USA and Britain in June of this year (1993) and had meetings with some of the top ufologists (personal friends of mine) concerning this case. Once the details have been entered into computers dealing with abductions, I will have a better idea of how to assess this case. It is certainly the best abduction I have had in southern Africa. The two women were not actively involved with UFOs prior to their experience, nor had they read any UFO literature. South Africa is poor in UFO material and they would only have been able to obtain such books in selective bookstores and some libraries.

When they had their experience, on 19th July, 1988, they did not know to whom they could turn. They were virtually rejected by the Witwatersrand Planetarium in Johannesburg, and it was only two years later that the daughter was put in touch with Elizabeth Klarer as being a sympathetic and interested person. Once they managed to meet up with Elizabeth, she introduced them to the South African UFO Research Society, under the chairmanship of George Drake and through this organization, their case was revealed to members. As a result of this, they were approached by M-Net Television.

Briefly, on the night in question, the two women had been working together until 03:30 in the morning. The daughter, Debra, is a graphic artist and had some urgent work to do for a SABC television commercial.

She worked with her husband and mother, Pat. But just before 03:30, Pat complained that she was too tired to work any longer and wanted Debra to take her home. This Debra did, driving the short distance from her home to her mother's house, in about 7 minutes. As they approached the house, Pat could see a light behind them and thought at first it was another car. Debra was a bit worried as night travelling for women on their own is never a safe practice – anywhere! But when she looked she saw the brightness of the light suddenly sweeping towards them and then it overwhelmed the car. She saw her

mother lock the car doors and she put her head on her arms on the steering wheel.

From this point on, their experience is weird and bizarre. They recall being taken on board a 'craft' by a woman and a man. They passed through a white mist and into a circular room which contained, in the centre, an examination table about one metre off the ground.

They were placed on this but Pat had difficulty in getting up, not being very tall, and she was helped by one of the aliens who put his hand in her back, and she floated up. Debra was in a dazed condition but did everything willingly, whilst Pat was more hesitant, more protective of her daughter.

They were both X-rayed and then had a strange examination. This consisted of a knitting-needle-like instrument being pushed into them just beneath the breast-bone and blood samples for DNA, RNA and other tests being taken. The interesting fact about this instrument was that it was broadly circular at the top, fitted with small glass/plastic phials.

Each time a different test was taken, the woman handling it turned it to a new phial and obviously it was controlled in such a way that only the blood affecting that particular test was taken into the phial.

For those who are not aware of the Barney/Betty Hill case in New Hampshire, USA, these two people were abducted on board an alien craft in September, 1961. Betty was subjected to several tests, one of which was that a long needle was inserted in her navel and she was told this was a pregnancy test. When the needle was first inserted, Betty cried out as it was painful and the man performing the test, immediately placed his hand on her forehead, which left her feeling calm and totally relaxed. (THE INTERRUPTED JOURNEY, by John Fuller)

In our present case, Debra gasped with pain when the needle was inserted and another woman standing behind her immediately placed a hand on her forehead. She then felt no stress and no discomfort. Both the women interviewed stated that they did not know of the Betty

Hill case nor had they read the book, and I believe them, although I feel that they might have learnt of it subsequently. But their reactions in the telling of the story did not pointedly show that they were lying; in fact, Pat mentioned how distressed she was when Debra called out. It was for this reason that she herself did not want to take the test.

However, she did eventually allow it because of something the woman said to her.

The main woman involved had already told them that her name was Meleelah (or similar). They found it difficult to understand her and she repeated her name two or three times before they could remember it. She also told them that she was the Commander of the craft. Her voice was high-pitched and rather sing-song, but she spoke perfect English. She told them that the various crew members were designated by the colour of the collar they wore; hers was purple and that showed her position as Commander.

Both Pat and Debra commented on how beautiful Meleelah was. She was small and seemed perfectly formed. She had no hair on her head, but Pat pointed out that her head was like that of a new-born baby and she had difficulty in refraining from touching her there.

At one point they realise they are in the air, as the Commander allowed them to look through the windows of the craft, and they saw Johannesburg below them as well as one of the Towers (Johannesburg has two towers, the Hillbrow Tower and the Brixton Tower). There is some difficulty about identifying which Tower it was they were looking at, but they eventually establish that it was the Hillbrow Tower.

The Commander then tells them how high up they are and Pat asks her to write it down on a piece of paper. She does this and Pat converts it into metres for Debra. She remembers at one point that Debra rolls the piece of paper around the pencil they had been using.

They do not recall the landing nor, in any detail, being transferred from the craft to the car. They do recall being in the car and as Pat gets out to go into her home, she finds herself holding a piece of yellow paper. She cannot, at that time, recall what it is about but sees there is a number on it, and when she asks Debra what it could be, Debra suggests it might be a telephone number. Pat goes into her house and puts the piece of paper in the telephone drawer.

A while later, when moving house (her husband is a building contractor who often buys houses, renovates them and then sells), Pat discovered the piece of paper. At that time, she still did not realise what it was, but says she packed it with her other goods to take to the new house.

I did impress on her the importance of this piece of paper and she immediately went to look for it, but even after the third interview she had still not been able to find it.

Gradually, over a period, the women started to have recall and even today, something will trigger off an incident that they had forgotten. Pat remembers more readily than Debra; she is stronger and more aggressive and was determined not to stand any nonsense from the aliens although in the end, before they left, she felt an overwhelming warmth and love towards them and said she would have gone along if they had wanted her to. Debra is quieter and more laid-back than her mother, but nevertheless a very positive person, intelligent and analytical of everything that is said. She often corrected what Pat had said, or added to it, thus producing a differing viewpoint so that I felt there was no question of a *folie a deux*.

Overall, there were several disquietening things which emerged and none which I would like to judge lightly. I have been in touch with Dr Willie Smith and he feels that the recall is too detailed, too complicated for the short time the women could have been there. But I have established that they were gone for approximately two hours and they are both observant and careful in their assessment of the situation.

I believe their story, although perhaps imagination might be playing its part in some of the incidents. Often one remembers something important but the details are clouded by the importance of the event, and perhaps inaccuracies do occur.

But there is no doubt in my mind that these women had an abduction experience; the only difficult part to assess was how far it went. Did the beings stop at the 'blood test' or did they go further? We know from what they told us, that Meleelah explained to them that they will never have total recall. They accept this quite readily, but being unused to anything like this, how can they realise what has been covered up. *And what could really have happened!*

AN ORDINARY MAN

*'There's an alien upstairs', our Johnnie said,
He's small and thin and has a large head;
His eyes are sloped and dark as night,
He doesn't smile and his lips are tight .
Around his head is a magic band,
He beckoned to me and took my hand.....
Oh Mom, he'll take me to his planet far,
And I'll be just another star...'*

*Our mother said, 'Oh, do be still,
If you're not quiet, he'll raise his bill.
There's nothing to fear, he's fixing the fan,
He's just a plain electricity man!'*

WATER: ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO UFOs.

THE FLICKERING BLUE FLAME AND MISSING WATER. – Case N° 73
Cape, South Africa.

Mrs P.L. lives with her husband in Kommetjie, on the Cape coast of the Atlantic seaboard. Kommetjie is a small village, mostly with holiday homes that are used for 2-3 months of the year. But there are more and more permanent residents, though it is not highly populated and there are a lot of open spaces.

One night in late November of 1991, Mrs P.L. could not sleep because of the irritating sound of the pool filter outside her bedroom. At about 2 a.m. she decided to get up and switch it off.

Her house is a pleasant structure, with an entrance hall leading into the lounge, and from there, glass doors open onto a pool area which has been enclosed on three sides, with a covering roof.

As Mrs P.L. came out of the lounge into the closed pool area, she saw a flickering flame, about 30cm (12 inches) high and of an intense blue colour. She thought it was an electrical fault but as she went closer she could see the flame was not coming from the filter itself; it was separate and burning in the sand which surrounded the base of the filter, a good few inches away from the actual machine.

After about 15 seconds, the flame just vanished.

When she looked up, prior to returning to bed, she saw a similar flame in her neighbour's window. There are no other houses around there, just this one other house to the left of hers and diagonal to it.

At first she thought it was a reflection and looked around to see what it could be reflecting. But there was no traffic about, or anything that might cause the flame. When she looked again, she could see the flame getting smaller and smaller. Then she took fright because it was all so strange, and ran back to bed and pulled the blankets over her head.

Next morning, her husband got up early and when he walked outside to have his breakfast on the patio, he could see that the water in the swimming pool was well below the normal water level. He knew he had filled it up the night before; there was no chance of a leak and he, as a builder, had checked it thoroughly. He estimated that about 2000 litres had been lost out of the pool's capacity of 20 000 litres.

The weather was still and calm; there were no clouds, so it was not a lightning strike. There was no fault with the filter either; it was working perfectly, if a little noisily. There was one single outlet for the pool, but no water had spilled.

As an experienced builder, Mr L. would have known if there was anything untoward about the pool, but he was quite adamant that, apart from the missing water, the pool was in perfect condition.

COMMENT:

In UFO AFRINEWS N° 4 (pp 17-19), we discussed the UFO interest in water, and what possible significance this could have.

The above case seems to be a typical example of 'water loss' to some unknown object. In this instance no UFO was seen and the dancing blue flame can by no means be interpreted as a UFO, although several of the cases quoted in AFRINEWS N° 4 had no visible UFO, so it does not seem to be a pre-requisite of the phenomenon. The basic research here is on the LOSS OF WATER, with some untoward event connected either directly or indirectly, with it.

SO SORRY

For those of you who have been UFO followers for a some years, you will be sad to hear of the passing of Aimé Michel, the well known French researcher, who died on December 23rd, 1992. Two of Michel's books were translated into English, viz. *The Truth About Flying Saucers* and *Flying Saucers and the Straight-Line Mystery*.

PING-PONG LIGHTS OVER BROMLEY. – Case Nº 71
Bromley, Zimbabwe

Farmer M. Patterson (not his real name) of Bromley, a rural area not far from the capital of Zimbabwe, had an interesting story to tell about a moon that wasn't real, and some leaping ping-pong balls of light. In his own words, this is his experience:

'On the night of August 1st, 1992, I had gone to bed shortly after midnight but was unable to sleep because my dog was barking furiously outside and would not stop. Annoyed, I got up and went to the kitchen window to see what the noise was all about. The time by my bedside radio clock was 12:15.

I looked through the window, facing south, but could see nothing to account for the dog's excitement, except that he was looking up at the moon. Apart from the barking, it was very quiet and peaceful all around.

Seeing nothing except the very bright yellow moon above the bluegum and msasa trees, I went to the window of my workshop which faces east. From there I saw the dog still barking aggressively at the moon, and shouted to him to keep quiet. He stopped and went into his kennel.

But now it struck me that I could not be seeing the moon on the east side, so I went back to the kitchen window and looked out. Suddenly, I saw a small light, like a ping-pong ball, bouncing in the air, leaving a 'string' of light behind it as it danced; it was at about the height of the 'moon' and to my surprise, the ball merged and became one with it. This ball was coming from the north-west and as I looked at it, another one bounced across my field of vision from the north-east. Again, this bright yellowish ping-pong ball leaped and bounced along, leaving a trail of light as it moved. Again, it merged with the large ball I had thought was the moon.

I went back to the workshop window, then returned to the kitchen; from both windows I could see more of these balls coming from NE and NW, bouncing along leaving their strings of light behind them and disappearing into the larger sphere of light. There was no smell when I opened the windows, except the usual scents of the farm.

At one o'clock exactly, i.e. about half an hour after I first saw the phenomenon, the large ball of light began to move southwards, above the bluegum plantation, and soon it was hidden from view by the trees. It was very cold and I didn't feel like going outside, so I went back to bed and slept like a baby for the rest of the night.'

The next morning, Patterson went to look at his maize plants, to see if there was anything amiss, as he thought the object and the lights might have affected the corn; but all was as it should be.

He is still puzzled, after all this time, about what the large and small balls of light could have been.

COMMENTS:

The full moon was on the night of August 12/13th. Only a sliver of moon would have been visible on the 1st August.

There is a Brazilian Air Force Report on 'ping-pong ball' lights that has similarities with Patterson's sighting:

'On the 19th May, 1988, Brig. General Octavio Moreira Lima reported that 6 fighter jets of the Air Defence and Air Traffic Control Centre (CINDACTA) for Brazil, were scrambled after numerous radar blips were detected on the radar screens of Air Force Bases.

When Col. Osirus Silva, of Petrobras, was landing in his plane piloted by Aldir Pereira around 9 p.m. on 19th May, they were told that three unidentifieds had been spotted on their route. They were described as 'strong red lights... which changed their positions rapidly.'

The jets were immediately scrambled (10 p.m.) and visual contact was established. The pilots chased the lights and were, in turn, chased by them. One pilot, Capt. Freitas, had as many as 13 luminous 'ping-pong' type balls surrounding his Mirage 111. They were distributed in groups of 6 and 7 objects on each side of his plane. They followed Freitas at a distance of two miles.

A special Air Force Technical Commission was set up to evaluate all the information. No time limit was set and no report - as far as we know - has ever been released.'

Reported in the MUFON UFO JOURNAL N° 223, Nov. 1986.
Articles by J. Antonio Huneeus and Irene Granchi, translated from O GLOBO, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

SPECIAL REPORT... SPECIAL REPORT... SPECIAL REPORT...

Because UFO AFRINEWS is totally African in concept, I don't normally report on what is happening on other Continents. Naturally, there are times when references to cases from different parts of the world are essential to the point I am trying to make, so I bring in brief details of a case allied to it.

On occasions, there are reports from witnesses who used to live in Africa, or had their experiences in Africa, but now live abroad; and once or twice, witnesses now in Africa whose initial experience was outside this Continent, and then I will report their cases too.

But, because so much of importance has been happening abroad - mostly in the USA -, I feel it is time that African readers know about some of the startling stories which have recently come to light.

In the MUFON JOURNAL (Sept, 1992, N° 293), Budd Hopkins tells the fascinating story of Linda C., a New York housewife who wrote to him about her abduction experience. It was one of several hundred such letters he regularly receives and it was only when an anonymous tape cassette from two security 'policemen' also came through the mail, that he sat up and took notice. Because, according to these two men, Dan and Richard, *they had witnessed Linda's abduction!*

Allegedly they were on duty in the early hours of the morning in Lower Manhattan (Nov. 1989), when they stopped their car for a 'breather'. They were aware of a bright light above them and when they looked up through the front windscreen of the car, they saw a woman, wearing a long white nightdress, float through the window of a 12th storey apartment. In front and behind her were two small people - like children - and one who stood beneath her.

She came out through the window in a foetal position and then straightened up and ascended into a craft with the three beings. The craft then took off and according to the security men, went straight into the Hudson River. They were shaken and stunned and their only reaction was to take off, at speed, and continue with their duties; a reaction which was to cost them great emotional stress over the next few months and culminated in their anonymous tape to Budd Hopkins and the mental break-down of one of them.

Subsequently, they contacted Linda and in fact, harassed her on several occasions, ostensibly under the guise of helping her sort out her experience. Instead, they became a threat to her and in one instance on Long Island, Dan made sexual suggestions to her and then tried to drown her after several bizarre acts, when suddenly an 'unknown' force knocked him over and allowed Linda to escape.

The whole story reads like some SF horror tale and in fact, it has been allied to the plot of a well-known American novel. On the other hand, as we always need to ask: if this is a hoax, to what purpose? Glamour, fame, money? Well, Dan and Richard are still anonymous and Linda has gained nothing and feels her life is in danger. Budd Hopkins, it is true, is writing a book about it all, but then he is entitled

to – he is a UFO-abductee investigator and an author.

At the moment, as is their wont, the UFO fraternity are having a field day, either slating the whole story or agreeing that this is really BIG NEWS. But other witnesses have come forward: apparently, at the time of the abduction, there were several cars crossing the nearest bridge and they had a reasonably clear view of what was happening.

Maybe they would not have noticed but, as this huge, red-lit UFO hovered there, the motorists experienced electromagnetic effects on their cars: engines stopped and headlights faded or went out completely. A woman driver who has come forward claims that the passengers in other cars close to her were well aware of what was happening.

The crux of the matter is even more bizarre than all I have already told you!

The two security 'policemen' have now made another confession. Inside the car with them was a VERY IMPORTANT PERSON. So important that if he did indeed witness the abduction, then the governments of the world must be aware of it!

The big UFO 'unions' are not talking -- they claim there is too much of world politics involved and they're probably right. I am beginning to think that the whole UFO 'thing' is so big (and perhaps horrific) that the less the general public know, the better. Or am I being a bit pessimistic in my thinking, and are we becoming too afraid of the shadows that haunt all our lives; those matters which do not appear too clearly and which, in all honesty, WE DON'T WANT TO FACE!

MOUNTAIN 'SPARKLER' EFFECT IN SOUTH AFRICA – Case N° 70 Cape, South Africa

Transcript of interview by Pam Puxley.

In 1978, Charles and Moira G., together with Don and Margie Mc., were staying at Don's holiday home in Pearty Bay, about 50-60 km down the Cape coast, past Hermanus. It was early evening, the atmosphere was clear as there was no smog from factories nearby. Charles was the first to notice a very bright light in the sky and called to Don and their two wives to join him on the first floor balcony. Looking over the mountains, high up above them, there were what appeared to be a series of lights which could have been one light, rather small but very bright. This light moved to the left and right, up and down, at a most incredible speed. Everyone commented how fast it shot from one side to another. There was no airport in the area, the nearest one being in Cape Town and in any case, no plane or helicopter would behave in such an erratic manner.

It was dusk at the time, not yet dark, so the light was clear but with no intense colour; it was slightly hazy. The light had no real form. It started to move away, at an angle, not going very fast. Then, all of a sudden, it picked up tremendous speed and just disappeared.

The most interesting effect was the aftermath: they all stood there, dumbfounded at the swift disappearance of the light, when the whole mountain started to crackle as though it was lit by 'sparklers'. There was no sound, but thin threads of light were coming out of the mountain where the object had been, almost as though it had left static electricity behind it.

It had the most profound effect on them all.

Charles adds, in his own words: 'Long after that, sometime in 1987 and at about one o'clock in the morning, I was walking along the road looking towards the mountain. I saw a 'bunch' of orange lights which looked like big bright blobs of glowing jelly and which seemed to be travelling along in the distance. They were where the main road would

be, at something like 30 degrees altitude. There's nothing there that can reflect light that travels, such as tramlines (there are no trams in the area), and the railway lines are much lower down. There are certainly no orange lights there.

'I watched them for some minutes; there were six of them going along in a higgledy-piggledy formation, keeping their distance. They were not following a uniform pattern either. They travelled from my left to my right, south to north, for about five minutes, then disappeared out of view. They were not going especially fast either; in fact, only at about 25 mph.

Now, I'm an engineer and worked with electricity all my life. I know about sodium lights which give off an orange glow, but they don't float around in the air and move about: they're fixed. This particular sighting was reported to the newspaper and people I knew telephoned and joked about my losing my eyesight!'

THE WALL OF FLAME. – Case N° 68.
Namibia

Interview by Pam Pudney with 'Hein' of Kuils River, Cape
Taped on 1st Feb. 1993.

'It happened in South West Africa (now Namibia), in 1970', Hein reported.

'I was 11 years old at the time and went to school in a little town called Swakopmund. My father was a geologist and spent most of his time out at a new uranium mine called Rossin. From time to time he and others moved on to other regions where they stayed in base camps and we children were obliged to stay in these camps with our Moms and Dads.

'At the time of the incident, we were in a camp right in the middle of the Namib desert. This region had little hilly outcrops – lots of stones

and no vegetation, or hardly any.

'Over one weekend, all the inhabitants of the various base camps got together one night for a braai (barbecue) at our base camp. Everyone was there, the parents and even those children who were normally at boarding school. There were at least 25-30 people there. It was pitch dark and there was this total silence of the desert.

'It was a beautiful night, clear as it usually is out there, and everyone enjoyed the meal. I don't recall the actual time, but it must have been between nine and ten o'clock; it was certainly after we had eaten.

'On either side of the base camp there was a mountain, narrowing down towards the Swakop river bed. These mountains didn't meet at the end; instead, there was a gap of about the length of two rugby fields between them, forming an open 'V'.

'The next moment, it was as if someone had switched on lights: there was this mass of flames, as high as the mountains - about the height of an 8-storey building. The flames were higher at the back, but I estimate their height in front to be about 80 feet (25 metres). And from side to side, it was like a closed stage curtain, but instead of there being fabric, it was all flame; just like you see in a fireplace, flickering, and the normal colour of fire.

'There was also an absolutely intense heat which we could all feel. The children started screaming, including me - and at that age I had a great voice! A lot of the women screamed too, and I can even recall one of the adult males who became a bit hysterical.

'There was a lot of panic and a lot of commotion. Although so young, I remember it quite clearly. The phenomenon lasted from three to five minutes as far as I can recall. It is difficult for me at this stage to estimate its duration; suffice to say it seemed like a long period of time.

'And then it stopped, as suddenly as it had started, as though a light had been switched off again.

'While the flames were still going and the commotion was on, the men were trying to decide on a plan of action. But as soon as the flames went out, they agreed to collect all their own firearms (each one having a separate bungalow in the camp) and go in their Land Rovers and *bakkies* (pick-up) to fetch the weapons, then meet again at my Dad's cluster of bungalows; then, slowly and cautiously, to approach the area where the flames had been.

'I clearly recall my mother shaking uncontrollably, trying to make tea and another woman saying, "Forget the bloody tea, give me a brandy!"

'Meanwhile the men came back to the area with their flashlights and firearms; but that night they couldn't find a trace of anything; no tracks in the sand from other vehicles which might have been used by people who caused the fire. They returned home but the women were so anxious, they made the men go back again. But once more, though they searched thoroughly, they returned with the same story.

'The following day at daybreak, everyone went to where the flames had been, including the children, although we were all still very scared. But there was nothing to be seen to explain the events of the previous night: not even burnt grass pods, or discolouration of the sand. Someone even suggested that it might have been a practical joke where some prankster had poured fuel down the mountainside and set it alight, and we actually tried to experiment with that, getting a bit of fuel on the ground and lighting it, and there was immediate discolouration, whereas there was nothing from the night before. Also, we could find no containers lying around and no tracks of people.

'Immediately after the incident, I did discover tiny footprints in the sand; little footprints like a doll's. These were not at the site but near a small tool shed outside our own cluster of bungalows. The tiny footprints were as clear as those of a baby, but even smaller, like those of a large Barbie doll; they were some two inches long (5 cm) and led to the tool shed but did not come out again. They were really perfect little prints, perfectly shaped, with the indentation of the heel being more firmly impressed in the soil, just like a human would walk. When I saw them in the sand, I was filled with a great curiosity. My sister

had Teddy Bears with flat brown paws, but I tried those and they did not fit. It looked as if someone had gone 'kaplonk, kaplonk' with a doll. My mother came with me and we looked in the shed, in case there was a doll there, but of course there wasn't!

'Our cats were also extremely nervous after the event, though normally they were very docile. They would come and jump in our laps, purring and very friendly. But all that stopped, and they became nervous and for quite some time wouldn't go away from the *rondavels* (round huts). In fact, while they were eating or drinking, they were like scared buck at a water hole, not trusting the area they were in. They would look sideways and act nervously, very unsettled. This lasted for between one and two weeks and then slowly they came back to normal. But I must say this upset me as my favourite, a massive black cat called Spykertle, who normally followed me like a dog, wouldn't budge at all. He was my friend in the desert, so I was most upset.'

COMMENTS:

To be honest, I don't think this case has any connection with UFOs at all, even remotely so, but it was interesting enough, particularly because of the small, unidentifiable footprints. It was for this reason that a decision was made to print it. However, William Corliss in his Source Book 'LIGHTNING, AURORAS, NOCTURNAL LIGHTS AND RELATED LUMINOUS PHENOMENA' says (page 23).

Circa: 1930 Colorado, USA. 'Shortly after midnight, away to the south, there arose from the crest of a long high mountain, the trend of which was east and west, a curtain of fire several miles long and from the ground straight upwards to a very great height. It seemed to be made up of threads of fire rising rapidly upward, and at the extreme top of this curtain of fire all of these threads turned abruptly at right angles and flowed rapidly westward.

Immediately, the conclusion was that this curtain had reached the top of the air and that the rapid movement westward was a visual demonstration that the earth had a tail like a comet, and further, that

the outer so-called void was not a void at all but contained sufficient of a gaseous filling to cause this drag on our outer air as a result of the great speed of the earth on its way around the sun. This phenomenon might have been a mountain-top glow or a low-level aurora'

One can speculate that this might have been an eruption of methane gas which ignited on contact with the air, but why it should occur as it did, remains the mystery.

SILVER DISC FRIGHTENS HORSE. - Case N° 72
Transvaal, South Africa

Interview with 'Hein', Mrs van H.'s son, by Pam Puxley on 1st February, 1993.

Mrs van H. was a young girl at the time of her experience. Full name held by Editors.

Mrs van H. was about 16 or 17 at the time of the incident, and living on a large farm near Bethal in the Transvaal, South Africa. She used to love horse riding and often rode to an area which was heavily treed.

This incident occurred sometime in 1948/49. She was alone on horseback when suddenly the horse stopped dead in its tracks and would not obey any of her commands. She looked around for a snake or to see whatever it was that caused the animal's fright, but there was nothing there.

The next moment she heard a very loud, strong hissing sound and the trees around her actually moved their branches. She then saw a silver object of the type one would describe as a 'Flying Saucer'. It was completely silver, with little windows.

The object was right above the tree tops and close to her. The little windows went around the disc, one window next to the other. And it was big!

The object never came down to ground level but it just hovered directly over the trees, making this whooshing, swishing sound. It disappeared after a short while but stayed long enough for the young girl to see its shape and all the small windows. They were like the windows of a Boeing 737, but placed around the edge of the silver object.

The witness found it all most intriguing, and was not really afraid, just curious.

THE 'WORM' IN THE SKY. - Case N° 69
Witwatersrand, South Africa

A second UFO sighting by Jack Jones of Cape Town.
Interviewed by Pam Puxley. (First sighting reported in AFRINEWS N° 7, Case 49)

Jack Jones had a further sighting in early March, 1963, about a year or 18 months after his first experience (a ball of flame over his car during a long trip). The second object he saw was also very unusual and seen in broad daylight. There were many witnesses.

Jack takes up the story: 'For my birthday on March 3rd that year, my wife bought me a pair of binoculars. The next Saturday at lunchtime, I went out to the garden with the glasses, waiting for the arrival of the first Boeing bought by South African Airways. The papers that day had articles about the plane's special slow flight from Bloemfontein to the Rand Airport, giving the locals a chance to get a good view of it.

'I was very interested in this plane because aeroplanes are my forte and the area where we lived was right in the path of the flight.

'That day I had lunch and was using my binoculars in the garden to spot the plane when I heard a funny kind of noise. Now I can tell what sort of aircraft are flying but that noise was not made by any aircraft I knew. 'This must be the Boeing', I thought. So I used the binoculars to get a close view.

'The new plane was coming across at a low altitude and rather slowly. But as I watched it, I spotted something else behind the Boeing, quite far out above the Sasolburg area.'

Jack described it as a 'worm in the sky' but with binoculars he saw it was shaped like a cigar and absolutely massive in size compared with the Boeing. Through the glasses he could see the colour, a sort of yellow-brown which reminded him of the colour of tobacco. Something else that was mystifying was a large hole at the rear of the object. Coming from this hole was thick black smoke. The colour of the object at the point of the hole was not as bright: it was discoloured.

The sun was out at the time and cast a shadow where the hole was, but there was no mistaking the thick, black smoke column. Jack also noted that the trajectory of the object was from west to east.

He was so excited that he ran indoors to tell his wife what he had seen. She had a visitor and neither of them believed him; they didn't even go out to look. He then went across to his garage business where he saw that the workers were all looking up at the sky. They grabbed his glasses to get a better view and soon a crowd of people collected, all watching the strange object. There was a large number of witnesses to the cigar-shaped craft and everyone was very excited.

After some time, the object slowly turned and moved upwards, leaving a trail of thick black smoke that hung in the air for ages.

One unusual detail Jack noticed about the object : both ends of the cigar shape dipped down slightly. He could never find an explanation to fit this. He had been involved with all sorts of aircraft during his service with the South African Air Force but this object was like nothing he had ever seen or heard of before.

He thought at the time, 'It surely didn't come from this Earth,'

COMMENT:

Confirmation of the date of the above came from the ex-Manager of South African Airways in Zimbabwe who said he had joined SAA in August of 1963 and at that time the Boeing aircraft were still new.

MORE LIGHTS IN THE SKY ZIMBABWE - Case N° 75

The following report was sent to us by the Matabeleland UFO Research Group (MUFORG), who had interviewed all four witnesses.

At approximately 20:00 hours on April 27, 1992, several witnesses saw a bright light pass above Esigodini, near Bulawayo, in the south of Zimbabwe.

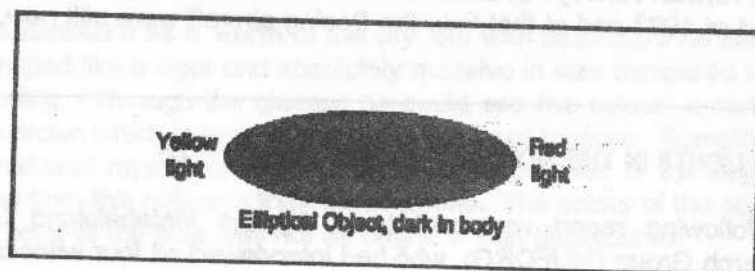
The object was apparently elliptical in shape with a dark body. The front end emitted a reddish light, while a yellow light appeared at the rear end.

It was a clear, warm night and yet there was no sound. The object appeared to be solid with unusual brightness and it moved at a very fast pace across the sky, going from east to west. It seemed to be travelling at a 45 degree angle and disappeared behind some trees, although the last witness said that it went out like an electric light.

Miss Sipho Moyo (22) said she was cooking the evening meal when she noticed that the whole area around her house was lit up. She became afraid and closed the house door but could see the 'strange' shape of an object travelling from east to west. She produced a drawing of what she saw which is corroborated by the other witnesses in Esigodini.

She also reported that the outline was fuzzy but the object was extremely bright so it might have been difficult to see clearly. Sipho thought it was travelling slowly. She claims to have seen it for about two to three minutes but time is deceptive and one cannot be sure of

this. The object disappeared behind some trees.



Mlungisi Ndhlovu (23) is a gardener by profession. He was on the main road coming from Esigodini village and noticed the light. The object was dark, elliptical, with a yellow light in front and a red one at the back. (This is the opposite of the colours of the lights described by others.) The light was moving from east to west.

Mpilo Mzizi (34) was outside her house making a fire. She noticed a light surrounding her, looked up and saw the object, pulsing red and yellow at the front.

[This is still another placing of the colours.] It appeared to her like a very bright star moving fast across the sky. She felt her observation was a matter of seconds.

Franz Kurt Schmidt (22) saw a similar object, but 30 minutes before the others at Esigodini. He was 30 km from the village. Schmidt has a good education and is a trainee Game Park guide. His observation was for 3-4 seconds and the object had a light-bulb yellow colouring. He did not notice a shape, as it looked rather like prolonged sheet-lightning. When it disappeared, it seemed to just 'switch-off'.

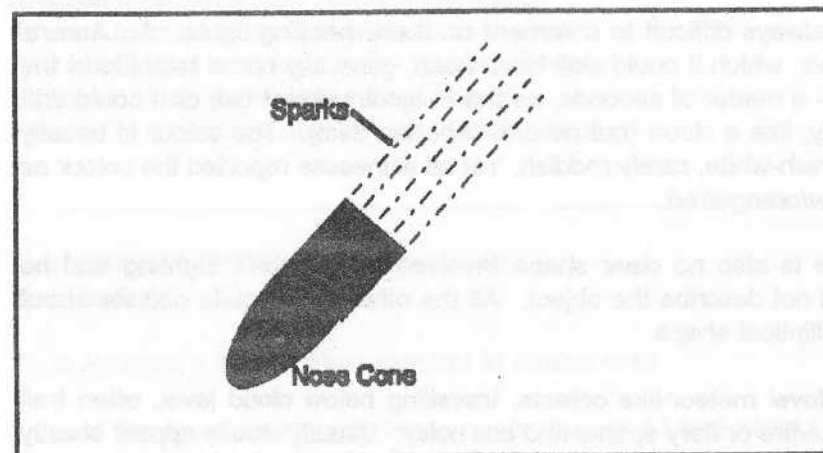
It was a warm night where he was, but drizzling lightly with some wind and thunder about. He had another witness with him at the time. His report is in contrast to those from Esigodini, where the night was clear and the stars visible.

Report from W.Harding, Harare, Zimbabwe:

'In the early hours of 27th March, 1993, I got up to get a drink. My wife and I were camping at Chirundu on the Zambezi River, close to the Zambian border. It was around 04:00 or 04:15. I was looking in a SE direction when I saw an object flying across the sky. It was at an angle of about 70 degrees above the horizon and coming down to the ground. It looked a bit like a bullet with a nose cone; not too sharp and there was a trail of sparks behind it. It was so bright, it lit up the whole sky. It was very clear, although there was no sound, nor smell, nor anything out of the ordinary about it.

It looked like a solid object but I didn't think it could be space debris. Unfortunately, it all happened too quickly for me to have time to call my wife to come and look at it and I have not heard of any other witnesses.

Drawing of the object seen by W. Harding.



Observation by Maria Sullivan, Harare, Zimbabwe

Over the Easter holidays, 1993, I went to my daughter's home in the Old Mutare area, between Mutare and the Nyanga Mountains. On Sunday, April 11th, in perfect weather, I saw a long blue light with a flaming 'tail' effect, streak across the sky very rapidly. The time was shortly after sunset and the object was very bright.

As it moved from SE to NW, it seemed to grow longer and brighter as it came towards me, then shortened and dimmed as it flew further away. It reminded me immediately of the blue light with a flaming tail seen by various people near Harare and the Mazvikadei Dam, on 14th June, 1991 (reported in UFO AFRINEWS N° 5).

The incident took only 2-3 seconds; the light diminished so fast, it seemed to vanish into thin air. There was no sound and no unusual smell. The light reminded me of a small comet.

COMMENTS:

It is always difficult to comment on these passing lights. An *Auroral meteor*, which it could well have been, generally has a brief life in the sky – a matter of seconds, as the Esigodini object did; or it could drift slowly, like a cloud (but no one reported this!). The colour is usually greenish-white, rarely reddish. Yet all witnesses reported the colour as yellow/orange/red.

There is also no clear shape involved in Schmidt's sighting and he could not describe the object. All the others were quite definite about the elliptical shape.

Low level meteor-like objects, travelling below cloud level, often trail smoke/fire or fiery sparks and are noisy. Usually clouds appear shortly before the object is seen, and often it is visible for a longer period of time than just a few seconds. On occasions they have been known to gain altitude after appearing to descend.

One other interesting factor that comes to mind here, is that although Esigodini was only 30 km away from where Schmidt made his observation, there was a discrepancy of 30 minutes between the sightings. This puts me in mind of a case in Pinetown, near Durban, South Africa. There were four witnesses to the event, two in almost adjoining streets, and the other two about 2-3 km away, and yet they all noted the time. The first two reported the sighting at 06:00 and the second two gave the time as 06:20. Twenty minutes difference and only so short a distance apart? There's obviously something that whets the appetite here!

THE DREAMER

*If I met an alien, a good looking one,
I'd ask him some questions before I was done.
I'd query his motives for coming to Earth
And ask if he knew how humans gave birth.
I'd want to make sure that he'd come in peace,
And wasn't just here for Earth's 'golden fleece'.
But most of all (as he came from above),
I'd want to be certain how he would make love!*

A CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE – Case N° 64 New Zealand

Karen Hardman's Story. (Now resident in Zimbabwe.)

'I would like to relate an experience my brother and I had when I was 8 years old and my brother Paul was 7. It happened in Gisborne, New Zealand, just before we came out to Zimbabwe. I'm afraid I can't remember the time of night, but it was dark, so it could have been quite late or in the early hours of the morning. The date was 31st August, 1969.

I found myself standing by my bedroom window, looking up to the sky at this saucer shape hovering in the distance. I can remember feeling frightened and in my mind I kept thinking that it was coming closer and was going to crash through the window. My brother was sound asleep in the bed next to mine and, feeling frightened, I woke him up. We both stood by the window and watched the object hovering.

In the distance, to the right of the object, I also remember a very bright star-like light, bigger than a star, above our neighbour's house. I can't recall my brother and I going back to bed, we just stood fascinated, watching the saucer-shape in the sky.

In the morning, my brother and I kept on at my Mum and Dad that we had seen a 'flying saucer'. My father laughed and joked about it, saying sure, he had heard of one flying over, on the radio. But we kept on at him about it. My Mum was cross, wanting to know why we had not woken her up, but being young as we were, we didn't want to disturb our parents. Also, we had a guest staying over that particular night.

Later on that morning, my father got my brother and me to go into separate rooms and draw a picture of what we had seen. Our pictures were nearly identical except that in mine, I had drawn the star-like object above our neighbour's house, to the right of the 'saucer'.

My father then decided to phone the Meteorological Department, who said they had had no reports of anything strange in the sky, so he phoned up THE HERALD to see if they had had any reports of any sightings, but they hadn't and suggested we see an Australian reporter they had working with them who was very interested in UFOs. The reporter came out to our house and my father showed him the drawings.

What convinced him that we had possibly seen something was my drawing. He believed that with UFOs that come out, there is a 'Mother Space Ship' not far off, which could explain the bright star-like light I had seen and put in my drawing. This Australian reporter had had

sightings in Australia, or so he told my mother.

Unfortunately the years have somewhat dimmed the exact memory of our sighting (I am now 32 years old). I wish I could remember more details of the UFO.

I feel that I saw lights on the craft ... it must have been fairly close as I always recall that I felt it was coming closer and would come crashing through the window. I was only 8 years old and it has left a very strange impression on my mind all these years.

My brother and I are not ones to make up elaborate stories; we didn't have that sort of imagination.

A small article was printed in the New Zealand HERALD the next day, about our sighting. Not long after this, my family emigrated to Africa.

Unfortunately I don't have the newspaper clipping; my father kept it. My brother is with my father and they do not live in Zimbabwe.

I have asked my mother, with whom I live, what the name of the reporter was, but she can't recall it. THE HERALD of Gisborne, New Zealand, should have a record of our sighting.'

Karen's mother writes :

'That day we had a visitor from Napier so the children had to move to the back bedroom that faced onto the next door neighbours. They woke up very excited, trying to explain what they had seen. Unfortunately they didn't wake us up because their father was very short tempered and it was more than they dare do.

I am convinced that Karen and Paul saw something very unusual and although I can't speak for my son whom I haven't seen since he was 14, Karen has never forgotten that night.

She at last agreed to write to you even though it all sounds a little far fetched. Her honesty is unquestionable.'

VIDEO CAMCORDER TIPS

At the MUFON conference in Richmond, Virginia, Jeff Sainio had a lot of tips to give to those of us who are lucky enough to have camcorders. Thus, if you see a UFO, bear the following in mind says Jeff: 'Keep talking. Describe what you're doing while filming .. what the object is doing, the colours you see ... try to include reference points, be the latter streetlights or stars. Set your auto-focus at 'infinity' and leave it there. Rotate your camera from horizontal to vertical ... steady your camera on something solid, for example, the roof of a car.'

THE UFOLOGISTS' LAMENT

*When you grow tired and grey, friend,
And your eyes afraid of light,
Don't give up the game, friend,
Keep up the good old fight!*

*Remember we were young, friend,
Absorbed with skies and stars;
And not afraid to search, friend,
For aliens on Mars!*

*And even when we knew, friend,
They'd fooled us at the time,
We'd rise above their jibes, friend,
And lie, we're feeling fine!*

*And now the years have passed, friend,
And still they are not fair;
So let's kick them up the rump, friend,
And show that WE DON'T CARE!*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Mr Ellison Madenyika of Masvingo, Zimbabwe:

Did you know that the African people of Zimbabwe have a name for UFOs?

They were known as CHITUNDU-MSERE-MSERE, or a Flying Basket. A local folk story tells of a small boy who was always left behind by the older boys when they went out to play, but somehow he managed to get to them in his Flying Basket. He would chant, 'Tundu! Ndoita msere msere. Tundu! Ndoita msere msere', as he flew through the skies.

From M. Sarikaya in the United Kingdom:

Thank you very much for UFO AFRINEWS. I like them. No apologies needed for the printing or paper and cover qualities; the important thing for me is information in the magazine.

Above all, I cordially congratulate all the people who are involved in publishing this magazine.

From Irene Granchi, C.I.S.N.E., Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

I have received UFO AFRINEWS N° 7 and thank you for it. I enjoyed every bit of it; your editorial, Prier Wintle's review of Dr Jacobs' SECRET LIFE*, and the wealth of information. Maria Sullivan's technical hints on questioning about UFOs are also useful for the neophyte.

* Prier Wintle's review has been reprinted in FLYING SAUCER REVIEW in the UK.

From Daniela Giordano, I CAVALIERI DI PEGASO RICERCHE D'AVANGUARDIA, Palermo, Italy:

I have inserted an ad of your bulletin on page 7 (of our publication) and a resume of your report on the UFO/crash on the Botswana border. I also added the resume of the Prof. Valkhoff report about the alleged alien writings by Maria Sullivan. I found both the reports very interesting. It is a pity they were too long for our bulletin. I liked very much your editorial comment too.

It gave me an idea of your personality and your problems. About the problems I can tell you that we have in Sicily the same basic money worries. All we do, my husband and I, is only the 'fruit' of our own efforts and our own money. And I don't have any hope that things can change.

From an Anonymous Reader, Cape Town, South Africa:

Why do you pursue your course to find out who has made contact with UFOs? What are your reasons? We've been here with you all for centuries; sometimes just as observers, and at other times as interactors.

We felt compassion for your race, since it is still in the cradle of technology, but one problem is that you are really on the verge of nuclear destruction. Why is there such a loathing for one another among your own race? And this hatred that you have towards your own planet...

This is one of the most beautiful of planets I've ever come across in the Universe. We've travelled from system to system until we came to this one. There are a few thousand of us among your race, but we new ones are only observers. The interactors have long since gone.

There is still hope for your race. We'll only look and watch for now; you have a great potential. Hope you'll find the solution to your problems soon.

Editor's Comment:

We don't believe in printing anonymous letters; at least the name should be known to your Editor. But as this is a classic example of the type of junk mail that some UFO investigators are subjected to, we felt it would serve as an example.

The letter was postmarked Cape Town and addressed to us. It was signed with some curious scribble which we have not been able to fathom, and the spelling and grammar left much to be desired.

Perhaps in return for these profound and wise(?) comments, we could arrange some English lessons for the writer?

IN CONCLUSION

How sad that in southern Africa one cannot report a UFO experience without resultant ridicule, belittlement and an often 'tongue in cheek' attitude from the Press!

Not every UFO reported is a craft filled with little green men from Outer Space, nor is it unidentifiable! But should one approach a reporter from the largest newspaper group in this part of Africa, 99% will besmirch the story with what, to them, is a great deal of amusement at the witness daring to believe there is anything beyond our planet and our knowledge of *homo sapiens*.

Of course, there are those who spoil the image of what UFO research is all about. A light hovering high up in the sky, flashing colours and moving about, is often misidentified by enthusiastic watchers as some craft beaming down a message at the witness. In reality, and if so many of us were more versed in astronomy, we would realize it was Capella or Rigel and the movement accountable to auto-kinesis; a sort of hypnotic dance occurring to the human eye. But who is there to explain the situation?

Should one approach the Planetarium, one is told that the Director does not believe in UFOs and therefore does not deal with them! Despite the fact that the witness has been subjected to a most frightening experience.

The Air Force of a country might send one a form to fill in, but according to a report in the Parliament of one of the largest countries in southern Africa, no one ever returns these forms. Can you blame them?

- a) Estimate the distance from the object to yourself.
- b) How long was the object visually discernible?
- c) Did the object emit any noise?
- d) Describe and draw the apparent shape., etc, etc, etc.

The witness can barely read, let alone decipher what is required of him/her.

But because one is uneducated and untrained in the sophisticated technologies of modern society, is one less likely to have a strange, frightening, inexplicable experience with 'something' -- be it a meteor, bolide, ball lightning or whatever?

I have been interviewed by some of the top media people in southern Africa. Some are disparaging right from the start and at least I know where I stand. What I find curious is that they even deign to talk to me; perhaps because it is their job and they are forced to do so. So, bully for them!

But the vast majority will do the interviewing and then, after having finished off with, 'and tell me, do you believe in fairies/ghosts/reincarnation as well?' they proceed to tell me of an unusual experience that their mother/sister/brother/aunt had some years previously. I have noted how earnestly they await my reply, as though I can reach into my subconscious and pull out the rabbit of easy explanation.

Some of the blame lies with the UFO investigators as well. They may be far too gullible; whatever they are told, they swallow readily without

trying to find a rational explanation for the sighting. They may also encourage the witness to enlarge on what he/she saw.

'I think there were port-holes all around. I could see the lights.'

'And', says the investigator, perspiration gathering on his fevered brow, 'did you see aliens?'

'Well, it wasn't very clear, but there were shadows....'

'But it could have been people -- like the Grays, with slanting eyes and no hair and a very thin mouth....'

'I-I didn't see that. Well, ah, it was far away, maybe the shadows could have been aliens... er.....'

'Yes, yes, good. I thought so. Very good, we must have you under hypnosis at the earliest opportunity...'

Fortunately, there are not many of that ilk, and most improve with age!

It's a hard task being a UFO investigator but to me, the most rewarding part is the look on the faces of the interviewees when they realise I believe them. Not all of them, but certainly a great number of them.

There will come a time - hopefully in the not too distant future - when some brave government is going to take a positive stand on UFOs.

They will admit that we ARE being visited, whether from Outer Space or another Time Continuum is not important. For whatever, they will admit that you cannot fool all the people all the time.

And I only hope that I will be allowed to interview just one sarcastic, unbelieving, ridiculing interviewer of today.

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