

**JUST WHAT DID HAPPEN AT THE ASSAP  
SERIOUSLY STRANGE CONFERENCE?  
CUE THE MONTAGE!**

**BEHIND THE SECRET OF THE NIGHT CRAWLERS!  
PAST LIFE REGRESSION AND FALSE MEMORIES  
4 (AND A HALF) YEARS OF ASSAP WEBINARS**

# seriously strange



**A GHOSTLY CONCORDE  
TAKES TO THE SKY!**

**THE GHOST HUNTER, THE  
PIDGEON AND A VICTORIA  
SPONGE CAKE**

**HARNESSING THE  
EERIE POWER OF MUSIC**

**DIESEL AND PETROL ENGINES;  
DO UAP AFFECT THEM  
DIFFERENTLY**

**issue 161**

# ASSAP

[www.assap.ac.uk](http://www.assap.ac.uk)



## ABOUT ASSAP

ASSAP, investigating the weird seriously (and the seriously weird) since 1981.

ASSAP is a scientifically-orientated educational and research charity and learned society dedicated to a better understanding of anomalous phenomena. As well as education, we carry out investigations and research.

Over 43 years researching and exploring the topics of the anomalous.

Anomalous phenomena divide broadly into four areas: psychic phenomena (ghosts, telepathy, mediumship, etc.), Fortean phenomena (cryptozoology, fish falling from the sky, SLI, etc.), Earth Mysteries (leys, archaeoastronomy, etc.) and UFOlogy, a now perhaps outdated umbrella term that covers UAP/UFO/USO and the associated phenomena.

ASSAP was founded on 10 June 1981. Founders included well known authors Hilary Evans and Jenny Randles as well as Fortean Times editor Bob Rickard and scientists Drs Hugh Pincott and Vernon Harrison. Other founders included Alan Cleaver and Maurice Townsend.

Our president is the Rev Lionel Flanthorpe.

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# FEATURES



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FEATURE

Discover the eerie tale of the “Phantom Concorde”—a spectral supersonic jet witnessed in Shropshire and Essex during the summer of 1975. With multiple eyewitness accounts, this story challenges the boundaries of the possible.



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FEATURE

Sounds can summon a sense of lost futures and half-remembered pasts. Neil Nixon explores how certain musicians have harnessed this eerie timelessness, blending nostalgia, folklore, and the uncanny to create immersive, otherworldly experiences.



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UFO close encounters are often linked to vehicle-engine failures, with accounts and theories suggesting electromagnetic interference as a possible cause. Ian Liston-Smith explores the intriguing differences in how petrol and diesel engines react during such encounters.



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FEATURE

An elderly woman, troubled by sounds she believed to be a ghost, found the true culprit—a pigeon roosting in her bathroom—unveiling a mystery that ended with a slice of Victoria sponge. We take the journey of how the mystery was solved!

# INSIDE ASSAP



## ASSAP E-News

This monthly newsletter is brought to you by William Eyre, ASSAP's esteemed archivist and librarian. With over 33 years of experience investigating the anomalous with ASSAP, William brings unparalleled expertise and insight to our community. Don't miss out on his fascinating discoveries, inside track and updates—sign up today!

Available at [www.ASSAP.ac.uk](http://www.ASSAP.ac.uk)

Our cover art this issue takes an element of each of the 4 Feature stories with the exception of the inclusion of Calvin UFO.

## ASSAP Membership

ASSAP e-membership £5 billed annually  
 ASSAP physical membership £20 billed annually.  
 Retired members subscription if £15 billed annually.

ASSAP membership gives you access to publications, like this one! Online access to a large catalogue of back issues, access to investigator training, use of our lending library of a number of books and content (by post), the opportunity to apply for a research grant. Early bird / membership price to the annual Seriously Strange Conference.

Access to the popular ASSAP Paranormal Webinars, a continuing weekly series of presentations, talks and special events. The ability to participate in live Q&A and conversation with the guest.

ASSAPs e-membership grants access to the live webinars.

The total number of Webinars now exceeds 200, every Thursday live at 7pm.

Website: [www.ASSAP.ac.uk](http://www.ASSAP.ac.uk)

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# EDITORIAL

*The greatest of apologies to those who have been eagerly anticipating this issue of Seriously Strange, originally planned for release in the Summer 2024, with the editorial and articles promoting the then upcoming ASSAP Conference in August. Circumstances and a series of challenging revelations have rocked the foundations within ASSAP. The core of our challenges lies in the discrepancies between our documentation at Companies House and the Charity Commission, which has necessitated reverting to governance structures outlined in earlier filings. This issue is complex, involving numerous steps to rectify. Including an EGM to vote on moving to motion and vote upon on having electrical online decisions. Which will have occurred by the time you read this.*

*To everyone who has been diligently working to steer us back on course along these stages, we extend a deep gratitude. The stark reality is that this ordeal has put considerable strain on friendships and relationships, some of which may prove challenging to mend.*

*There are bright green shoots of resolution at hand. Lessons are being learned. A disconnect has been recognized with the members, it's at the front of many conversations and will hopefully all being well, be put right under new leadership decisions. They might be yours! There are new and exciting times ahead with your involvement and support.*

*Talking about the strange, seriously should be at the core of what we do.*

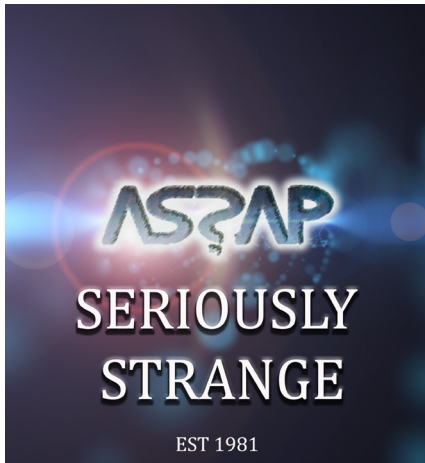
*Since joining ASSAP in 2011, I've discovered a set of core values that marry professionalism with approachability, where one can share a casual drink with fellow members. It's an eclectic mix of experience, knowledge, and diverse skills, ranging from academic scholars to passionate researchers and those newly intrigued by the anomalous. This blend has been the guiding principle in shaping this issue. Attempting to be accessible in design and content, yet rich and fulfilling to those well versed in the weird. This issue takes inspiration from the quirky charm of Fortean TV with the depth of National Geographic and Fortean Times, offering clearer, richer content for all levels of interest in the anomalous.*

*Interested in submitting articles, features, or short opinion pieces? Feel free to contact ASSAP [publications@assap.ac.uk](mailto:publications@assap.ac.uk) Have a presentation or talk in mind? We invite you to share your content at one of our ASSAP webinars [webinars@assap.ac.uk](mailto:webinars@assap.ac.uk) where you can also use the platform as a sounding board to test your ideas, refine your approach, and make improvements. Beyond this, ASSAP serves as an educational body, committed to training and engaging in research. Once our current issues are resolved, I hope we can actively move forward with experimental and research projects. All are welcome to participate. Get in touch!*

*We're eager to hear your thoughts on this issue and our direction forward. Please feel free to reach out with any feedback or queries. **Kristian. Content and Media.***

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As the virus of unknown origins took its grip on the world in 2020, how did the paranormal community in and around ASSAP move to keep people engaged and fascinated in the weird and the wonderful?

We look at the webinars as they move into their 5th year.



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A recap montage of the 2024 Seriously Strange Conference that tookplace at the University of Winchester.

Talks, presentations and shenanigans!



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ASSAP has an online presence in a number of different spaces and we would like to connect with you. Let's get social!



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We pay respects to Dennis Bury, a long standing member of ASSAP and SPR. Principal Trustee of the Survival Joint Research Committee

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Ghost in the machine?

A revisit of a piece by Slyvia Wix.

How quirks in the broken code of a dated videogame about the world of simulated evolution cause characters to interact with "dead" characters, creating unexpected and often eerie instances of artificial after-life.'



# Yippie-yi-o!

# Yippie-yi-yay!

## Ghosts ride across the sky



Prof Rob Gandy

When I was asked to say what were my 'best' half a dozen 'real-life' road-related ghost encounters[1].

I had no hesitation in including the multi-witness sighting of the 'Phantom Concorde' which I originally detailed in Fortean Times[2].

Apparitions relating to people or animals can be accepted, but one involving such a huge and inanimate object stretches credulity. Naturally, I assumed that it would be a unique, one-off event; but how wrong could I be!? Following his listening to my being interviewed by Paul Bestall for his Mysteries & Monsters podcast[3]

Magnus (pseudonym) contacted me to tell me, we that he too had witnessed a 'Phantom Concorde', but this was in Essex! Therefore, I repeat below the details of the original Shropshire event for readers who may not be familiar with it. I follow this with Magnus's experience.

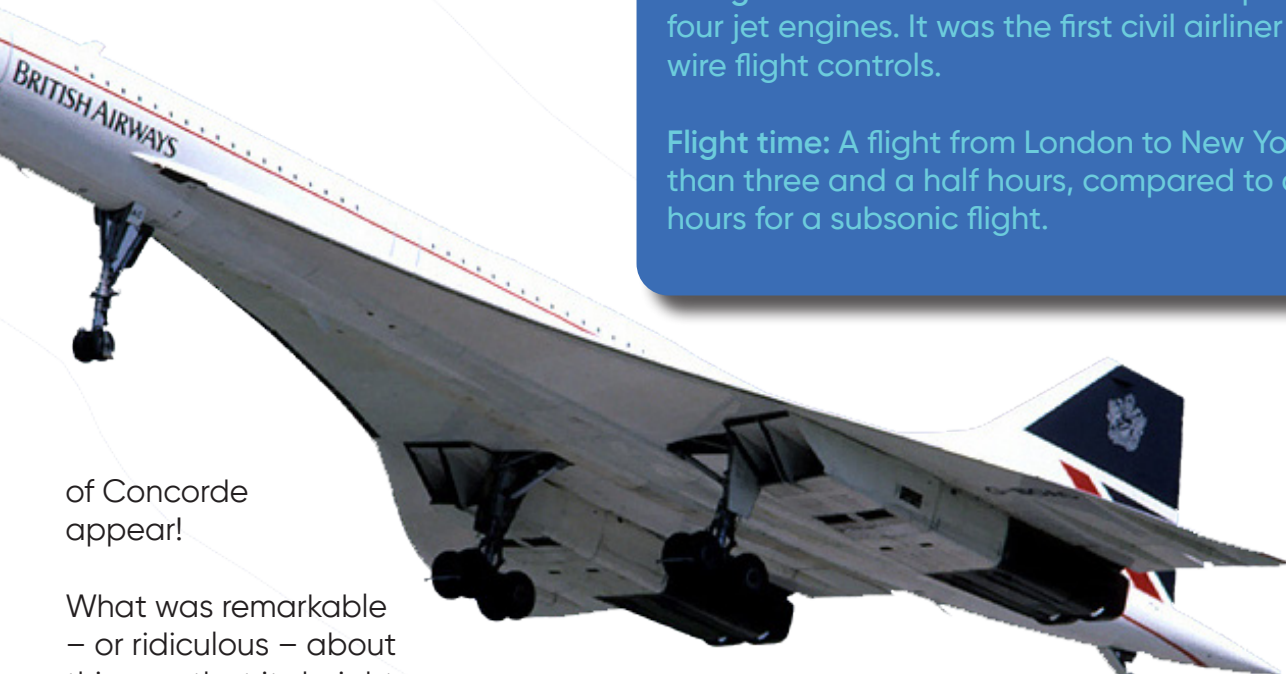
### Shropshire Phantom Concorde

It was mid to late August 1975, and Len Chester (pseudonym) was 15 years of age. Together with his mother and father (now deceased) he had gone on a weekend trip to Shropshire in the old ambulance that his

dad had converted into a mobile home/ caravanette. They stayed at a campsite in either Arley or Hampton Loade, and visited the Severn Valley Railway, where there was a locomotive that he was particularly interested in. It had recently arrived in an un-restored state and was at Bewdley Station that weekend. They travelled on a steam train, which got delayed for a while at Hampton Loade station. Everyone disembarked onto the sunny platform until the delay was over, including, as Len recalls, a carriage full of nuns. Just then, a Spitfire aircraft flew past and someone remarked that they thought there was an air show in the vicinity.

Later that day, a fine Sunday afternoon, they left for their home on Merseyside. They had not travelled very far, perhaps 15-20 minutes into the journey; Len's father did not drive fast and therefore they were probably north of Bridgnorth on the A442, which was the most direct route. This is reinforced by Len's clear recollection that nearer home they passed an overbridge of the old Ellesmere branch line, which is situated on the A525 between Whitchurch and Wrexham.

They were in open countryside when suddenly to their left, behind a low hedge, they saw the quite unmistakable shape



**Speed:** The Concorde could fly at over twice the speed of sound, with a top cruising speed of 1,354 miles per hour.

**Design:** The Concorde had a delta-shaped wing and four jet engines. It was the first civil airliner to use fly-by-wire flight controls.

**Flight time:** A flight from London to New York took less than three and a half hours, compared to about eight-hours for a subsonic flight.

of Concorde appear!

What was remarkable – or ridiculous – about this was that its height – some 10-15ft (3-4.6m) above the ground – speed and angle made it appear that it had only just taken off. (Len remembers that the undercarriage was still deployed, but he accepts that he may be filling gaps in his memory). This was strange enough in itself, but all three of the family commented that it had seemingly taken off from what was just an ordinary farmers' field. Len is very clear about this fact because what struck them as being very odd was that they were not near any airfield. Len recalls that Concorde was parallel to them, also heading north, and about 100 yards away. He cannot remember whether or not they heard any noise from the aircraft, despite its close proximity; again, this might just be his memory. The aircraft disappeared from view behind hedges and trees as they continued up the road, and was then nowhere to be seen.

Len has tried to rationalise this event over the years. Perhaps it was part of the air show that had been suggested by one of the people who had seen the Spitfire (although spotting a flying Spitfire does not

automatically mean that it is part of an air show).

But then why had it been so impossibly close to the ground? Enquiries have ascertained that Concorde was not involved in the Cosford Air Show, the main large air show in the area; indeed, there appears not to have been a Cosford show in 1975 (the modern event only started in 1978) and the one in Sleaf, Shropshire, 30 miles away, was cancelled that year.

Concorde only flew at two Cosford shows, in 1986 and 1987[4]

Maybe it was taking off from an airstrip somewhere in the Severn valley beyond the field. But no other airstrip can be found anywhere nearby there that would be capable of accommodating Concorde, which required a runway that could handle a Boeing 747 jumbo jet[5].

Maybe it was on a normal flight but was experiencing trouble, and had to fly very low for a period.

But, if Concorde had experienced such serious trouble in its flight then it would surely have been reported in the national press. Perhaps it was something else altogether... but on this point Len has no doubt in his mind: it was unmistakably a Concorde! Therefore, this episode must be filed as both 'strange' and 'unsolved'.

## Essex Phantom Concorde

It was one bright and sunny weekday afternoon in the height of Summer in 1975, possibly July or August. 13-year-old Magnus was being driven to the shops by his mother, who was in her mid-30s. They were chatting and looking around as the car headed down Priory Road towards the junction with Whitchurch Road, in Harold's Hill, Romford, Essex. There was little or no traffic. To their left was a line of terraced houses, set back from the road, and to their right was a large open field, skirted by trees. Suddenly, coming from the west towards them, across the open field, was an airplane. But it was no ordinary airplane – it was Concorde! Both Magnus and his mother recognised it from the shape of its nose and its delta-shaped wings. Its undercarriage was 'down' and it was coming in only 50 feet above them. When it crossed them, it filled the sky and everything went dark as it cut out the Sun, making the undercarriage appear black. But the most disconcerting thing was that there was no sound whatsoever coming from it – it was completely silent! The two of them watched it traverse the sky for what was probably 5 to 10 seconds, and then it simply vanished into thin air! Stunned, Magnus and his mother looked back to where it disappeared, not believing what they had witnessed. She exclaimed 'What the hell was that!?' Thinking back, they realised that they hadn't seen the airplane coming from distance over the horizon, it had just been 'there' without any warning.

The flight of the airplane would have placed it as coming from across North London. Stanstead airport is the nearest airport to Romford (32 miles) but is in the wrong direction.

But everything about the episode just didn't – and still doesn't – make sense to both Magnus and his mother. They have discussed it many times over the years and have stuck to their story despite the scepticism and ridicule of family and friends. It was reading about another Phantom Concorde in Fortean Times[2], together with listening to my interview on the Mysteries & Monsters podcast[3], that made Magnus decide to come forward. It is interesting to think that people always remember their seeing Concorde because it was so iconic, with its unique design. Therefore, watching it cross the sky was something that people did; and so, its appearance and disappearance was observed and noteworthy in both cases.

## Thoughts

I confess that I too have had a close encounter experience with a Concorde! In the early-1980s I was refereeing a cub football match in Bromborough on the Wirral (two of my sons were playing). It was the usual situation of kids running around chasing the ball and parents shouting encouragement or obscenities from the touchline. Suddenly, everything went quiet and everybody stood still, and looked up into the sky. There – apparently 'out of nowhere' was Concorde – only a few hundred feet above all of us. Like the two experiences described above, the undercarriage was down; and then it disappeared over the trees and out of sight....

With Concorde gone, I blew my whistle and restarted the game. Was this yet another example of a Phantom Concorde? Absolutely not – this Concorde was on the flightpath coming in to land at Liverpool Airport just across the River Mersey. It was Grand National Day at Aintree Racecourse and, in those days, Concorde always brought the rich and glamorous from London to Liverpool for the meeting. But what I can vouch for is how people found the airplane totally awe-inspiring and would stand and gawp at it at close quarters. Therefore, I have every

confidence that the witnesses to the Phantom Concorde did not misidentify some other type of airplane.

So, having more than one case of a Phantom Concorde, each with multiple witnesses, does beg the question of what the nature of the phenomenon might actually be? It seems sensible to exclude the possibility of timeslips, because no 'real' Concorde would have ever been present in those locations at those heights on any occasion. But what is truly remarkable is that both events took place at almost exactly the same time, i.e. Summer 1975, despite their being approximately 160 miles apart!

Surely airplanes cannot have departed souls!? Because if they did then that would ratchet weirdness up to eleven! Nevertheless, the skies above the Peak District are said to be haunted by WWII airplanes[6] and records show stories of phantom cars and motorbikes disappearing in front of people. Examples of ghostly horse-drawn carriages are legion in history[7].

If ghosts are simply the spirits of the dead, then how does transport fit in (let alone ghosts' clothing!)? Passenger airplanes are ubiquitous in modern skies and little attention is paid to them unless there is something particularly noticeable or interesting about them. They will usually be a Boeing or an Airbus. You look up and spot one in the distance and then get back to whatever you are doing. You didn't see whether it appeared from nowhere and vanished into thin air – it was just a boring airplane. Consequently, there might be many 'ghost airplanes' flying across the skies unnoticed. This is obviously highly improbable. The chances are that such aircraft are [Trigger Warning for a very, very bad pun] Mirages or Ilyushins!



## NOTES

- 1 <https://www.selectcarleasing.co.uk/news/article/dead-end-ghosts-roads-uk-haunted-supernatural-halloween;> Dead End - The top six road-related ghost encounters - Phenomena Magazine No.162 p.12-15
- 2 Rob Gandy, A Miscellany of Merseyside Mysteries, Fortean Times, FT382 p.38-43
- 3 <https://audioboom.com/channels/5053713-mysteries-and-monsters>
- 4 Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Pers. Comm., 22 Nov 2018.
- 5 [www.concordesst.com/faq.html](http://www.concordesst.com/faq.html)
- 6 <https://drdavidclarke.co.uk/urban-legendary/ghost-fliers/>
- 7 The curious thing about phantom coaches and horses is that they are sometimes said to involve headless coachmen and headless horses. In which case, how were the reins attached to the horses so that the coachman could steer them? Of course, this assumes that headless coachmen could see where they were going!

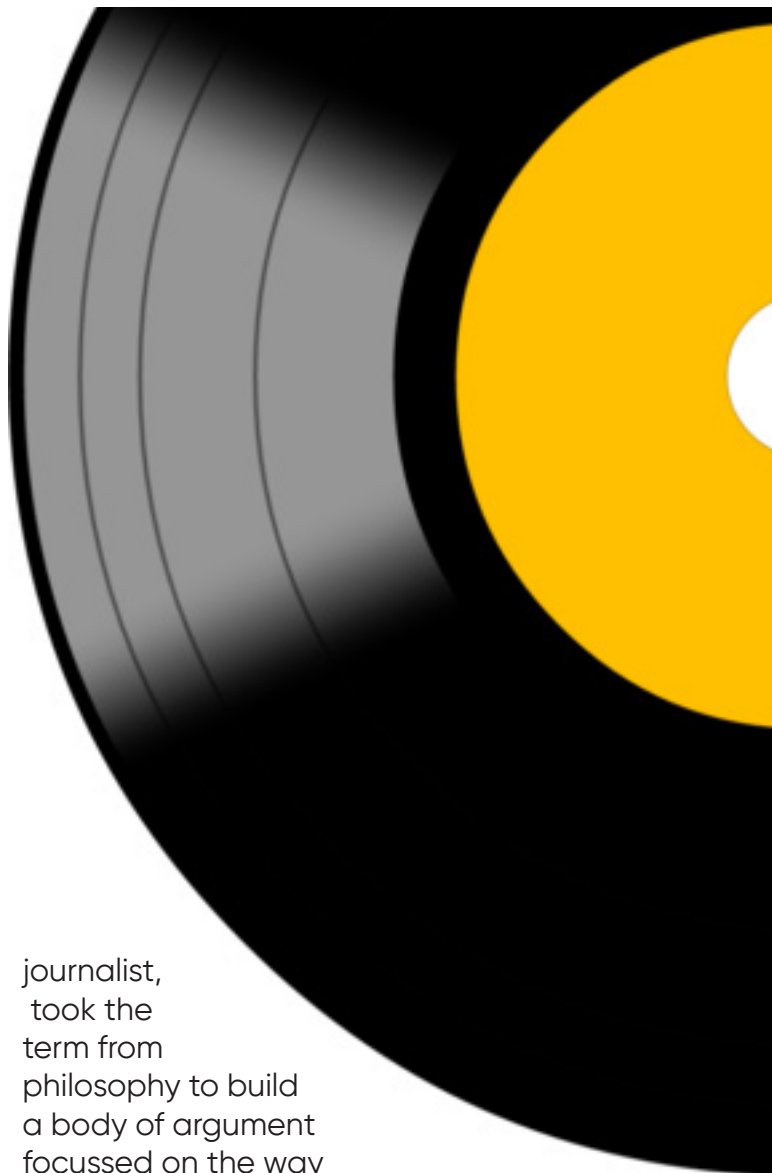
# Seriously Strange Sounds

By Neil Nixon

Music – popular, cultish, and hugely unpopular – hasn't been found wanting when it comes to invoking the paranormal, and any trawl of song titles, record packaging or simply the imagery employed by acts in a range of genres will soon produce examples in which the same subject matter that keeps ASSAP in investigations is employed to make a creative point, or simply shift product. The current study aims for something a little deeper and a lot more nebulous in looking for a few insights into how, exactly, some musicians can invoke a sense of the seriously strange in their work. We don't have space to fully explore a complex subject but, hopefully, the sources and examples lined up here will provide anyone with the inclination and energy to explore the subject in more detail.

There is – at least in terms recognised by some audiences and critics for whom music is a serious and significant subject – such a thing as hauntology. It serves both as a description for a particular area of musical activity and as a useful tag for those seeking out a specific kind of music. Mark Fisher (1968 – 2017), amongst many other things a political theorist, lecturer, and music

journalist, took the term from philosophy to build a body of argument focussed on the way music can play with perceptions of time and culture. Specifically, its ability to invoke a sense of lost futures, or bring about a strong sense of a past we wished we had. The mismatches between both the reality of the time we inhabit and the times we imagined, along with our own personal sense of the feelings and realities we can almost touch are the basis for emotional reactions to the music Fisher recognised as providing hauntology. Fisher's arguments are frequently intense and are fully explored in *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (2014) and the posthumous *The Weird and the Eerie* (2017) the latter published by Repeater Books, which he co-founded. However, his opinions on music are frequently inseparable from observations on politics, philosophy and the depression that led to his death by suicide in 2017.





***“Today, I will be creating yesterday’s music for tomorrow!”***

Consequently, those with a casual interest might find a more accessible start in the handful of general works out there exploring hauntology one of which summarises Fisher’s influential thinking: “Fisher’s formulation of hauntology consists of two component parts...the ‘no longer’ and the ‘not yet’. The former haunts the present from the past, returning repeatedly... [making] its presence felt. The latter haunts the present from the future.” Fisher’s ideas honed observations on popular culture that had been in mass circulation for some time, notably in John Berger’s discussion of the way publicity (i.e., advertising) plays with perceptions of time because “in essence [it is] nostalgic {selling} the past to the future” and noting “this future is endlessly deferred...it remains credible because the truthfulness of publicity is judged...by the relevance of its fantasies to those of the spectator.”

A practical insight into this in music is readily available for anyone going online to sample the sounds produced by the Ghost Box or Castles in Space record labels. As an example, I got a promo earlier this year of The Nation’s Most Central Location by Warrington–Runcorn New Town Development Plan and raised a few of the points in this article when I played some of it on my radio show. The name of the act, the graphic design of their visual material and their reliance on the analogue synth sounds and sparing timbres that appeared to represent and positive and highly productive future in the 1970s are now a haunting presence, offering up a strange and dislocating listening experience, similar in many ways to the manner in which the best British folk horror movies – like *The Wicker Man* – collide a sense of modernity with a pagan sensibility, evoking a force both old and indestructible, with a power to change our experience of the present.

What these sounds do to us emotionally and the mechanisms by which they do it is slowly being unpicked. Consciousness remains a mystery though the last few decades have given us a picture proving firstly that our brain stem, particularly the cerebellum,

an aspect of brain design we share with many less-complex organisms, "generates affect" whilst the mid-brain located periaqueductal gray/grey (PAG) works as the "main output centre of all the affective circuits, channelling information... [to generate] 'emotion proper'" [Mark Solm's italics].

Humans are – literally – hard-wired to process sound and make sense of what they hear. Pitch, for example, "is so important that the brain represents it directly... we could place electrodes on the brain and be able to determine what pitches are being played" Daniel Levitin – a musician and recording engineer with a CV boasting involvement with the likes of Steely Dan and Neil Young – has devoted an academic career to understanding how our brain understands music, teasing out conflicting theories to a conclusion that humans "are storing both the abstract and specific information contained in melodies" and our processing of music in general is complex to the point that regions all over the brain light up and no specific model of music processing has yet been found that fully explains the complexities of how we experience these sounds.

We know definitely our experience is more complex than record keeping, or the "constructivist" model whereby we are thought to store an "abstract generalization" and that the best guesses on where a definitive answer will lie seem to be with "a hybrid of sorts" offering a "multiple-trace memory model." Crudely, music impacts us in an emotional, visceral way, has the capacity to create images, be understood intellectually but can also be enigmatic and for many of us finds links in our mind with very personal experiences.

This existence between an imagined past and a promised future that often lurks perpetually ahead without ever appearing is a familiar enough notion, seen perhaps most vividly in the recent past within populist political campaigns, like those offering to "Make America Great Again" or "Take Back Control in Britain."

The difference between advertising and political sleight of hand and the music discussed here is the particular focus of the music on creating an eerie and timeless dislocation, an ever-elusive emotional essence that comes with the tension between us existing in the present and simultaneously within imagined pasts or futures. Crudely, the music celebrates this strange and opaque state of being present and being somewhere in another time, advertising and populist politics draw on the same dynamic to persuade us to immediate courses of action by promising us we'll be glad of the choices we made.

A select few musicians set out to create works that are deliberately uncanny and strange, it's only fair to let a couple comment on what they do and how they do it. My only suggestion at this point is that you could better understand the experiences on offer by starting at their online Bandcamp pages, listening, and then exploring via tags at the foot of the page to find more equally strange sounds.



*Iconic with their 70s offbeat weirdness. Falcons of Haunt.*

The Falcons of Haunt exist in a timeless zone (that said, Dudley is tagged on their Bandcamp page), within which their music explores a universe informed by cult movies (some albums are alternative soundtracks) and things generally half-remembered. To me it's a haunting and beguiling experience capable of changing the mood in almost any situation in a day. The Falcons of Haunt (aka Dave) say: "I guess that I have been lucky in the sense that I have never had to look for music, it found me. I hear music 24/7, Snippets of melodies and tones in everyday noise. There are not many mornings that I wake up and don't have the urge to put on tape what I heard whilst asleep. If anyone was to find my phone, they would discover humming and spoken word ideas that make no sense to anyone but myself.

"Nostalgia and memories of a better yesterday are predominant in the sound I create. growing up I loved children's TV that touched on folklore and sci-fi, I guess now it's called hauntology? As I got older my appreciation for off-beat movies from the 60's and 70's began to trigger my imagination.

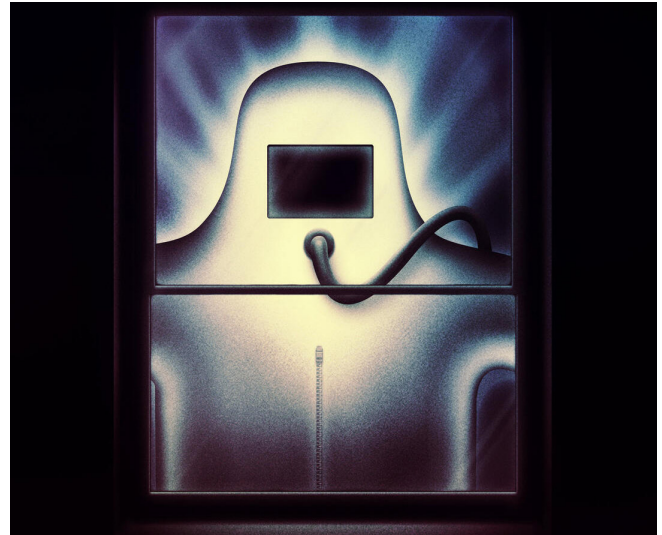
"During the recording of 'We are the damned' I hit a composer's block. Relocation to Weymouth and Portland where it was filmed, re-ignited the spark and the soundtrack was completed in less than a week. A few weeks later I discovered two cousins were extras in the film, eerie?

"Sounds I hear are usually random and uncoordinated, but they are placed in some kind of sequence, much like a jigsaw puzzle. The music is subliminal and insular as it is always created through headphones enabling me to hear every nuance and timbre.

"I imagine that I am actually a collector and curator of sound. I possess hundreds of hours- worth of audio waiting to find a space in the ether. I realise that my craft will never make me wealthy but that one day it will be my legacy, I find that comforting. Bandcamp,

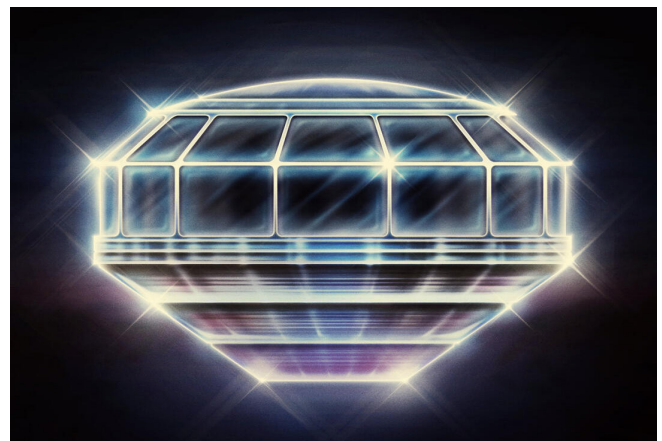
Spotify etc. has made it possible to be remembered.

"Today, I will be creating yesterday's music for tomorrow!"



The work of The Night Monitor (aka Neil Scriven) is firmly in ASSAP territory, in addition to conjuring up eerie visions with old school electronics The Night Monitor's catalogue is a litany of projects based on classic claims of the paranormal, a 2023 outing – Close Encounters of the Pennine Kind – tackles the famous Todmorden UFO abduction event of 1980. The Night Monitor says: "I can most simply describe what I do as creating instrumental synthesiser soundtracks for vintage (largely pre-1990s) 'paranormal' events.

"I've been fascinated with Fortean topics from a very young age, inspired initially by the Orbis partwork magazine 'The Unexplained' and Usborne's 'World of the Unknown' series in the early 1980s."



"Musically, my inspirations are the more synthetic, electronic TV and film soundtracks of the '70s and '80s, such as Arthur C Clarke's 'Mysterious World' TV series, 'In Search of...' with Leonard Nimoy, or 1970s Doctor Who and other examples of Radiophonic Workshop or library music of the time.

"Topics so far have included albums based on the 1977 'Welsh Triangle' UFO wave, and the Enfield Poltergeist, whilst my 'Perception Report' series of EPs takes some design cues from 1970s era Flying Saucer Review and features musical odes to The Owlman of Mawnan and Jean Hingley's Mince Pie Martians.

"Each work has its own distinct musical approach, inspired by the era of its subject matter. Ultimately, I'm trying to evoke the same sort of feelings I had from reading about these topics in my youth. The wide-eyed, child-like fascination I had as a young boy - creeped out by supposedly real photos of ghosts, or eerie illustrations of UFO occupants.

"Artistically, I take the subject matter very much at face value, regardless of my own personal perception as to the reality or otherwise of the events in question. From a creative viewpoint, I approach things from a position of absolute belief. This is because it's an essential component of why I was attracted to the source material in the first place - it was generally presented as being true, or possibly true. I want to present that same non-dismissive attitude towards these strange experiences in my music. The Night Monitor is a true believer. I, myself, am generally more sceptical."

There's a point in my radio shows, after the opening triple shot and after I've had a brief rant about our Big Album for the week (to which we'll make three visits and bang on about why we love it even if others don't) where I point out that simply ranting anymore about the music is pointless, because it's time to let that music speak for itself. Hopefully, the music and musicians here have introduced themselves well enough. Beyond that the point isn't so much to understand as to experience, so the sources lists include

Bandcamp addresses for The Falcons of Haunt and The Night Monitor, from whose pages you can follow tags into a labyrinthine web of seriously strange sounds.

## NOTES

Merlin Coverley - Hauntology - Ghosts of the Futures Past, Oldcastle Books 2020, pp 266-267

John Berger - Ways of Seeing, Pelican 1972, p.139

John Berger - p.146

Most of the album is available to hear, here: <https://warrington-runcorn-cis.bandcamp.com/album/the-nations-most-central-location>

Mark Solms - The Hidden Spring: A Journey into the Source of Consciousness, Profile Books 2021, p.124

Mark Solms - p.136

Daniel Levitin - This is your Brain on Music: Understanding a Human Obsession, Penguin 2019, p.29

Daniel Levitin - p. 165

Daniel Levitin - pp. 162-164

"Yesterday's sounds for tomorrow" etc. are here: <https://thefalconsofhaunt.bandcamp.com/>

Cover highlighted above Acker Whelk and Paramount Dubmen

The Night Monitor's eerie oeuvre is available for audio perusal here: <https://thenightmonitor.bandcamp.com/>

2 Covers highlighted above Close Encounters of the Pennine Kind and Space Mystery of the Terror Triangle.

**Neil Nixon** has been interested in all things ASSAP for as long as he can remember and has been writing and researching these various interests for decades. His most recent books are UFOs, Aliens and the Battle for the Truth (2021) and Why Mystery Matters (2023). His live talks have included Seriously Strange Weekends and regular ASSAP webinars and he can be contacted via his website, especially if you want to swap ideas on anything written in this article:

<http://www.neilnixon.com/>



# UFO close encounters and vehicle-engine failure

By Ian Liston-Smith

Discussing the general subject of UFOs (recently rebranded UAP - Unidentified Aerial Phenomena - by the US military) has become almost respectable since the June 2021 publication of the Pentagon's UAP report. The report didn't reveal anything dramatic, just more or less stating; "These objects have been seen by military personnel and recorded by various sensor platforms doing manoeuvres impossible for our technology. There's no suggestion that they are from a foreign adversary [or of alien origin], but the matter requires further research." [1] There is an interesting and fairly well documented aspect of the phenomena. Over the decades hundreds of reports from across the world have accumulated of motor vehicle engines cutting out during a close encounter with a UFO.

The vehicle appears to act almost as an instrument - independent of the witness - in reacting to the event, sometimes reacting even before the witness saw anything unusual. The data seems to reveal a particular response suggesting the effect is genuine, as we shall see later. But to illustrate the phenomenon, here are some typical examples:

The first reported instance I could find was from 1909 - not of a car but a motorbike - when on 19 May at 1130 pm in Wroxham, Norfolk, a lone motorcyclist saw a globular light travelling in a straight trajectory overhead. During its passage, the motorcycle headlamp failed to operate. He stopped his machine when this occurred, but the headlamp began to operate once the object moved away and out of sight. [2] [\*]

Another was near RAF Fairford, Wiltshire, in 1969 (exact date unknown) where a family felt the air become electrified as the engine stalled and the car lights went out. Their dog became quite agitated. They then saw three disc-shaped metallic objects moving in a V-formation high overhead. The car engine could be restarted after the discs had disappeared. [3]

Our next curious report is of an incident near Sopley, Hampshire, on 6 November 1967 where a cigar-shaped object - bright, phosphorescent green with a white bottom - approached a diesel lorry. The driver reported that the lights and radio went off but the engine continued running. He stopped his vehicle about 60 feet away from the object, which was moving now no more than 10 feet above the road. A Jaguar car approached the scene during the sighting and its electrics and engine failed. When the object moved slowly up into the sky both the truck and car then operated normally. [4]

In the final example a red luminous disc passed over two tractors in Forli, Italy, on 14 November 1954. One tractor had a diesel engine and the other a petrol engine. The diesel tractor continued to operate, but the other tractor's engine stopped and could not be started until the UFO had vanished. [5]

These last two cases reveal a very interesting response which I hinted at above; the observation that diesel engines have rarely been reported to stall during a UFO encounter. Diesel engines don't have spark plugs, and nearly always continue to run during such an event, although their lights may dim or extinguish until the object moves away.

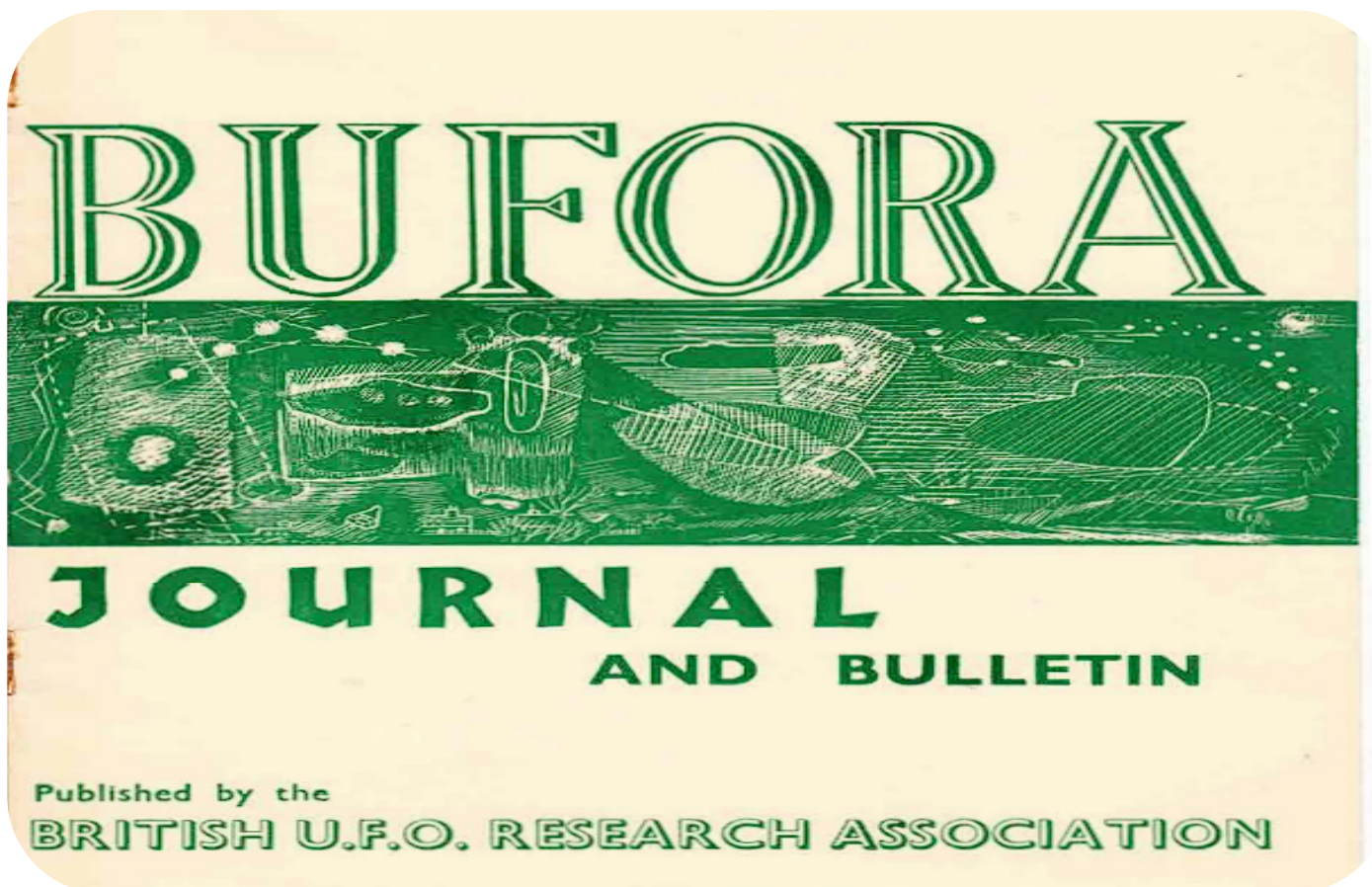
This petrol/diesel engine anomaly is the sort of observation that is unlikely to be erroneous or fictitious as it shows up in the data only when there are a sufficient number of reports. I think it lends credibility to there being a real phenomenon that is yet to be explained. It also implies that whatever UFOs are, they are associated with strong electrostatic or electromagnetic effects.



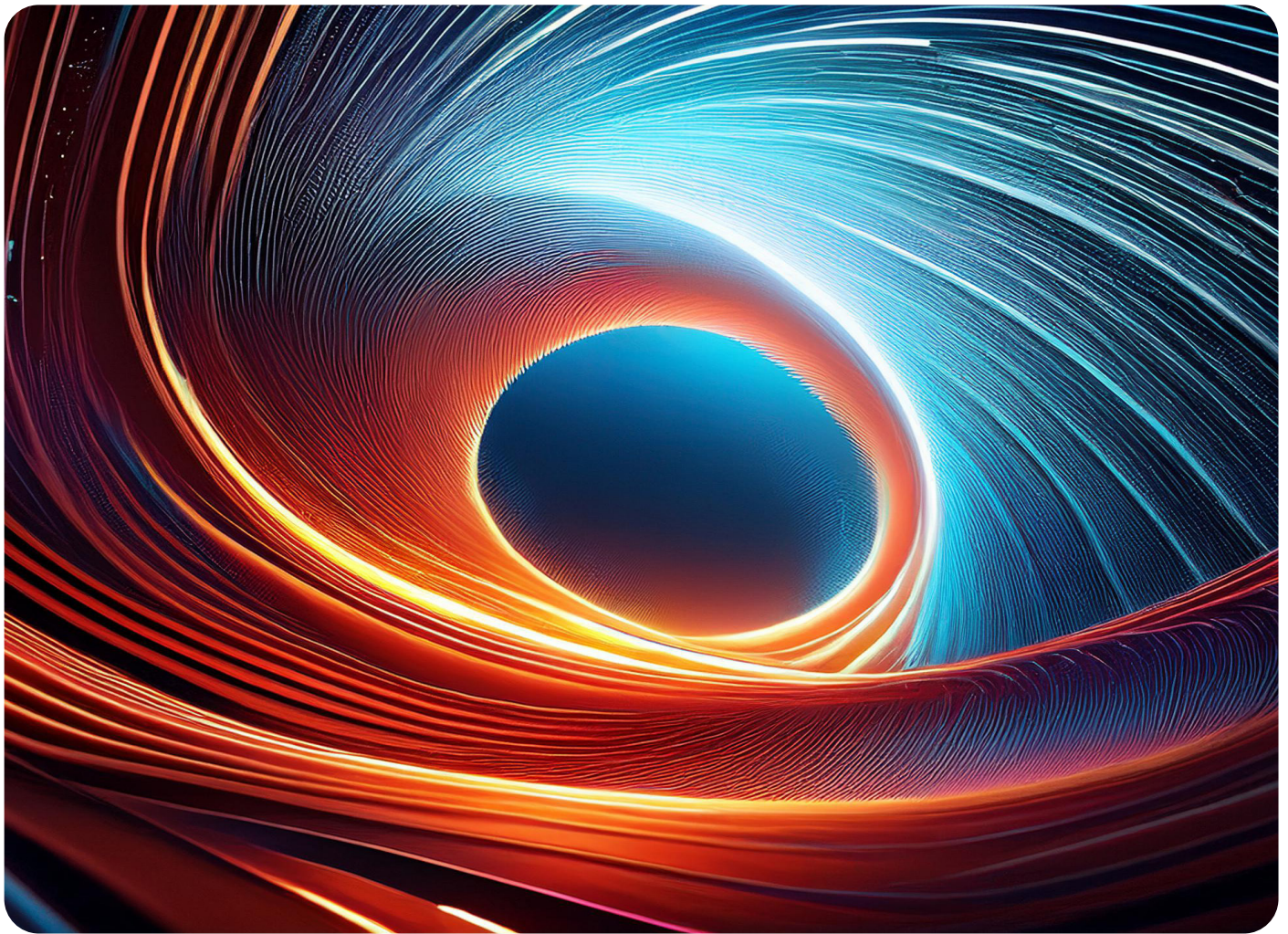
Most of the reports I have found are years, sometimes decades old. Unfortunately I have not found any contemporary reports relating to modern petrol and diesel vehicles having complex electronic engine-management systems. Such cases might give insight as to whether modern vehicles are more or less susceptible, and this data would very likely throw more light on the phenomenon.

There are two main theories as to what's happening regarding close-encounter engine stalling. One is that strongly ionised air reduces or prevents sparking at the plugs. The suggestion being that the glowing appearance around the object is a plasma, and this ionises the air around the object for some considerable distance. The ionised air prevents the the charge from building up sufficiently to allow a spark in the plug. Diesel engines (with mechanically controlled injectors) ignite the fuel by compression so they don't have an electrical input to keep running.

The other theory is that some form of very strong magnetic field interferes with the vehicle's electrical system, possibly by saturating the ignition-coil core and reducing its ability to generate high voltages for the spark plugs. BUFORA carried out an experiment in 1964 which, although not proving the case engine stalls were caused by strong magnetic fields, did provide some interesting supporting evidence. [6]



I'm minded to think this latter theory is the more plausible explanation, as it would also help explain some of the other noted effects on a vehicle's electrical systems and the occasionally reported localised interference with power distribution, radio and TV reception. But wouldn't a strong magnetic field leave significant residual magnetism in the vehicle's steel parts so be easily confirmed as an after-effect? Yes, if the magnetic field is not changing and is unidirectional like a that of the Earth, or a magnet. However, some observations suggest that the magnetic field is slowly oscillating, and as the object moves away the alternating field diminishes and demagnetises the vehicle, in exactly the same way that professional magnetic tape bulk erasers work. Nevertheless there have been cases where residual magnetism has been reported - including magnetising mechanical watches.



The magnetic field theory - whether it's an alternating field or not - is further supported by a case in Spain in February 1978 when a close encounter not only stopped the engine and magnetised the driver's watch, but it also apparently partially wiped a cassette tape. Unfortunately, given the number of cars that would have had music cassettes and cartridges, this is the only case I can find where the recording might have been demagnetised by the UFO. I expect the magnetic strip on bank and credit cards would also be affected - but again, I've not found any data for this. [7]

I recently came across a third aspect to this which may prove relevant. Ross Coulthart mentions in his recent book 'In Plain Site' that the US military have identified a very specific microwave signature surrounding some of these objects. Apparently this has been known about since at least the 1980s, since it was mentioned by research academic Jacques Valee Ph.D in a TV interview with Jeffrey Mishlove back in October 1986. [8]

These electro-magnetic events are a special class of UFO encounter, which open the possibility for a UFO detection method. From the early 1960s UFO detectors of varying sophistication have been available to the public.



Serious UFO detection requires monitoring of many parameters. For example changes in background radiation; wide-band radio emission from ELF to beyond microwaves; radar interference; tiny changes in gravity and of course detecting the anomalous motion of aerial objects. This type of analysis is being carried out in the San Luis Valley, Colorado, where researcher Chris O'Brien is monitoring some of these parameters. [9]

This is a complex and expensive undertaking, but for decades followers of the UFO enigma have been encouraged to undertake their own monitoring using various magnetic anomaly detectors. Flying Saucer Review (FSR) published an all electronic detector circuit back in 1968. In the 1970s researcher Ray Stanford tried to establish a network of UFO detectors with his Project Starlight International, describing in his leaflet a couple of simple magnets-on-a-wire designs for people to make at home. As a teenager I remember saving up for the 'Skywatch UFO Detector' advertised in FSR for many years. Various electronics magazines have published construction details - often with a tongue-in-cheek attitude - and DIY plans of differing complexities are available from the internet. For the past few years even Amazon has been selling one. [10]

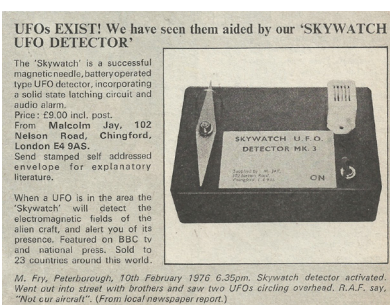
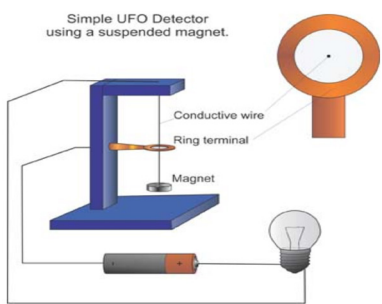
Some time ago I built one of my own detector/magnetometer using a Hall effect compass module. Like all the others mentioned, it is relatively crude and un-calibrated, but it has been triggered a number of times, although I doubt the cause was extra-terrestrial in origin!

All these designs are just basic magnetometers. There is already a network across the world of precision magnetometers for detecting changes in the Earth's magnetosphere caused by solar flares, coronal mass ejections, etc. But perhaps they are not sufficient in number nor designed to detect the relatively rapid changes the UFO phenomenon might create.

In the September 2015 edition of Fortean Times, Jenny Randles was prompted by 'Preston' - a mutual acquaintance - to write a piece about UFO detectors and how modern communications could create a network of devices. Although an interesting proposal, and an updated version of Ray Stanford's project that ended in the 1970s, nothing came of the suggestion. In conclusion, I have no idea what UFOs are, but I'm pretty sure a small percentage are a real, genuinely witnessed, unexplained phenomenon. To the surprise of many, the recent Pentagon report actually confirms this. The obscure reaction of different types of vehicle engine seems to indicate that these are not all just misidentified objects - they are real and create an observable specific pattern. Of course it remains to be seen what effect close encounters will have on electric cars.

**NOTES:**

- [1] <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/Preliminary-Assessment-UAP-20210625.pdf>
- [2] East Anglian Daily Times, May 21, 1909
- [\*] Newspapers at this time were full of reports of airships, including some on the same page this motorcycle story appeared. This is probably what the motorcyclist saw.
- [3] FSR Case Histories, Supplement no. 3
- [4] Spacelink, Vol. 5, no. 1
- [5] NICAP report, June 1960
- [6] <https://bufora.org.uk/documents/BUFORAjournalVolume1No.2Autumn1964.pdf>
- [7] FSR, Vol 30, no. 3
- [8] <https://youtu.be/sP10HPJkJ4Q>
- [9] [www.ourstrangeplanet.com/](http://www.ourstrangeplanet.com/)
- [10] <http://fortean-blog.blogspot.com/2011/02/ufo-detector.html>



# Seriously Strange



# **The Ghost Hunter, the Pigeon and a Victoria Sponge Cake...**

**By those who dare not speak their name**

## **Setting the story**

Several weeks ago, I received a late morning call from a lady, who for the purposes of this narrative I will refer to as Liz. Liz lives in Kent, near to the coast. When I answered the call, Liz began by asking if I was "Steve, the ghost hunter?" When I replied that I fitted that description, Liz went on to explain that she had got my number from a friend of hers who lives in Pembrokeshire, adding that she herself lived in Kent but was calling on behalf of her mother, who I shall call Doris.

## **The Call**

Liz continued, saying that I may find her enquiry a little bit odd; her mother had been hearing noises from upstairs in her house and that she was saying that her house was haunted, although she herself, was sure that it wasn't. Liz described how her mother and father had retired to Pembrokeshire more than fifteen years earlier and that her father, had died the previous year leaving Doris living alone. Liz did suggest that her mother move to live with her in Kent but Doris had no intentions of leaving her house and was a fiercely independent lady in her nineties. Doris had mobility problems which prevented her from going up and down the stairs and as a result, she now lived entirely on the ground floor of the two-floor property. Doris had an agency employed carer, who visits twice each week and a family friend takes her to the shops once a week.

## **The ghosts that never was**

Liz explained that she normally calls her

mother each evening and for the past few days Doris has been saying that she has been hearing noises coming from upstairs. The noises, according to Doris, sounded like someone moving about, opening doors and rummaging around. The sounds had begun a few days earlier but they were now beginning to worry Doris and she was becoming anxious that the house may be haunted. Liz then said that she was absolutely sure that it wasn't, although the house did look a bit creepy, it wasn't haunted. She then described how when her father was alive, he would often joke around and say that the house was haunted or blame the ghost whenever something fell or got lost.

She went on to explain that the property was originally built in the 1800's as a farm workers cottage and that when her parents first bought it, the property had needed a lot of modernisation. Whilst they were excavating the old earth floor beneath the rear part of the house (now the conservatory and kitchen). A skeleton of a small mammal was found, maybe a cat, maybe a dog. Liz couldn't remember which.

She described how her father who always loved a joke would often say that the ghost of the poor animal could be heard wandering around and knocking things over or occasionally stealing food from the kitchen cabinets. In reality, these incidents were almost always her father, who was fond of helping himself to an occasional snack and whenever Liz's mother asked where the food had gone, he would often reply that the ghost must have taken it.

In his later years, following a stroke, her father had become a little bit clumsy and would occasionally drop things or not put them away correctly so that they would fall and again he always used to blame the ghost.

## The sounds

Returning to the sounds that Doris has been hearing. According to Liz; the first time her mother mentioned she had heard the sounds was earlier the same week, just as she was settling down to watch the early evening news on television. Doris had apparently considered calling the Police but when the sounds quickly stopped, she wasn't sure if she was simply imagining them or if they had come from outside, though she lived in a quiet cul-de-sac.

On the following evening, while Doris was watching the evening news. She had heard the sounds again. She told Liz that the second time she heard them, she had muted the television and listened. They definitely seemed to be coming from the upstairs of her house but she couldn't place exactly whereabouts they were coming from. Doris said it sounded like someone was quietly moving about, rustling things and what she thought might have been a child speaking. As she was listening, the sounds stopped and after listening for several more minutes and hearing nothing she turned up the volume on the television.



It was on the second evening, during their normal 9pm chat that Doris first mentioned that she had been hearing strange sounds coming from upstairs earlier that evening and also on the previous evening. Doris said that the noises didn't last very long but that she was worried that someone may have broken in to the house and that she had considered calling the Police but when the noises stopped, she thought that it was her imagination and she didn't want to worry the Police unnecessarily or appear to be foolish.

Liz said to me that she regretted what she said next but when her mother mentioned the sounds, she joked about it possibly being the ghost cat or dog wandering about up the stairs. Liz told her mother that if she heard the sounds again, then she should call the Police. Liz also suggested that her mother should ask the carer, who was due to visit the following morning to have a look upstairs to see if anything was amiss.

## You need to call a priest

When Liz called the following evening, Doris said that she had asked her carer if she would mind taking a look upstairs and had explained that she had been hearing noises on the previous evenings and that she was concerned that maybe someone was getting in and rummaging around. Doris apparently also mentioned what Liz had said during the previous evening's call about it possibly being a ghost. The carer declined to go up the stairs, saying that she wasn't having anything to do with ghosts and that Doris needed to call a priest and have the house blessed.

She had become annoyed that the carer had been so foolish. Liz reminded her mother that she should call the Police if the sounds were heard again and they said "goodnight".

## Becoming anxious

On the fourth evening, Doris again turned up the television sound and was watching the news when she heard what she thought was a loud bump from upstairs. She immediately muted the television and called out that she was calling the police. She heard nothing further and again decided that perhaps it was just her imagination and not wishing to trouble the police or appear foolish she decided not to call them. Later that evening, when Liz called her. Doris told her that she had heard a bump and suggested perhaps the house is haunted as Dad once said. Liz explained that her father was only joking about there being a ghost but Doris argued asking why would he say such a thing. Liz then tried to explain, but it was clear that her mother became cross at this suggestion asking why he would ever do such a thing. Not wishing to start an argument or upset her mother, Liz said that she would speak to the agency who supplied the carer and ask if they would send someone to have a look around upstairs during their next visit. Liz said that her mother was clearly becoming anxious about the sounds so she reassured her and they said goodnight. The following day, Liz called the agency but was forced to leave a message asking for them to call her back as soon as convenient. They never did.

## The Lord's Prayer

Next evening, when Liz called, Doris told her that she had been listening for the sounds earlier and that she had once again heard what sounded like someone or something moving about upstairs. When she had heard the sounds, Doris called out asking who was there and telling them to leave her alone. Doris then said that she started to say the

Lord's Prayer out aloud and that as soon as she had begun to say the prayer, the sounds had stopped. Liz asked her mother if she had called the police yet as she had instructed and her mother replied "What use would they be? The police can't get rid of a ghost and they would only think I was being silly and put me in a home." Liz told her mother she would try to get someone to come round to check the house and considered phoning the police herself. As it was by now almost ten o'clock so they probably wouldn't come out that late for something that had happened hours earlier.

## Call a friend

The next morning, Liz called a friend who lived in Pembrokeshire, intending to ask if she would mind looking in on Doris and explained that her mother had been hearing sounds from upstairs and was now thinking that the house was haunted. The friend - we'll call her Pam said to leave it with her and that she would drop by and see how Doris was. Pam lived about 25 miles from Doris so she would try to call in the following day, after work.

After talking to Liz, Pam mentioned the call to her colleague who was in the office, saying that Liz's mum thought she had a ghost in her house and that she was going to pop in to see Doris, the following day as she was due to have family visiting that evening. Her colleague suggested that she knew of someone who investigated haunted houses and ghosts, maybe they could take a look.

It transpired that Pam had been a regular listener to the local radio station where I hosted a weekly show that featured local ghost stories and haunted locations in West Wales. Pam had a look on the radio station's social media page and got in touch.



( Editor Note: AI just cannot get numbers and text quite right ;- )

## Who ya gonna call?

I took the call from Liz late morning and upon hearing the story I said that I might be able to visit in the next day or two. Liz explained that there was some urgency and that she was concerned that her mother might be worrying about this ghost even though it was not real.

## The visit

Mrs. P and I arrived at the house at about 5:35pm. Doris was expecting us and she opened the door, greeting us with a smile and asked if I was the ghost man and inviting us both inside. She had already prepared a pot of tea and a plate of biscuits. As we sat in the kitchen. Doris described what she had been experiencing over the previous evenings. The account tallied with what Liz had already said on the telephone except that Doris thought the sounds had been going on for longer. Doris also said that her late husband had always told her that the house was haunted and said that she was worried that it might be the ghost that was disturbing her. She explained how at first, she thought the sounds were someone moving about and that perhaps a burglar had broken

in but then added that the sounds had stopped when she began to say the Lord's Prayer so she thought it must have been a ghost.

I asked Doris if she heard the sounds at any other times other than during the early evening? She replied that it had been every evening and always around the time that the evening news was on the television. Doris gestured toward the TV which was on with the sound muted in the corner of the front room and I could see that the evening news had already started. We had heard no unusual sounds during the 15 or 20 minutes since our arrival and I continued to talk to Doris, asking about her recent experiences and also chatting more generally about what she likes to watch on TV.

Soon after, we all heard a series of two or three quiet but distinct bumps that seemed to be coming from upstairs. Doris pointed to the ceiling and said that was what she had been hearing.

## Ghost hunter vs a pigeon

I asked if I could take a look? and Doris immediately said 'yes'. Leaving Mrs P with Doris, I quietly ascended the stairs and upon reaching the top I paused and listened. Off a short landing corridor were four closed doors; after a few moments, I heard quiet but distinct sounds coming from behind the first door to my left. The corridor was illuminated only by the outside twilight coming through a small window in the sloped ceiling and not wishing to hunt around for a light switch or call down asking whereabouts the light-switch was, I turned on my pocket torch, aiming it at the floor as I slowly lowered the door handle and pushed the door ajar, pausing once more to listen. The sounds from inside continued, my impression being that they sounded like a fluttering, rustling noise which made me wonder if a bird was inside the room. I pushed the door wider and looked inside, shining the light ahead of me into the semi-darkness. Immediately I did so there was a commotion as a startled pigeon shot across in front of me to the far side of the room. The bird, settled on top of a small wall cabinet. I moved the light around to see if there were any other pigeons but there was just the one. I could also see the room was a bathroom and that the window facing me was partially open. I pulled the door closed, and called downstairs saying I think I have found the ghost. I opened the door and stepped into the room, closing the door behind me. The pigeon flapped and scuffled about but remained on top of the cabinet. I went over to the window intending to open it fully so the bird would escape. In order to do so, I had to first pull back a curtain which was wedged into the hinge and which was preventing the window from moving. Once the curtain had been pulled clear of the hinge, I was able to open the window fully, and after some persuasion, the pigeon flew past me and exited through the window. As I bade the bird farewell, Mrs. P called to me from outside of the bathroom asking if everything was alright. I closed the window, located the light switch and opened the

door, assuring her everything was perfectly OK. With the overhead light now on, we could see where the pigeon had been roosting over the previous nights. Pigeons, aren't the cleanest of birds and there were droppings and occasional feathers all around the bath and on the floor. Further evidence of the bird was to be seen on the window sill.

We returned to Doris, explaining how a pigeon likely entered through a window blown open by recent stormy winds and had been roosting there, sneaking in during the evening news.

## Operation clean-up and more tea

Mrs. P and I cleaned Doris's bathroom, finding a surprise. With no mobile signal, I used Doris's landline to call her daughter Liz, explaining the situation. Liz promised to send a tradesman.

As we left, Doris insisted on giving us something for our trouble. I refused cash, but couldn't resist her freshly baked Victoria sponge!

The next day, Liz confirmed the window would be fixed, and the pigeon presumably found a new spot to roost.





The Nightcrawler phenomenon began in 2007 in Fresno, now it exists as live folklore. Amassing a following who swoon with equal fascination and wonder. Like the Masked Magician, I will show you how I believe it is done.

As the member of ASSAP, The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena, moderating over some of the social pages of the educational charity. The person who records the weekly webinars making them appealing with title graphics for their respective Youtube/Rumble/Bitcute channels. A topic occasionally rises in the threads and group chatter. One seemingly as heart-warming to the members as Gef The Talking Mongoose, that of the Fresno Nightcrawler. One that personally bubbles with a pool of wet frustration and darn right cynicism.

Many, many moons ago I was and I figure still am a member of AboveTopSecret.com a skeptically leaning forum news site, of advanced technology, UAP/UFO, paranormal and conspiracy. Though in more recent years has been swallowed by the enormity and divisive US politics and foreign policy activities. Coupled with such active conversations having migrated to social media rather than the ATS forums threads. It was probably 2009, I saw a video of 2 "beings" walking side by side in the garden. One slightly smaller. Apparently walking compasses. wishbone-like both white in a garden. Left to right making ghostly steps silently. Filmed from a camera positioned likely outside of a bedroom window. It did the rounds, the comments and views of Google video and KillSomeTime clips was that it was another "Nightcrawler", this time doubled.

In 2011, the video captured on residential Yosemite home security footage.

Then going back into the ATS posts, found the 2008 videos, and the UFO Media Matters 2009 mini docu, which contains footage taken at the 2008 MUFON Symposium, spliced with Victors Comachos own documentary recording of attending the Univerison 21 Fresno studios, and then visiting Jose in Feb 2008. My interest, like many of the commentors, ended with their view being it is a fabrication. Perhaps using a washing line to pull it along or some kind of mechanism to tug it along making the feet walk like a marionette.

Leaving the topic there, never crossed my mind and active thoughts of weird anomalies until in 2020, when Hannah of ASSAPs exec Media said hey, would you like to represent ASSAP and comment on a video from a Japanese film company who are in Los Angeles. The video is about a pair of trousers running up a street. Is it paranormal? A ghost or has the Fresno Nightcrawler now moved to Los Angeles? Whilst I doubted its authenticity as an actual piece of paranormal footage. It is quite a remarkable bit of filmmaking, a pair of running white trousers that kicks a fence and goes under the shadows of a tree. Asking myself the question. If I were to recreate this, how would I do it?

With the event of fast-flow video content, tiktok, reels and youtube shorts, the topic of Nightcrawlers is fever pitch and twice have personally observed the topic trending high. Videos amassing millions of views. They all use the same footage clips of the various videos mentioned above. Often flipped around, zoomed in, recoloured. tiktokers, reelers and tubers often just copy each others trends, creating an amplification in the topic to viralize their content. Playing internet sleuth and using other users footage as their base. Pouting speculation and fake shocked faces. Unfortunately, very, very few ever give credit or reference the original source material.

## *“Load of bollocks!”*

**Richard Freeman of The Centre for Fortean Zoology, when asked at Seriously Strange 2023 about his thoughts on the Fresno Nightcrawler**

June 2024, another conversation occurred of online swooning in wonder at the Nightcrawler from the ASSAP chat on a Thursday live webinar, and was another trend on the short form video platforms. Was the final kick I needed, “The Secret of The Nightcrawler” was underway. Finding a pair of trousers that exhibited similar motion, light in material and white. Well, I found a pair ideal for putting together for some filming however they were strikingly blue!

I picked up some paracord, and some blue washing line. Adding a coathanger to the trousers was an ingenious way of not having to damage or modify them in anyway, afterall they are not mine!

Threading the washing line around a kitchen door handle and under the hanger for a quick trial demo. I hypothesised that I would need perhaps two cords one to suspend the height and one to pull the “nightcrawler” along. However this quick demo across the kitchen, proved it could be done with just the one as I pulled it left and right, the feet kicked up nicely replicating the motion of the 2007/2011 videos.

**The Midnight Experiment** was a chance to try it walking a greater distance. Unfortunately, the plan of filming using night vision was scuppered as technology failure occurred. **The Day Experiment** went to a local nature reserve, looking for a wide space with trees present. I had not considered the wild grass creating drag on the steps, adding weights to the kitchen roll tube legs with pegs proved a winning combination. Demonstrating better steps closer to the 2007/2011 footage as the video shows and helping the motion through the wild grasses.

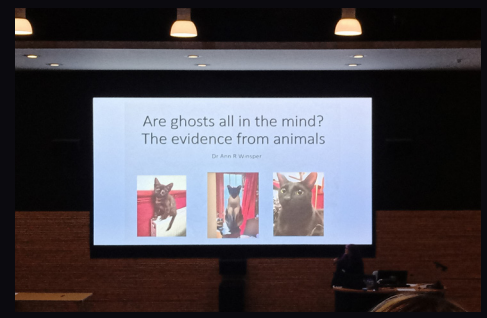


The Secret of The Nightcrawler vid-doc is available to watch online  
[https://youtu.be/Q-4FCCN\\_ezQ](https://youtu.be/Q-4FCCN_ezQ)

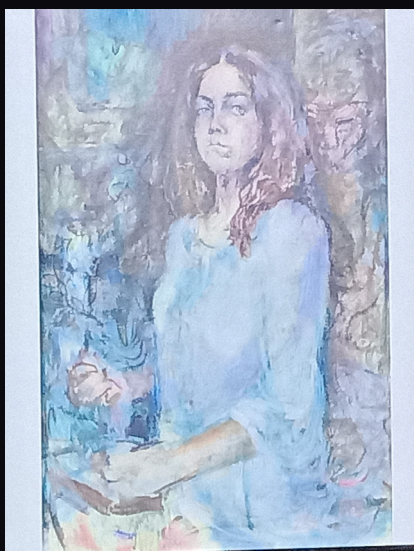
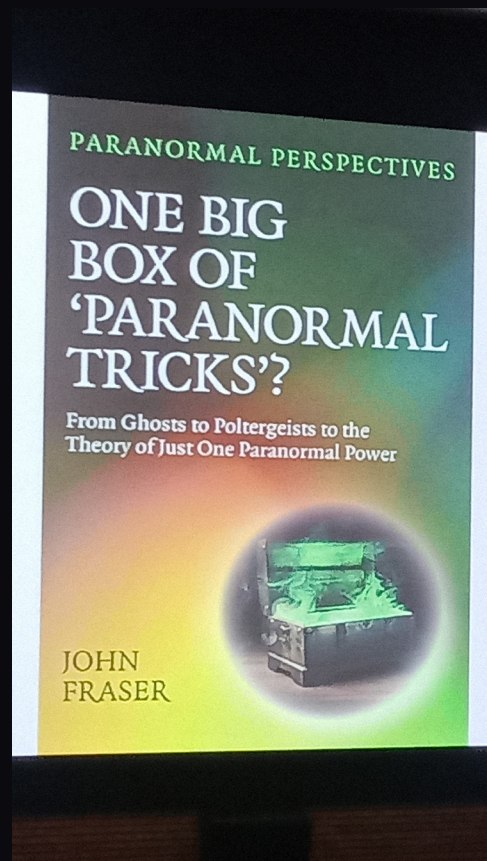


# ASAP Seriously Strange

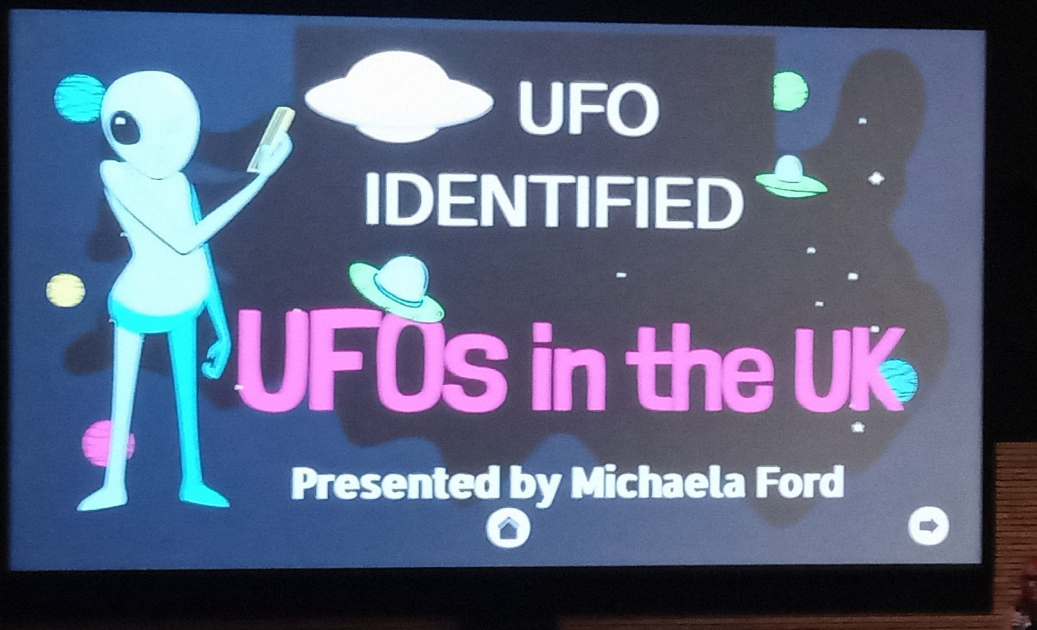
The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena



As August ended and September began, the University of Winchester hosted the annual ASSAP Seriously Strange Conference. Many attendees had walked the city to see sights such as the cathedral, parks and shambles-like back streets. Sampling hospitality and sipping local ales before visiting the venue perched high on the hill. Two days jam packed with incredible presentations and demonstrations of research that ran almost to schedule! A number of those who attended squeezed in a ghost walk, an experience to behold aboard the spooky red bus for some "Summer Holiday" themed travel and shindigs with the evenings entertainment, that will not soon be forgotten.



Everyone gathered to share greetings, talk and share stories of the year that has passed. For some the journey to Seriously Strange is an annual pilgrimage on the paranormal calendar, for others a wholly new experience with anticipation of what to expect, with warmth and welcome they were brought into the fold. Guests and visitors from across the country and indeed beyond!



2024's Seriously Strange Conference, hailed from the University of Winchester for the first time. The historic hill and valley streets of Winchester are rich with myths and legends. Secrets, ghosts and an underclass of murderers, vagabonds and thieves. The experience of Seriously Strange began on the Friday evening, with an immersive tour bringing the dark tales to life. Beginning with a shortcut through a cemetery opposite the Uni. The weekend promised an amazing line-up of presentations and speakers, from across the breadth of the topics of the anomalous. Held at The Stripe, a large auditorium on campus. Hosted by Craig Williams, who introduced the esteemed guests throughout the weekend.

Saturday engaged and enthralled the audience, taken for a ride across many subjects. Neil Nixon opened with a great talk, setting the tone of why we love mysteries and to be sure to give everything we see and hear a closer inspection. "Today Winchester, Tomorrow the Cosmos." Kristian Landers short film and examination of The Secret of the Nightcrawler, Dr Ann Winsper asking the question, Are ghosts all in the mind, The evidence from animals. Deborah Hyde explores the Croglin Grange Vampire, John Fraser took everyone on a journey, his journey. John's first ghost hunt! Dr Kate Cherell Has Elvis really leave the building? Celebrity seance in the digital age. Prof Chris French, the psychology of coincidences and Matt Arnold revisiting the Epworth Haunting. Plus a special panel including Deborah Oakes and Dr Paul Rogers.



The historic hilly streets I was talking about proved too much to a tour bus full of eager spook lovers, dressed for a "Summer Holiday", as we dodged bridges, breathed fumes and peoples underpants were soiled. Cheers went up as we pulled into our destination for an evening of entertainment, not soon to be forgotten. Full of comedy, live music and razzamataz.

Many drinks later, we all returned to campus, where for some their heads went to pillows, for others, the drinks and conversation continued deep into the night. Matt Arnold quotes the account of the headless badger who ran up a young ladies petticoat at Epworth!

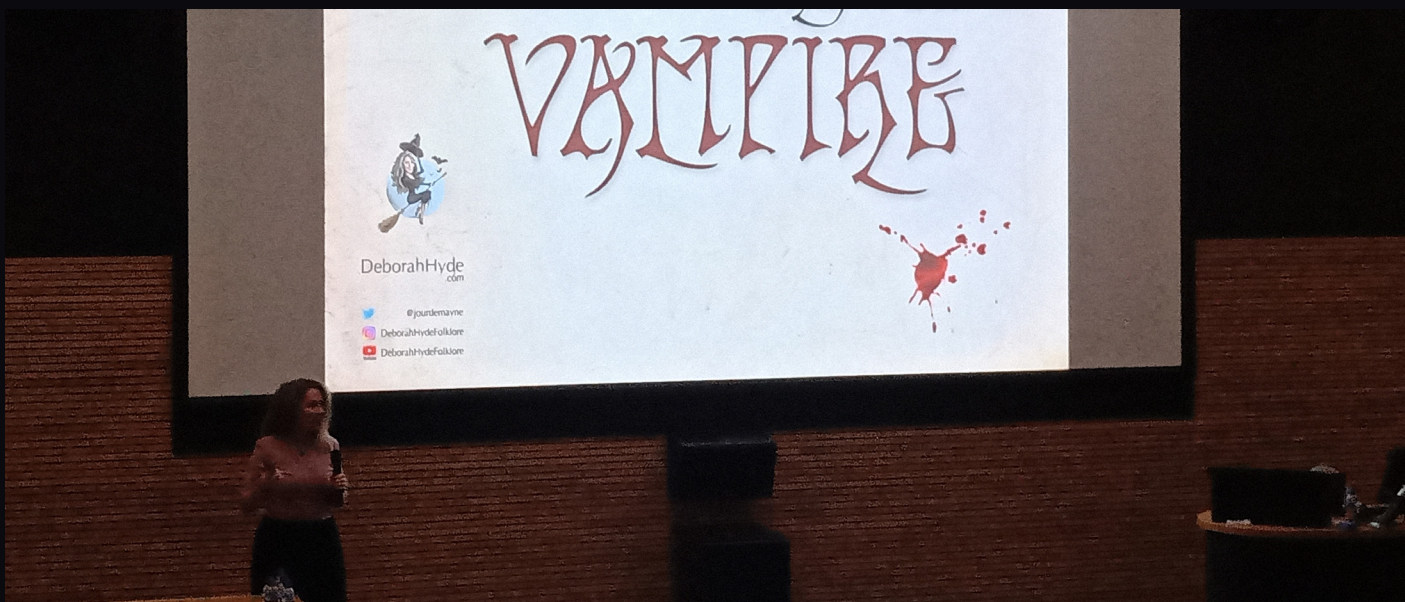


Sunday was a packed program, a highlight was Dr Mark Newbrook who gave a presentation on Skeptical linguistics and became very interested in the astonishing case of The Dodleston Poltergeist that followed, the seemingly real-time communication across time from



Thomas / Lukas four hundred years in the past and an observer from the future. Never have I witnessed an audience so mesmerised and drawn in, eager for more! We hope they have a wonderful collaboration in examining those hundreds of messages. Dr Robert Radakovic explored Transhumanism. Karin Beasant shared the occurrences and history from within the famed Jamaica Inn. Sarah Pilkington shared a closer look at one of the most misunderstood mysterious cases, The Dyatlov Pass incident in Siberia. From a case on Uncanny, Patti Keane the person at the centre of events, presented Portrait of a poltergeist. Showing her art and diary from a time of turmoil and confusion.

The day wrapped up with an excellent data driven examination of UFOs in the UK, Michaela Ford stepping up for UFO Identified.



# SOCIAL SPACES

Where to find where the Association of Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena have social media.

WWW.

[www.ASSAP.ac.uk](http://www.ASSAP.ac.uk)

*and also add your email to receive the ASSAP Newsletter to your inbox*



Facebook

Search "ASSAP: The Association of Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena"

*A lively place with more than 3,200 followers, a place for news and discussion.*



Facebook

Search "ASSAP British UFOlogy Overview"

*A relaxed vibe with 1,900 followers, a focus on the topic of British UFOlogy and relevant UAP discourse.  
Created by the late Robert Moore.*



X / Twitter 2.0

@ASSAPar paranormal

*3,700+ followers, a place for announcements, news and inside ASSAP.*



# Ghosts in a Holographic Universe

## Are ghosts just people stuck in the recycle bin of the holographic universe?

By Sylvia Wix

**Consider this idea:** you're not living in reality but in a vast, sophisticated virtual reality, a holographic universe. This might sound far-fetched, but scientific discussions across physics, astrophysics, biology, and neurology lend some credence to this theory, making it less outlandish than one might initially think.

Imagine our existence within this framework: we're like programs or files in an unimaginably advanced machine, akin to players in a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG) like World of Warcraft, blending elements of games like "Creatures," "SimCity," or "The Sims." Here, each of us is an avatar, living out our narrative within the simulation.

Now, what happens to an avatar when it "dies" in this digital cosmos?

In the Artificial Life simulator game "Creatures," bodies of the digital beings lingered after death, The body of the generated Creature stuck around for a bit after death on screen. Sometimes, by quirk, glitch or evolution in each "game" the AI driven other Creatures would respond as if it were alive to them. However some Creatures couldn't see it at all. This struck me as fascinating. Consider now this old game where developers could not have anticipated that something like that could happen. This phenomenon, observed in a now-dated game, prompts me to ponder: could our universe, with its superior technology, harbor similar anomalies?

### Are ghosts people stuck in the recycle bin?

When you delete a file on your computer, it moves to the recycle bin, not immediately erased but awaiting final deletion. Applying this analogy to paranormal phenomena, could ghosts be residual data from a once-active program or file?

- \* Apparitions replaying death scenes might be like a video loop, stuck in a repetitive playback. Figures appearing incomplete or motionless could represent corrupted or incomplete data files.
- \* Disembodied voices might be akin to audio files left unpurged.
- \* Phantom hitchhikers who vanish after brief interactions could be transient glitches in the system.
- \* Phantom scenery phenomena might be scenes from the past, stuck in a loop due to unremoved code.

These could all be manifestations of "glitches" in our cosmic machine, where data or programs continue to run despite their lifecycle's end, much like files in a recycle bin that can still be accessed or played. With experiments like the Fermilab Holometer, we're on the brink of potentially confirming if we live in such a holographic universe. The implications for all fields of science, particularly in paranormal studies, would be profound.

This theory suggests that what we call ghosts might just be echoes of consciousness, data yet to be fully deleted in this grand simulation we call reality.

Originally published in SS 2013, incorrectly credited.

# Past Life Regression and False Memories

By Steve Bowkett

Two points I want to make immediately are that I'm not a big fan of age or past life regression for therapeutic purposes, and that the mind can spin false memories very easily if, in hypnotherapy, the therapist asks leading questions. Indeed, the subconscious can create false memories for other reasons, as we'll see.

Regarding the first point, the origin of the word regress is 'to go back'. So if age regression is used as a technique by a hypnotherapist, the client may go back to whatever incident(s) contributed to the problem to be resolved. This means that if the client regresses to re-experience an incident that happened when he or she was age five, it's possible that they will at that point only have the cognitive resources available to them at that time; i.e. the limited and childlike mental capacity that failed to make sense of or otherwise deal with the incident when it happened. This is especially likely to be the case if the client is 'deep in reverie', i.e. fully engaged with the scenario to the extent that consciously he/she isn't, as it were, standing back psychologically distant from the memory.

Past life regression is a fascinating subject and useful research has been done by authors such as Ian Stevenson (Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation), Raymond Moody (Life After Life) and Chris Carter (Science and the Afterlife Experience – the third of a fascinating trilogy that also includes 'Science and Psychic Phenomena' and 'Science and the Near-Death Experience'. Highly recommended if you've not come across them). However I think it's wrong for a hypnotherapist to assume that past lives are a reality, let alone suggest this to a client: as therapists we need to work with the world view and belief system of the client and avoid imposing ours on them.

That said, I've dealt with two cases where the idea of past lives was involved. The first client, Sheila, came to try and get rid of her migraines. One technique I use is a step-by-step approach to uncover sensitising and triggering incidents – incidents that prime the individual to 'do' the behaviour and then the experience that triggers it. Sometimes the sensitising and triggering incidents are the same.

So I began to ask Sheila, who was deep in hypnosis, if the incident 'that first set you on the path to the creation of the problem' happened in childhood. She indicated no. However, further questioning seemed to reveal that it must have been a very early incident indeed, although when I asked if the first incident happened when Sheila was a baby, she hesitated and then said, greatly shocked, 'Oh my God I'm a man!' That jolted Sheila out of hypnosis and she was able to tell me what she'd remembered all in a flash; which was that she'd lived before during the French Revolution. She (he?) had found herself in a large room panelled with dark wood. There was a high arched window overlooking a huge courtyard thronged with people. In the centre of the courtyard was a guillotine, with the executioner about to carry out the sentence. At that moment a lackey entered the room with a parchment for my client to sign – it was the order of execution and this was duly implemented.

Sheila immediately realised that her migraines were a 'punishment of guilt' for the people she'd condemned to death. To try and resolve this I used what I call the 'judicial rationale'. This is not an attempt to persuade, but a chain of reasoning for the client to consider. In the judicial system someone is guilty if they intend to harm and then carry out the act of harming, so by those criteria Sheila judged was guilty. I pointed out however that when justice is done, when the punishment has been endured, then the debt has been paid. Back in hypnosis, Sheila acknowledged, both consciously and subconsciously, that she'd 'served her time' and could now let go of the guilt.

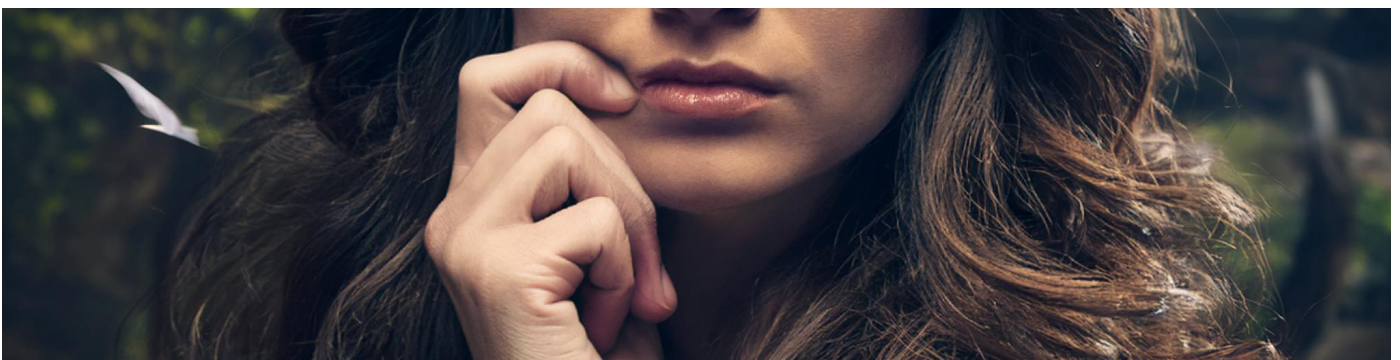
As a result of this, her migraines faded over the coming weeks.

Whether she had lived before in 18th Century France is something I couldn't be certain of; but Sheila believed she had and it was the power of her beliefs that led to the resolution of the issue. The next case is more clear cut. Angela came to see me asking to be regressed because, she said, 'I have a very puzzling but very strong affinity with Japan, and I'm sure I lived there in a previous life.' She was very amenable to being hypnotised and was soon deep in reverie. Also, although I'd set up the finger-reflex ideomotor response (a subconscious reflex where one finger twitches to answer yes and another to answer no), she was happy to verbalise what she was imagining. She said that she had indeed lived several hundred years before in ancient Japan and that she had been a geisha girl, one of whose functions was to 'attend to' the samurai warriors who visited the geisha house. She was using the present tense to relate her increasingly detailed and steamy experiences without any prompting from me. However, at one point I instructed her to keep talking but to lose all conscious awareness of my voice (though she probably had anyway by then). Speaking directly to the subconscious mind, and asking her to use the ideomotor response to answer, I asked her if she had indeed lived before in ancient Japan. She indicated no. Then I asked if the subconscious was creating these memories because consciously Angela so wanted to believe in her past life; and the answer was yes.

So here we have a case where the subconscious was deliberately creating elaborate false memories to satisfy the desire of the conscious mind to have lived before. This is in line with the general principle that the subconscious is usually supportive of the life of the whole individual. Before bringing Angela out of hypnosis I asked the subconscious if it would allow conscious-Angela to access her past life memories, without revealing they were fabrications, whenever she wanted to, and of course her subconscious complied.

Back in the here-and-now, Angela was absolutely delighted to have had her past life beliefs verified, 'And so spectacularly!' she added, her gaze drifting past me as she enjoyed those memories again. And who was I to disabuse her?

It was the theoretical physicist Werner Heisenberg who said, 'The universe is not only stranger than we think, it is stranger than we can think.' So although these two cases don't prove the reality of past lives and reincarnation, I for one will remain open minded until proof or otherwise comes along.



## About the Author

Steve began writing for pleasure in his early teens. He taught secondary English for 20 years, leaving the profession in 1994 to concentrate on a writing career, which includes visiting schools to run writing workshops for children and professional development sessions for teachers. To date he has published 82 books, most recently educational books on creativity, thinking skills, philosophy and wellbeing. He qualified as a hypnotherapist in 1991, initially at The Therapy Training College under its founder, David Lesser (<https://www.lesserian.co.uk/>) and subsequently with John Howard and Peter Delves. Over the years Steve has developed his own approach to hypnotherapy, which he has written about in two (as yet unpublished) volumes – 'Everyday Hypnotherapy' and 'The Story Behind the Problem', a collection of his most memorable cases. He is a member of the International Hypnotherapy Association (<https://www.ihahypnotherapy.com/>). [www.stevebowkett.co.uk](http://www.stevebowkett.co.uk)

# Celebrating 4 years (and a half) of ASSAP Webinars



When the virus of controversial origin swept across the globe, governments, guided by their think tanks and advisors, implemented mandatory lockdowns. This decision profoundly disrupted social order, isolating families, fracturing communities, and preventing gatherings.

In this new era, digital platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime became daily escapes, while businesses pivoted to online operations. Amidst this shift, there was a surge in creativity and adaptation. People sought new ways to maintain engagement and conversation under the constraints of lockdown. One platform that particularly thrived was Zoom, offering capabilities for multi-user video and audio interactions, alongside features for audience engagement through presentations.

Amid this digital renaissance, ASSAP seized the moment to connect people through shared curiosity about the unknown." , Christian Jensen Romer, Mark Davey, and the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena rose to the occasion. They launched a series of engaging webinars, with the inaugural session, "The Theory of Ghosts," uploaded to YouTube on July 8, 2020. This first webinar was met with enthusiastic reception, setting a weekly tradition of Thursday evenings at 7pm.

Over four years later, these webinars have not only endured but have become a vital source of knowledge and community spirit. They offer a platform for sharing research and exploring a wide array of topics, presented by esteemed members from diverse backgrounds.

The ASSAP webinars transcended their original purpose, becoming a beacon of continuity and connectivity in an otherwise fragmented world. They reminded us of the resilience of human curiosity and the unyielding desire to connect, learn, and grow, even when physical distances keep us apart. Now, they are a regular staple of programming in the paranormal schedule. Paid ASSAP members receive weekly invites via email, providing a link to Zoom, the ability to watch and connect live with presenters and guests, engage with the Q&A, and participate in the conversation.

Another first in 2024 was the ASSAP Halloween Special. Broadcast simultaneously on Zoom and live to Youtube!



Halloween occurred on ASSAP webinar Thursday and will not do so again for a number of years!

Youtube

Rumble

Bitchute

Youtube Music



# ASSAP

## EGM – A most Extraordinary General Meeting

Why an EGM? An extraordinary general meeting (EGM) is where a meeting that's not the scheduled Annual General Meeting (AGM) is called. Sometimes in business terms this is called an Emergency General Meeting. Circumstances demand people together to take drastic action or to address a critical matter. In a nutshell, after a rollback of the Articles of Association to an earlier filed edition sent matters into the air. What decisions made since that filing date stand, and what is and what is not in effect. Many people have many ideas of how these matters need to be resolved. It's also true, not every action taken is perhaps the correct one. What was clear, whichever way it was cut. The rollback date preceded updates allowing meetings and decisions to be made electronically. ASSAP Executive Committee consists of members who are from across the country. The ability of useful facilities such as conference forum services like Zoom, Skype and suchlike, where collective decisions can be made is a requirement. The hurdle being to facilitate first a gathering in person, to have a quorum at a venue that is accessible by all at a location suitable for everyone. To have such a motion put forward to those attending and those who have cast a vote physically by post. Each aspect requiring meetings, planning and attendance.



Following meetings and consultations required the location to be London for member accessibility and a venue suitable for all. The result arrived at was The Chesterfield of Mayfair. 1st February. Wonderfully art deco and stylish.

Accompanying the successful vote to have electronic communications, were 3 presentations turning the affair into an event for the members attending. Featuring Professor Chris French, Deborah Hyde and Naomi Ryan aka Spookybarrister.



The Chesterfield is a stones throw away from one of London's most infamous haunted locations. 50 Berkeley Square. Like a bunch of fans who've just caught a glimpse of their favorite pop star, the thrill of being near such a notorious place sent shivers of excitement down everyone's spine.



The detail; the those keeping score. Physical In person vote 18 – 1 abstain.  
16 postal votes – yes. 6 proxy votes – yes. 6 blank postal/proxy returns.  
1 spoiled ballot in area mentioning postal and proxy votes.

# To the memory of Dennis Bury



<https://dennisbury.muchloved.com/>

One of ASSAP's leading founder members died on 29th December 2024

The Reverend Dennis Bury, aged 81, had been suffering for a couple of years from scoliosis, a degenerative condition of the spine. He worked tirelessly for the Association and Executive in its formative years and became its first Ombudsman. He was a one-time member of the SPR Council and its Survival Committee. The possibility of surviving bodily death intrigued Dennis, who for over a decade was Principal Trustee of the Survival Joint Research Committee Trust, a research charity established in 1963 between prominent psychical researchers and Spiritualists, including Maurice Barbanell.

A formative journey through science and academia, From chemistry, theology before a scholarship took Dennis across the ocean to the United States to complete an MA. Becoming a Health Care Professions Council Practitioner Psychologist on return to the UK in 1970. Further Dennis explored other pursuits at Royal Holloway College and Central School of Speech and Drama numbering amongst them. An associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, Adjunct Professor to the University of Syracuse. The boundaries between Science and Religion held significance in Dennis's thoughts. Delving deep into the many philosophies of the great journey.

"I have taken the view that what we perceive of reality, both interpersonally and also when we come to think about things, is that we can never see it. We can only see the results of what our instruments print out for us—that is reality and beyond that there is more but we shall never know it. I am a true Platonist in this vision." – Dennis Bury.

ASSAP will absorb the materials and content produced by the Survival Joint Research Committee Trust. Potentially to be made available by our library and archive. Future presentations, webinars and content based on the work of Dennis Bury and the SJRCT.

Dennis operated his blog for a number of years [DennisScience.com](https://www.dennisscience.com)

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200924121409/https://www.dennisscience.com/dennis/is/>



## *Current as of publication date.*

Chair: vacant	
Secretary & Treasurer: Matthew Simon	secretary@assap.ac.uk
Membership Secretary: David Ball	membership@assap.ac.uk
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Publications Officer: vacant	
Training Officer: Steve Parsons	training@assap.ac.uk
Research Officer: Caroline Gibson	research@assap.ac.uk
Investigations Officers: Joanna and Gary Walpole	NRPI@assap.ac.uk
Librarian & Archivist: William Eyre	library@assap.ac.uk
Webmaster: vacant	
Groups Co-ordinator: Lee Norton	groups@assap.ac.uk

Non-executive positions  
President: Lionel Fanthorpe  
Vice-President: Dr Hugh Pincott

## **Closing remarks and last minute thoughts**

The sheer volume of time, effort and passion by those behind the scenes is extra-ordinary to those who have held any such roles we salute you, a charity education body that requires the commitment of full-time expectation, to be on-call, to respond, to produce, to organize and to always being prepared for the next obstacle or face a grilling from those who shout loud with expectations of instant gratification.

Be kind. Be amazing.