

# FSR BOOKSHELF — 10

New UFO books reviewed by . . .

*Janet & Colin Bord*

“THE ideal UFO witness, in order to be believed, would have to be someone who was never in trouble, never saw anything mystifying before, never thought of UFOs, never spoke of them, never even heard of them at all. Maybe, just maybe, he’d be believed.” These are the words of Travis Walton, and they indicate the problems he faced after his UFO abduction in November 1975. This case remains controversial; but despite valiant efforts the sceptics have been unable to prove that it was a hoax, or even to present any convincing evidence against it. According to **Bill Barry’s** account of the affair, **Ultimate Encounter** (Corgi, £1.25, 206-page paperback), everything happened as claimed by Travis and his six fellow forestry workers, who were close by when he was struck by a shaft of blue-green light from a hovering UFO. Barry gives the full story of Travis’s abduction and the aftermath, with all the claims and counter-claims, and it makes fascinating reading. Unfortunately the end of the book is padded out with general information on UFOs, the search for extraterrestrial life, and so on, but the first three-quarters presents a useful insight into people’s reactions to a reported UFO abduction.

**Ronald Story**, author of two books demolishing the case for “ancient astronauts,” confesses himself to be “a very cautious UFO ‘proponent’” in the Introduction to his new book, **UFOs and the Limits of Science** (New English Library, £5.95, 245-page hardback, illustrated with photographs and drawings; has source notes but no index!). In this down-to-earth study of ufology, Story gives a history of the subject from the controversial UFO shapes found among prehistoric cave paintings through to the 20th century, followed by his opinion of the ‘hard data’ — physical trace cases and UFO photographs. Part III contains his ten ‘best’ cases, each detailed and with the author’s reasons for believing them to be still unexplainable. Finally the data is evaluated, special attention being paid to the subject’s suitability for scientific study. Although we recommend this book to all ufologists, we also have some criticisms of it. There are too many printer’s and spelling errors in the text, including some surprising ones like “Alan” (instead of Allan) Hendry. And surely it should have been pointed out (not just in the Acknowledgements) that Chapter 16 was written by J. Richard Greenwell, or at least adapted from his article in *The Encyclopedia of UFOs*. Finally, Bruce Murray’s sceptical appendix, “The Limits of Science,” reads strangely after Story’s appar-

ently open-minded approach to his subject. Murray cannot possibly know enough to pontificate on so many strange phenomena in the way he does, and Story’s decision to conclude with this negative piece makes us begin to wonder whether after all Story himself is a debunker wearing the clever disguise of a “proponent.”

**The UFO Encyclopedia** by **Margaret Sachs** will inevitably be compared with Ronald Story’s *Encyclopedia of UFOs* which we reviewed in Bookshelf 8. Although both books deal with the same phenomenon, their editors’ approaches and attitudes are very different. Whereas Sachs’ book attempts to cover the widest possible area with a great number of short entries, Story has been more rigorously selective with fewer but larger and factually based entries, often written by acknowledged UFO authorities. In her attempt to be completely comprehensive Sachs sometimes lapses into the ridiculous. Thus she gives us a six-line entry for POLICE which says that police often see UFOs because it is their job to patrol and observe. And another entry for Elvis Presley, complete with photograph, because he said he had seen a UFO.

Regrettably, some of the entries for magazines relate to publications that do not meet the most basic standards of literacy, which shows a lack of critical awareness in the compilation of this encyclopedia. This is in one sense an advantage as lesser-known groups and individuals sometimes gain an entry in Sachs, while they fail to make an appearance in Story. But since the data is often supplied by the individual or group, it is not always objective and can be positively misleading. If we compare the entries in both books for some well-known cases and people, we find that J. Allen Hynek merits three quarters of a page in Sachs and a whole page of Story’s larger format, giving perhaps 50% more information. Likewise Allan Hendry gets half a page with a photograph in Story, but no entry in Sachs. Other prominent serious ufologists are also missing, while relatively unknown “personalities” are included.

The reasons for Sachs’ decisions on whom to include or omit are unclear. The Travis Walton abduction receives two and a half pages in Sachs (cross-referenced as Travis Walter (!) — and there are other careless errors), but under one and a half pages in Story. Under CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND Sachs gives two entries. First, a three-line definition of Hynek’s classification and then a quarter-page

synopsis of the movie of that title, plus a half-page still from the movie, while Story provides a whole page of detailed analysis of Hynek's classification and no mention of the film.

Other examples: three pages on Zeta Reticuli in Story, one and a quarter pages in Sachs. The Lakenheath/Bentwaters case gets two and a half pages in Story and one and a quarter pages in Sachs. So Story generally gives a larger, more authoritative and detailed account of those subjects at the core of ufology, while Sachs generally takes a quicker, lighter view and includes many entries with only a peripheral connection with serious ufology. Ideally both books should find a place in the ufologist's library, but if the expense of this makes a choice necessary, then we would definitely recommend Story. Less involved newcomers to the subject who simply need a quick, brief guide to the various references that they meet in UFO writings will probably be well pleased with the cheaper Sachs volume. Unfortunately, some addresses, publication details of magazines, etc., were already out of date on publication, and some even a while beforehand.

Story's *Encyclopedia of UFOs* is published in the U.K. by New English Library in a large-format hardback edition, price £12.95, and is also available in the U.S. Sachs' *UFO Encyclopedia* is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, in a 408-page hardback price \$16.96, while in the U.K. a Bantam/Corgi paperback edition is available at £4.95.

In October 1978 a young Australian pilot, Fred Valentich, disappeared without trace on a routine flight across Bass Strait, near Melbourne, Australia. His last communications were some cryptic radio transmissions to Melbourne airport saying that a metallic craft with green lights was hovering above him. The case was widely reported by UFO publications (see FSR 24/5), and *The Devil's Meridian* by **Kevin Killey & Gary Lester** (Lester-Townsend Publishing, Sydney, Aust.\$4.95, 228-page paperback) which has been written around the Valentich disappearance, adds very little to our knowledge of the event.

In fact the material is barely sufficient to fill two chapters, and so the authors have promoted the Bass Strait as another area of mysterious disappearances and unknown forces. The evidence for this is less substantial than that for the Bermuda Triangle, and the bulk of the book is a liberal padding of basic UFO-lore and many mundane sighting reports from the Antipodes. This book is of most value for reader's interested in the details of the Valentich case, as the authors have talked to the friends and family of the missing pilot and give a recent view of the background to the case. They discuss the possibility of a hoax and arranged disappearance, but Valentich, who seems to have been almost a model citizen, emerges from the inquiry unblemished.

A UFO investigator for twenty years, **Raymond E. Fowler** has written a personal view of the UFO scene from 1947 to the present: **Casebook of a UFO Investigator** (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632, a large-format 246-page paperback, price \$5.95). Most interesting and instructive is his material on IFOs, hoaxes and wild-goose chases; practising and would-be UFO investigators will also find his book a useful inside look at investigation, with valuable tips on how to go about it. The book is illustrated with a few photographs, and also has a bibliography and full index.

Followers of Bigfoot and his kin will be aware that there has recently been much activity among researchers in China, where sightings of 'wild men' have been reported from Hubei Province. Now Steve Moore of *Fortean Times* has edited a collection of articles by witnesses and researchers which give more information than has so far been published. There is also an article by Xhou Xinyan entitled "Does the 'Flying Saucer' Exist?" which was published in China's daily press and shows us how the subject of UFOs is presented to the Chinese people. **Wildman**, *Fortean Times Occasional Paper No.1* (a 22-page booklet, illustrated with map, drawings and photographs) is available from 'Fortean Times', c/o 9-12 St Anne's Court, London W1, price £1 (U.S. \$2.50) U.K. and world surface mail, U.S. \$4.50 airmail.

During his career as a psychiatrist in New Jersey, **Dr. Berthold Eric Schwarz** has taken careful note of psychic events involving himself, his family, friends and patients. These include straightforward telepathy and precognition as well as more complex psychic interactions. Now he has collected together the papers he has written on this theme over the years and published them as **Psychic-Nexus: Psychic Phenomena in Psychiatry and Everyday Life** (Van Nostrand Reinhold, U.S.A. & U.K., price in U.K. £11.20, a 308-page hardback with diagrams, photographs and index). Chapter 15 deals with Stella Lansing's UFO experiences, which readers will remember Dr. Schwarz has also described in detail in FSR. He sensibly states: "Just as it is erroneous to jump to the conclusion that Mrs. Lansing is actually filming UFOs, so it is presumptuous to state that what she frequently photographs has no connection with UFOs" (p.278). This sentence pinpoints one of the problems of ufology and possible psychic connections: the link is suggestive but tenuous, and like smoke it can be sensed but not grasped. Dr. Schwarz's intriguing study of psychic events is worthy of the ufologist's attention, because it demonstrates that psychic communication is not rare, and that finding has implications for the understanding of UFO events and witnesses.



The subject of UFOs has inspired hundreds of books and pamphlets during the last 30 years, many of them now being rare collectors' items. Arcturus Book Service publishes an annual bibliography/catalogue listing around 1,300 UFO titles in its 60 pages, as well as books on paranormal phenomena, hollow earth, mystery animals, extraterrestrial life, pyramidology, fairy mythology, Bermuda triangle, ancient astronauts, astroarchaeology, South American mysteries and megalithic cultures. Many of the books listed are in stock at very reasonable prices, and we can from our own experience recommend Arcturus's efficient service. Anyone looking for old or unusual UFO books (and also new American books which are often

difficult to obtain in the U.K.) should not hesitate to send for a copy of the **1981 UFO Literature Reference Guide & Catalog**, which can be obtained from Arcturus Book Service, 263 N. Ballston Avenue, Scotia, N.Y. 12302, U.S.A. The price is \$2.50 for residents of the U.S.A. and Canada, and \$3.50 (including airmail postage) to readers outside the U.S.A. and Canada.

Robert Rickard & Richard Kelly's *Photographs of the Unknown*, reviewed in Bookshelf 7, is now available in a paperback edition (New English Library, £4.95). So too is Randall Jones Pugh & F. W. Holiday's *The Dyfed Enigma*, reviewed in Bookshelf 1 (Coronet, £1.25).

## RETURN VISIT TO AVELEY

*Bob Easton*

**Our contributor has recently joined the UFOIN team, and this is the report he submitted to become accepted. He also acts as RIC for BUFORA in the Essex area.**

**August 28 1980. 20.30 BST. Aveley, Essex. MED. Level A.**

READERS of Volume 23, No. 6, and 24, No. 1, will recall the incredible story of UFO contact and abduction claimed by the family of John and Sue Day (then given the pseudonym of Avis). The incident, from 1974, and its aftermath (which still has repercussions for the family), has entered British UFO folklore as one of its more significant events.

Aveley is a small village on the eastern fringes of Greater London, with flat land and dotted woods, but with a military "danger zone" situated to the south by the banks of the River Thames. We now have cause to describe another encounter which has taken place in this location.

The night was described as warm and clear (in fact weather details show 25 km visibility, a temperature of 68°F, 3/8 strato-cumulus cloud at 4000 feet, and a light south-westerly wind of 10-12 knots). There were five witnesses all travelling together by car. This is an interesting coincidence as the previous abduction involved a family of five travelling in a car at a spot very close by.

The witnesses were Anthony Constable (aged 34), a cafe proprietor from Upminster, who has no interest in UFOs, and who has sought a rational explanation for the sighting; his wife Josephine, also 34, who helps in the cafe and has a mild interest in UFOs, having read "Von Däniken"-type books, but who has never before seen anything like this, their two children, Dean (age 10) and Scott (age 8), who have not been interviewed and, finally, Carol Fisk (age 18), who is the sister of Josephine and lives in East London.

As Carol was on a visit to her sister, and as it was a pleasant evening, they decided to take a short country

drive. They left in their Ford Escort, with Anthony driving, and after an hour or so relatively aimless wandering they found themselves on Aveley Road, heading south towards the village. Anthony and his wife noticed the phenomenon more or less at the same time, seen first visually as two very bright red lights suspended in the south-east at an elevation of about 30 degrees. Calling them to the attention of everyone else, as the lights looked rather close, it was decided to try to get a better look at them. As they drove into the

