

ASSAP NEWS

ASSOCIATION FOR THE
SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF
ANOMALOUS PHENOMENA

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Has the secret of Runwell been solved at last?

THE mystery of Runwell, reputed to be the most haunted village in SE Essex, may have been solved by "Earthquest" — a group of researchers led by Andy Collins. Their method of working is exemplary of how Project Albion (see ASSAP News 6) can operate.

Using place names, local legends, psychics and historical research they may have discovered the meaning behind the strange design of the Runwell Cross — a diamond-shaped motif unique to the area.

Starting with the place name of Runwell, the group gained a valuable clue. The word 'Run' or 'Rune' may derive from the Old English 'Hruna' meaning 'tree trunk'.

Another authority suggests the name came from the Saxon 'rune' meaning 'a mystery' or a secret, implying a 'secret' well, a secret meeting place or a well possessing a secret of some religious observance.

Essex historian, the Rev Philip Marrant, writing in 1816, believed Runwell, 'undoubtedly received its name from the considerable running well in the parish.'

Earthquest were later to re-discover this almost-forgotten holy well.

At a visit to the Runwell church, Earthquest chanced upon many local legends which it was able to decipher.

One legend tells of an 'evil vicar' chased by the Devil. The vicar ran out of the church's south door pulling the wooden door behind him.

The Devil struck out in fury at the woodwork leaving his claw mark burnt deeply into the door. The claw mark can still be seen today.

The vicar then vanished leaving a bubbling, hissing pool of evil-smelling black liquid on the porch floor where he stood. All that remained of the vicar was a strange skull-like flint.

Earthquest realised this legend could relate to a holy well. On many occasions a saint, for instance, was killed and where his or her blood fell a spring or well gushed forth which thereafter was attributed with healing qualities and the ability to cause miracles.

Historical research revealed more

legends discovered in a strange manuscript written by the Rev John Edward Bazille-Corbin, vicar from 1923 to 1961.

The manuscript included one entitled "The Coming of the Runwell Cross" which provided a major clue as to the possible true nature of the motif.

It told how two early Christian missionaries rested by the well and built a small chapel. Then a "mysterious visitor" turned up and, claiming to be a craftsman offered to decorate the floor.

Using red and black stones he "drew a unique and heretofore unknown design...which men since have called Runwell Cross."

Andy realised this strange legend echoed an almost identical event which happened at Glastonbury during the early years of this century.

Frederick Bligh Bond in charge of excavations at Glastonbury Abbey used psychic faculties to aid their work. The messages, communicated by a "dead" monk enabled them to discover two previously unknown chapels.

One message stated that set in a mosaic pattern upon the stone slabs of the Mary Chapel at Glastonbury Abbey was a sacred groundplan, a blueprint for the construction and siting of building and the fashioning of the landscape to a certain design, including a zodiac.

A few years later a Gloucestershire woman, Katherine Maltwood, caused a sensation in antiquarian and archaeological circles with the publication of her book 'Glastonbury, Temple of the Stars'.

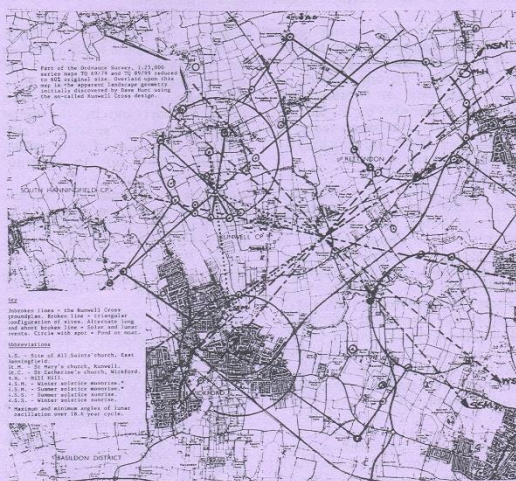
In it she detailed her finding of huge zodiacal effigies etched into the landscape around Glastonbury seemingly confirming the work of the dead monk.

The parallels with the legend of the Coming of the Runwell Cross were obvious. And the theory became stronger when Andy, in a personal interview with the

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THE RUNWELL CROSS outline as used in Christian art.



THE RUNWELL CROSS layed out on a map of the area in Essex.

Ghost hunters find their ghost!

IN the three years since it was formed the Sheffield Society for Research into the Paranormal has investigated a wide variety of anomalous phenomena. Indeed, at their inception they helped the Northern Counties Society for Psychical Research study a poltergeist case in the centre of Sheffield.

Their first conclusions were that the phenomena could be put down to an over-active imagination. After learning more about the woman in the centre of the case, however, they felt this was a possible case of fraud.

While interviewing another woman who had witnessed possible poltergeist activity several months previously the group suffered their own anomalous phenomenon. For no apparent reason the tape recorder they were using suffered from extraneous interference!

The witness told Dr Michele Clare, SSRP secretary, how objects such as cigarette packets and trays would move on their own accord at her place of work. After a medium was called in, who gave the woman a relevant message from a deceased relative, the activity stopped.

A case involving their local Radio Sheffield may not have produced any evidence of poltergeists but it has put them on good terms with the station.

Personnel at Radio Sheffield had reported unusual happenings and feelings of unease late at night. The events were infrequent.

A former employee also reported having seen the ghost of a maid while working there. The SSRP in conjunction with the NCSRP carried out an over night investigation — but nothing came out of it apart from some useful publicity.

In July 1980 a junior jazz band display in a field near Kirby-in-Ashfield became the venue for some unusual anomalous phenomena.

Near the end of the display the children started falling over. In all about 400 people were affected and 300 taken to hospital. Most recovered quickly with a few staying overnight.

Spectators including children, babies, policemen and even two horses were affected.

The SSRP investigated all possible causes. The symptoms were similar to organo-phosphate insecticide poisoning but the tests were all negative.

No physical cause could be found despite intensive research.

Mass hysteria was suggested but, as Dr Clare points out, how would this affect babies and horses? The file is still open.*

Members of the society were lucky enough to observe a ghost while looking for one in an April 1980 investigation of the ghost of Carbrook Hall. The family living above the 17th century pub had reported poltergeist activity including glasses, cutlery, coins and a large cheese all being seen to move.

During an informal overnight investigation four people out of the five in the room said they saw a ghost. During two further overnight investigations nothing was observed.

In January 1980 the group investigated the case of a UFO seen by a chartered surveyor. It was described as two bright lights with an unusual flight pattern.

There were two more poltergeist cases in 1981 — one in a hair dressing salon and another in a council house — but SSRP is not currently involved in any full-scale investigations.

***Editorial Note: ASSAP News would be interested to hear of any similar cases and from anyone interested in researching this field of study which seems a particularly suitable case for treatment by ASSAP.**

Reports of other local group's activities would also be appreciated.

New Age Down Under

FEELINGS of a New Age are, it seems, being felt in Australia and in an attempt to promote the paranormal and alternative realities a new magazine has just been launched down under.

Called 'Venture' the first issue has articles on life after death, dreams, healthy eating, UFOs, reincarnation, the tarot, astrology, psychometry and numerous other topics.

In a predominantly ETH biased article on UFOs, author George Humer presents an interesting case.

Max Richardson, a worker on the Hillside tin mines, was preparing to sleep outside one May evening in 1978 when he saw a round bright white light come towards him.

As it got nearer he noticed the silent craft was larger than a zeppelin and travelling at high speed. He observed the object — it changed to a bright orange colour — for about 15 seconds.

The next day he noticed his magnetic compass at 19½ degrees in error, a situation which lasted for 48 hours. For the next 2½ weeks he was amazed to find his sight, strength and energy had increased considerably.

On 2 June 2.00-3.30am a bright light filled the sky for about three minutes.

The report reveals that two weeks before a strange visitor came to the camp.

He had a cockney accent and said his name was Tony Lee. He had a copy of the Sunday Times which considering it was only 10am and they were 143 miles from the nearest newsprint was "unusual".

The visitor seemed obsessed with the chemical Beryllium and had an outstanding knowledge of chemistry. The number was XB1 or Y251. These were later found to be false.

He said he was from the Mount Newman railroad works but further enquiries were to reveal this was also untrue. He was dressed in green.

On another occasion aboriginals visited the camp asking about the sound of a motor coming from high above the camp. Despite searches no source could be found for the noise.

The fact it occurred at a mine, the strange lights and magnetic anomalies will strike a chord with 'Earthlights' readers.*

*"Earthlights" by Paul Devereux. Available from The Ley Hunter, PO Box 13, Welshpool, Powys, Wales. Price £11.00.

International seminar studies UFOs

by Hugh Pincott

Why are there so few genuine UFO cases in Switzerland? Why has the percentage of unexplained ones in Britain risen over the past few years? Why have only 4 reports of alleged Close Encounters of the Third Kind been noted throughout France in 30 years?

These were some of the questions raised by researchers from Britain and the French-speaking countries of mainland Europe during a study weekend at Boulogne in February. Attended by 30 participants, the seminar was organised jointly by ASSAP and continental research groups.

The single most important conclusion that recurred many times in presentations was the absolute need for scrupulous care in questioning and analysis, as well as attention to the minutest detail. Yves Bosson from Switzerland put it well: "One of the problems today is that cases ultimately proven to be faked show no unusual distinction from genuine ones in the early stages. Careful investigation is therefore doubly important."

Jenny Randles felt however that since British workers had managed to filter out "ordinary" phenomena quite well in the early stages, the proportion of impressive cases in the UK had risen from 5% to around 20% in 5 years.

French investigator François Gerard stressed the need to follow up and check the findings of initial reports, otherwise they can take on an interpretation quite unwarranted by the facts. Many impressive "scientific" and chemical analyses, for example, do not stand up to scrutiny.

Sociological and cultural aspects were examined very seriously. Few good cases were reported in Switzerland possibly because the Swiss mentality was down-to-earth and not given to polemics and speculation.

Harry Harris referred to a senior British psychologist's view that ufologists were rationally "deficient" because they took an interest in such matters. Sociologist Shirley McIver of the University of York disagreed. Her statistical survey of BUFORA members revealed personality and belief profiles not significantly out of line with those of the general population.

British delegates admired the high degree of specialisation achieved by their Mainland colleagues, who

in turn were most impressed by the existence in Britain of a co-operative organisation such as ASSAP where so wide a range of talent and expertise could be brought to bear on the study of anomalies.

In his introduction, organiser Hilary Evans summed up the bemusement of the modern ufologist. "The more we eliminate the rumours and errors, the hoaxes and illusions; the more we set aside cases like Cergy-Pontoise, Warminster and West Wales; the more we dismiss the ufo nests, the underwater bases, the men-in-black, the abductions, and the messages from our Cosmic Brothers, the more we get rid of all that; the more the UFO problem emerges in all its complexity — a Gordian Knot still waiting for its Alexander."

Help

Caroline Wise would like to know...

If anybody would like to 'adopt' a Polish dowser as a pen-friend...

If anybody knows whether a stone circle ever existed on Hilly Fields, Ladywell, South East London...

Please write c/o the editor, ASSAP NEWS.

Research round-up and progress report

by Jenny Randles

Activity is beginning to shape, at last, following the second meeting of the National Investigations Committee, in Birmingham during January. Most of the forms that will be used in producing case reports have now been compiled and a Report Format was also agreed at this meeting. This format (outlined on sheet F1) is used to guide the preparation of a case history on any anomaly. It is not a rigid set of rules, but means that the cases flowing into the ASSAP archives in the future will have an ordered structure about them – which will facilitate researchers who wish to make use of them.

A revised list of Area Coordinators is included in this issue. There are still some areas not adequately covered, but most coordinators have already begun to mobilise their team of investigators and set them on the road towards producing case reports.

A number of local meetings have been held; the coordinators are distributing relevant forms and they will be reporting back to the next National Investigations Committee meeting to nominate the first batch of officially Accredited Investigators for ASSAP.

These will be chosen on expertise, as proven by their ability to produce good case reports. All such Accredited Investigators will have to sign the ASSAP version of the Code of Practice, when finalised.

If you are not satisfied with the action (or more likely the lack of it!) within your region, then write to your Area Coordinator, as in the list, and tell them so! Similarly, if you are an ASSAP member who would like to try investigation and feel you might be able to work towards Accredited Investigator status for us, then write and tell your Coordinator so. We are still in need of help in many areas.

Finally, if you come across information about any local anomaly which you think should be investigated, it would help ASSAP enormously if you cut this out of the newspaper or jotted down the details on a bit of paper and sent it to your Area Coordinator. He can then make sure that ASSAP gets onto the case.

Remember we do not subscribe to a press cutting agency, and so unless you are prepared to tell us what is happening it is very likely we do not know anything about the anomaly going on in your back garden! And if our investigation team does not know about it we cannot investigate it, of course.

Meanwhile, up in the north, things are certainly happening thanks to the continuing RADIO CITY stories. As I write this (mid March) the weekly series has gone on all year, and is about to enter its twelfth programme. The public response has been so encouraging that I have been asked to keep it going for a while yet, well beyond the initial 8 weeks planned for it.

Programmes to date have included; UFOs, Premonitions, Ghosts & Poltergeists, Astrology & I Ching, Mysterious Vanishings, Animal Intelligence, Magic & Witchcraft,

Reincarnation and timeslips, amongst others.

It is having its amusing moments; although I was besieged by angry Liverpool Football supporters not pleased that a 'live' experiment with the I Ching had announced that their team would not win the European Cup thanks to defensive errors! (A fortnight later they lost the match due to just that reason ...but as I write it remains to be seen if that will prove their downfall!).

Then, during the programme on Witchcraft, we were warned that if we did not do the subject justice retribution would be upon us (both myself and the Radio City researcher helping me on this programme did not enjoy this show one bit!) We think we did alright (indeed afterwards a witch called the studios to congratulate us), but we had some hairy moments.

With two minutes to go to the end of the show and the hourly news awaiting, the headphones and consul collapsed and crashed to the ground! With Brian Ford and I looking at each other the news faded in and strolling into the room came what looked like a witch riding a broomstick! It turned out to be the cleaning lady, taking advantage of the break, and carrying her mop at an illusionary angle!

More seriously, however, the programme has continued to generate interest in ASSAP, new members, and some fascinating cases, including our first ethical problem. One lady in Southport claimed to be in telepathic regular contact with her husband who is on the run from the police! Fortunately she has now lost contact so I don't have to worry about whether I should tell the police, or if I did how on earth I would explain!!!

Other examples of cases (to be recorded in future issues once investigated) concern; the Birkenhead man who met aliens in Tesco's shoving 100 tins of dog food into a trolley because they were doing experiments on the behaviour of animals back at home base!... the Chester youngster who was given super metal-bending powers by an alien he met six years ago...and a most unusual Wallasey story about the sun coming down out of the sky, changing into an unearthly face, and dancing outside the open window in front of three startled witnesses! There are many other more mundane events too, like ghosts, precognitions and poltergeists!

To close I will discuss one case that has been followed up. I have obtained much written information from the primary witness and ASSAP investigator James Feltham has interviewed her and her husband at some length...

A HISTORY OF PREMONITIONS...

Mrs SB is aged 55 and lives in West Kirby, a pleasant sea-side village at the edge of the Wirral peninsula. She is now interested in psychic phenomena and has visited Spiritualist Churches, where many folk tell her they can see a white-haired old lady by her left hand side. This, she believes to be her mother, whose presence at this side she has often felt and who is connected with one of her two main premonitions. (Several other anecdotes are included in the report but these are the two best supported).

(1) In June 1965, approximately 9am on a bright but overcast day, she was washing up in the kitchen of her home and aware of the bird-songs in the garden. Her husband had left to go to work.

Suddenly she was aware of a scene superimposed onto the garden and taking command of her vision. This scene appeared as if through a window about 3 feet in diameter and round. It was fuzzy at the edges, but the pictures inside the window were so realistic there was never any doubt they were happening. It was like watching a very impressive TV display, although so close that she felt almost part of the scene being viewed. However it was only a picture.

The events depicted had no sound associated and the ambient garden sounds continued uninterrupted. After 45 seconds the image faded out.

In this 'vision' Mrs SB saw her husband and his car being towed out of the Mersey Tunnel and fined £2.50 for doing so. The reason was that he had run out of petrol and this 'toll' for causing traffic chaos is still in force (whilst rather more expensive today!) Apparently ashamed of his folly Mr B was not going to tell her on arrival home that evening. So she told him!

Mr B was amazed and for a long time, before he came to accept her story about a vision in the garden, believed she must have followed him to work in another car (they did have another car). He confirmed the story.

(2) Ten years later Mr and Mrs B were visiting Mrs B's mother at Clatterbridge Hospital. Whilst feeding her slithers of apple Mrs B suddenly saw a kind of plastic sheet (which she describes as an aura) interposed between her face and her mother's head. This was pale in colour, mostly white. As this occurred something inside her head told Mrs SB that her mother would die before Wednesday. She told Mr B and pointed to the aura whilst it was still there, but he saw nothing.

The old lady died on the Tuesday, as predicted. (This being three days later).

Mr B could confirm these details, and a further vision made the next day (ie two days before her mother's death) where at Church Mrs SB suddenly saw her mother's coffin in the aisle, complete with an unusual brown stain on its side – which she mentioned to her husband. When the coffin did appear it was exactly as reported, including the brown stain.

This case poses some interesting questions about the nature of timeslips and telepathic or precognitive visions.

EAST LONDON, SINCE 1971. VIOLENT HAUNTING.

Most researchers would agree poltergeists and hauntings are not dangerous physically but in this case the family have been repeatedly attacked and the daughter, 13-year-old Denise, has it seems nearly been killed on a number of occasions.

The "ghost of an 18th century monk" has tried to strangle Denise, drown her by pushing her under the bath water and has suspended her out of the window.

In the latest attack (Sunday 27 February) the ghost tore off her nightdress, threw her onto the bedroom floor, 'paralysed' her by some unknown means, and pulled her knickers down.

On this occasion Denise also spoke to the figure and it said his name was Milton. The family became so scared they were all sleeping in one room when researchers Caroline Wise and Alan Cleaver visited their home.

One interesting point being followed up is the apparent fact that John Wesley, founder of Methodism, stayed at the house during the 18th century. In his time John Wesley too suffered poltergeist phenomena, and apparitions of a malevolent nature. Turn to Page 4

New Posts

Following the annual meeting of ASSAP these posts have been filled:-

Chairman: Maurice Townsend.
Ombudsman: David Christie-Murray.
General Secretary: Hugh Pincott.
Treasurer: Maurice Townsend (*pro tem*).
Publications: Hilary Evans.
Archives/Library: Bob Rickard.
Investigations: Jenny Randles.
Research: Currently vacant.
External Affairs: Lionel Beer
Training/Internal Relations: Dennis Bury.
Membership Secretary: Janice Bagnall.
Conferences: John Merron.
Editor Common Ground: Kevin McClure.
Editor ASSAP News: Alan Cleaver.
Groups Co-ordinator: Viga Grabham.

New twist in metal-bending research

ASSAP'S research department recently took advantage of an unusual opportunity: to use the service of an electronic expert for minimal expense. Jonathan Sealy, working with David Robertson at Birkbeck College, London, designed and built a portable piezo-electric detector for use with metal-bending PK subjects. Once finished ASSAP will have full use of the equipment.

Sadly the project was not completed and ASSAP would welcome donations to help conclude the work. David Robertson reports on the progress so far:

The design of the equipment to measure accurately small changes in geometry of piezo-electric sensors must be undertaken bearing in mind several sources of error:

1. Attenuation of some frequency components even to the extent of loss of data if the noise at another frequency is large. This is signal processing design.

2. Artifact. This can come from the mains power supply and is caused by switching; it can also come from the changes in the cables (caused by vibration) which may be recorded by sensitive instruments.

3. Micro breakdown in capacitors, a well known occurrence for some types.

When constructing our equipment, we decided to power the circuits from the mains supply as this is cheap and could, if required, be easily replaced by battery.

The voltage source is housed in a separate box so that magnetic fields from the mains power would not intersect the instrumentation; it is regulated to ± 15 volts from a higher coarse-grade supply.

After distribution to the instrumentation each board then regulates down to ± 15 volts from a higher coarse-grade supply.

After distribution to the instrumentation each board then regulates down to ± 12 volts, this is able to take out any transients from the mains and also any picked up on the 15 volt distribution from such source as transmitters (radio microphones).

Three of these primary voltage sources have been completely finished.

The construction technique was to use printed circuit boards; the tracks being in the form of transistors which can be directly stuck on the board prior to etching away the excess copper.

The components can then be soldered directly onto the board face without need for drilling; at least for the prototypes.

As the sensor has its own internal resistance and so cause a step signal to decay exponentially with time we decided that this could be swamped with a standard

resistor; a capacitor is included for similar reasons. We decided that this distortion should be removable by subsequent electronic integration.

What we found was that the input voltage and input bias current of the first amplifier caused so much error that the output of the integrator tended to drift off quickly.

The next thing tried was the use of copper stabilised input stages. This drastically reduced the drift of the output but still led to concern as the noise floor was not attainable with a reasonable drift rate. This meant that data would be lost due to the low frequency component.

At this stage, after improving the

design with successive prototypes of each sort, financial considerations prevented any further development.

For the future we propose two lines of investigation and development.

The first is the use of screened ultra-high input impedance components very close to a similarly screened specimen, if, as seems likely, a suitable cable cannot be found for remote amplification.

The second idea is in effect an active filter.

A low noise stage could be free from drift by placing a low-pass filter at a time constant of about 20 seconds, in the feed-back loop. This would cut down the troublesome low frequency noise and enable the true shape of signals shorter than this period to be observed.

To summarise we can claim to have developed good artifact-free apparatus that may be quickly built, but we must admit that we have not finally solved the drift problems.

Runwell mystery becomes clearer

From page 1

present vicar, discovered the past vicar of Runwell, Bazille-Corbin and Frederick Bligh Bond had been friends!

The manuscript also indicated where the holy well stood in the parish, and Earthquest soon tracked it down.

Earthquest used their **psychic abilities** next to discover "the secret of Runwell". It was member Dave Hunt who independently came up with confirmation of the landscape geometry theory.

He was watching a television programme about a religious order of fighting monks, The Knights Templar, when he had a "psychic" flash of inspiration.

In the programme presenter Henry Lincoln suggested the Templars had purposely laid out certain structures on hilltops in the region of Languedoc, S France to form the pattern of a huge five-pointed star.

Dave was unaware of Katharine Maltwood's work and the theory Mr Collins had come up with.

However after many hours work he eventually came up with a plan of the Runwell Cross redrawn on a map of the area, using geographical alignments.

On visiting the centre of the cross Earthquest members were presented with a panoramic view of the landscape.

Andy explained, "All important solar and lunar risings would be seen at a zero horizon, in other words at or below eye level, supporting our theory that it was from here alignments would have been calculated and marked out."

But they also discovered something else at the centre-point. Something which psychic information had warned them to expect but which nevertheless came as a staggering surprise...

...And to discover that particular 'secret' you will have to buy "The Mystery of Runwell" by Andy Collins. It costs £1.95 and is

It will illustrate well how such research can be conducted in your own area.

Who knows what mysteries lay hidden in your local landscape? The booklet by Mr Collins illustrates how place names, legends, research and psychics might be used to solve its secrets.

Cases around Britain

From page 3

ELMDON, NEAR BIRMINGHAM. MARCH 8. FALL OF ICE.

A chunk of ice was reported in the Sun to have smashed a factory roof at Elmdon. No one was hurt. The ice was "believed to be from an aircraft."

CHEDINGTON, WEST DORSET. HOMESICK DOG.

After Mr and Mrs Chapman left their cocker spaniel with people 100 miles away in Devon, they heard the dog had run away.

Three years later the dog turned up filthy, starving and ill at his owner's home having, incredibly, hiked the 100 miles.

Unfortunately the Chapmans had, by that time, moved house.

(News of the World, 13 February).

ASSAP INVESTIGATIONS:
Executive Office Responsible for Investigation:-

AREA COORDINATORS:-

ASSAP