

PROF



LEFT: Colin Andrews crouches to gather wheat straws for examination. Behind, from left, are Pat Delgado, Burt Taylor and Don Tuersly.

ABOVE: A series of circles which appeared at Chesserfoot Head, Hampshire.

EVER-INCREASING CIRCLES

whose vital regularity, and mysteriously, appear in cornfields around Britain. Now a team of enthusiastic amateur sleuths has completed a comprehensive study — and they are hoping to solve the mystery. ELISABETH DUNN reports.



ON THE night of July 6, 1986, a signwriter and a retired electrical engineer sat on the edge of the Punch Bowl, a beauty spot near Winchester, Hampshire. Equipped with light-gathering binoculars, cameras and a tape recorder, one of the pair had waited here day and night for the previous three weeks. Just after midnight, the engineer went home, leaving the signwriter on watch.

Time passed uneventfully. By 3am, when the engineer returned, a light drizzle was falling. Three-quarters of an hour later, as the sky began to lighten, the pair noticed that something had happened in the field below them. About 300m from where they sat, a stem, unseen force had swept a vast circle in the corn.

The floor of the circle was pressed flat to the ground, in a beautiful clockwise swirl. Its circumference was defined by a wall of standing corn, enclosing this was a ring of flattened cereal, swirled in the opposite direction. Although bent horizontally, none of the corn stems was broken and, as the season wore on, the crop continued to ripen as if nothing had happened to it. Outside the ring, the corn was untouched. The watchers on the hill had seen and heard nothing, but when they played the tape — which had been running all night — they were rewarded with occasional burblings, like a human voice recorded backwards.

Horrificans (rare in Hampshire) make circles in the corn. So do crows, helicopters and curious couples. But these circles are crude and clumsy compared with the precision of those investigated by Pat Delgado and Colin Andrews.

The Delgado/Andrews circles are formations of great beauty that apparently owe nothing to chance. But after eight years of study to date, the investigators remain as mystified as to their origins as they were at the outset. Every time they think they may have identified a common factor in the appearance of the circles, a new refinement of shape, or pattern is introduced, leaving them baffled, but renewing their determination to find an explanation.

If it is the case that the circles have been appearing for hundreds of years, they went unchronicled until 1975, when a Hampshire, noticed a single clockwise-swirled circle in a field alongside a highway. The circles returned in the

following years and, in 1978, he found one large circle surrounded by four smaller ones set out like the five-spot on a die. It was not until July, 1981, when Pat Delgado fern from a golfing companion of a large circle flanked by two others exactly half its size in the Punch Bowl, that the evidence began to be collated. In July 1985, Delgado was joined in his endeavor by Colin Andrews. Andrews was returning home from an evening out at the Andover carnival, when he heard a police radio report of a UFO sighting near Stockbridge. He reached the spot before the elderly couple, Mr and Mrs Collins, who had definitely seen something, and who were very frightened. Andrews recalls: "They were about 200m away from something that looked like a four-far wheel standing on end. Miss Collins said it had many yellow-white lights around the edge, and more lights along spokes leading into the centre of it."

The following morning, five circles appeared at Alfordwood, in Aysgarth, five more materialized at Goodworth Clatford, the three incidents forming a dead-straight line. His imagination fired by the coincidence, Andrews contacted Delgado who was, by now, enjoying some celebrity as a circles consultant.

Delgado is a retired electro-mechanical design engineer with two years at the Woomers missile range and a stint with NASA in Australia behind him. Andrews is chief civil engineer for the Test Valley Borough Council. They were joined by two like-minded sleuths: Don Turvill, the signwriter and veteran UFO enthusiast, at one time a close observer of the Warrimster Things; and Bursy Taylor, proprietor of a driving school in Andover, and holder of a private pilot's licence. As a group, they have been distressed over the years by public reaction to their findings. Contrary to popular opinion, neither little green men nor nuns-and-bells flying saucers have any role to play in the formation of the magic circles. Delgado and Andrews are happy to entertain the idea that the wheels in the wheat are nothing to do with the extraterrestrials; they simply do not know. There is a methodical study of the most dramatic of the formations to appear since 1975, and analysis of a mystery.

There are, it seems, particularly favored sites where the circles appear year after year. The Punch Bowl is one; Seven Barrows near Litchfield on the Hampshire/Berkshire border is another,



Chilcomb, 1987 — the floor pattern in this circle gave the impression of an enormous vertical pressure, which flattened the plants radially outwards.

A noise similar to electrical static began to crackle, apparently coming from some unseen source about 2.5m away. Within six seconds, the noise stopped. He was extremely frightened.

Kilmington. Often, the formations appear near the scenes of unexplained happenings — road accidents involving only one car, for instance. At Winterbourne Stoke in Wiltshire, where, in 1987, some particularly fine specimens appeared, the body of a Hawtrey jump-jet pilot who mysteriously ejected, leaving his plane to fly on and crash into the Atlantic 56km south-west of Ireland, was found lying in the field near the circles. During their research, Delgado and Andrews have felt their own blood freeze on certain occasions. In 1986, they visited a circle-adding formation at Childrey, near Wansley, a shape that had an intriguing new refinement — a short, straight pathway leading away from the ring and ending in an arrow-head. At the point of the arrow, a bowl-shaped area of soil had been scooped out of the ground, but no discarded seeds was anywhere to be found.

Andrews returned home to Andover with a sample of the soil taken from the bowl and put it in the outhouse specially reserved for circle data. Like his house and garden, the hut is protected by burglar alarms. Minutes later, the alarm went off inside the hut. At 4.15am the next morning, the garden perimeter alarm went off and the time clock, run off the mains, had also stopped at 4.15. A designer of burglar alarms, Andrews could find no fault in the system, and it was reset. Two nights later, at 4.15am, the office and the perimeter alarm both went off. Throughout the next fortnight, they continued to sound without incident, always at 4.15am. Mrs Andrews failed to persuade her husband to give up his research — circles have since been banished as a subject for family conversation.

Recounting a visit to an oval ring at Kilmington, Andrews describes the stems of wheat as being flattened outwards radially around the outer edge of the ring, and facing inwards towards the centre of the later edge — two opposing forces working in close proximity. It was, he says, like rolling he had seen before, but he was now becoming used to the capricious nature of the circle-forming force: "As soon as you think you're getting somewhere, something happens, as if it's saying, 'What do you think of it now?'"

At the top of the oval was a heart-shaped indentation, spread into the ring as if pushed by some giant breast-stroke swimmer. Andrews and the whole team visited the ring several times in the days after its appearance.

Andrews recalls standing some 9m from the edge of the ring in the fading sunshine, when a noise similar to electrical static began to crackle, apparently coming from some unseen source about 2.5m away.

"I grew louder, to a pitch where I expected a bang to follow," Andrews says. With great presence of mind, he stood his ground also, within six seconds, the noise stopped. He was extremely frightened.

Then there was the case of the white jelly, found in the centre of a circle at Goodworth Clatford. A sample was sent

initially it was thought, to be some kind of confectionery that had gone rancid, but a further test found no evidence of glucose syrup used in sweets manufacture. Bursy Taylor, and the team which accompanied him from the Andover Adventist, somewhat improprietly handled the jelly, and were all afflicted with severe chest colds soon afterwards. The substance remains unidentified.

The reaction of the healthy sceptic is to dismiss the circular phenomena as a hoax. Pat Delgado and Andrews patiently explain that not only have they seen unchronicled hoaxes, they have also systematically tried to reproduce the circles themselves and found it impossible to exert enough force to flatten the huge (20m diameter) areas of corn, let alone achieve an elaborate and exact floor pattern without breaking a stem or without leaving tracks in the field.

Delgado's examination of the theoretical possibilities leads him to eliminate most of the explanations known to science. Electro-magnetism, for example, has been shown to make plants move, but not to flatten them and would require so much hardware in a remote field as to be impracticable and certainly detectable.

Almost imperceptibly, Andrews and Delgado incline towards a theory that whatever force creates the circles is controlled by an intelligence: "We may be looking for an unrecognized force that is already in existence at certain locations, but requires control and manipulation. Or a force that is transposable and used at will by some controlling power. Both ideas suggest there would necessarily have to be an intelligence wanting to produce these manifestations."

They then lead into a complex discussion of quantum physics and parallel worlds. Calling as witness no less an authority than Einstein, they demonstrate the bridge between mass and anti-mass which, they argue, fully supports the theory that the circles are created by an unknown force manipulated by an unknown intelligence — which is not a little green man.

It does, however, appear to have a sense of humor. Last year, observing the season's crop of circles in the Punch Bowl, a farmer (becoming increasingly cheered off by the manifestations attracting tourists to his field) was moved to ring Delgado with some urgency one morning. Delgado arrived, scanned the field, rubbed his eyes and sped off to the airfield at Turxton from which Bursy Taylor flies his photographic missions. Together they flew to the Punch Bowl to shoot the scene before the crop was harvested.

The figures — which does not appear in the book because its authors fear they have stretched credibility quite far enough — shows the Punch Bowl with its regular circles and trapezoids created by a farmer's tractor for mowing and spray the crop. Between a set of trapezoids, it appears a legend described in the family press, horizontal but unbrot (stemmed corn). We see not alone.

On film, UFOs get more exposure than when they reportedly visit our planet. Most sightings are treated sceptically, although **MICHELLE DAW** discovers a new book documenting some remarkable reports and boasting all the credibility in the world. Believe it or not.

A BEAUTIFUL alien who seduces an earthling and leaves him with a case of what can only be called cosmic clap, farm animals that are mysteriously and meticulously mutilated and a top-secret United States military installation in Nevada that has dismantled and down alien space craft may seem like scenes from a Steven Spielberg blockbuster. But they are not the work of a science-fiction author with a fertile imagination.

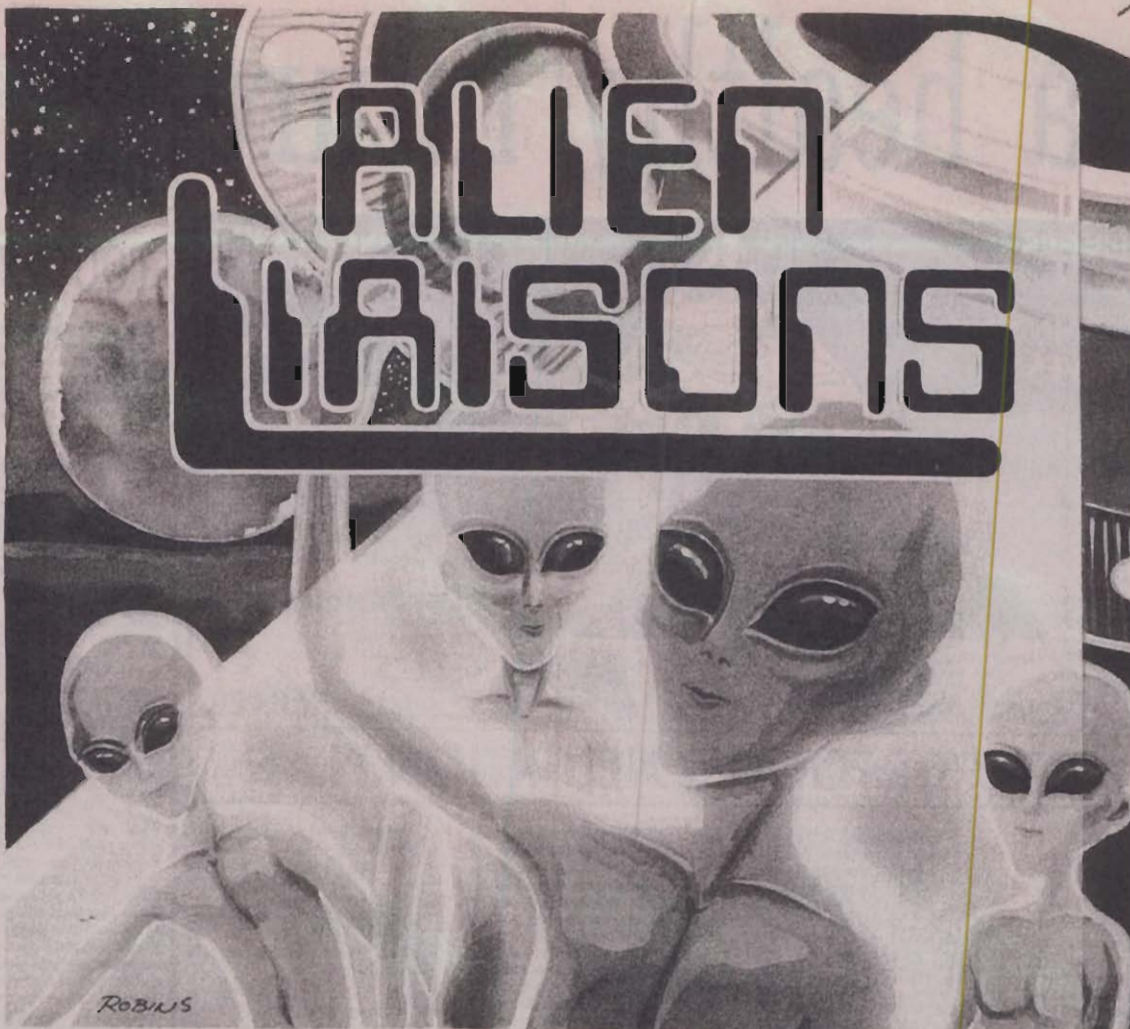
Instead, they are from a 247-page bestseller, *Alien Liaison: The Ultimate Secret*, which is the result of extensive investigation by a man regarded as a leading authority on the perplexing subject of UFOs.

Timothy Good, 49, first became interested in alien life in 1955 when he read a book which detailed sightings of inexplicable objects and life forms by such qualified observers as military and civilian pilots.

Since then, Good, who also is a professional violinist, has travelled the world interviewing key witnesses and collecting a wealth of evidence of its existence, including several thousand intelligence documents.

Since 1967 he has lectured on the subject at schools and universities as well as to medical and scientific organisations and the British House of Lords UFO study group.

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a number of trips to the Woomera test range, which had been set up with Britain in 1946 to test military missiles and, then, the Blue Streak, Black Arrow and Black Knight launchers.

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"We were the first trained in Australia in transistor theory and so were often the only ones able to work on missile equipment under trial.

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While working at Woomera in 1958 or 1959, the informant revealed, an object was recovered on the range, outside any trials zone, by a helicopter involved in a search for a missing girl.

"The object eventually turned up in the workshop I was employed in at the time because of its presumed ancestry. I am telling you that I saw this, touched it, worked on it," he emphasised.

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"It had no radiation — a counter registered zero — not background, although we were late it was a faulty instrument and ground was normal. Disinform perhaps?"

"At this point we sought advice on high — I don't know who; this handed by an engineer. The next I knew was that it was removed security staff, along with the Arme mentioned earlier.

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Good's first book, *Above Top Secret*, went to the top of the bestseller lists in Australia and Britain when it was re-released in 1987. It documented the systematic cover-up of information about UFOs by the intelligence communities of the world.

As Good says in his Introduction to *Alien Liaison*, thousands of documents on UFOs have been released under the Freedom of Information act in the US. They come from agencies such as the Atomic Energy Commission, the CIA, the FBI and the US air force, army and navy intelligence branches.

"The fact that research into UFOs by these and other agencies was long denied (with a few exceptions) and that thousands more documents remain classified and, therefore, exempt from disclosure, is proof — if proof were needed — of just how seriously these matters are taken," he writes.

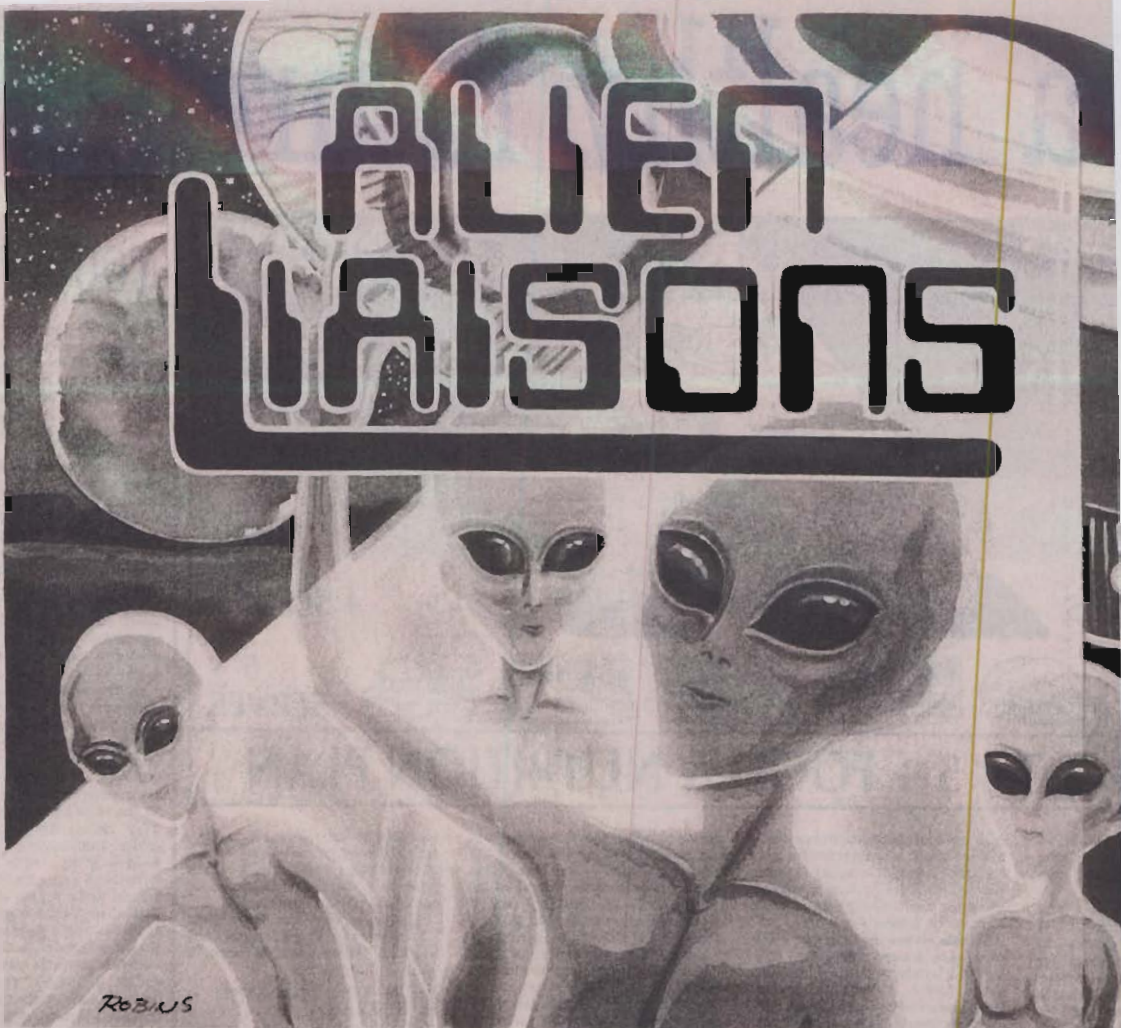
Good claims *Above Top Secret* proved beyond doubt there had been a cover-up since the 1940s and *Alien Liaison* goes one step further in revealing some of that secret knowledge.

Despite Good's credentials and his painstaking research, some of the accounts of human contact with aliens in his latest book require a significant stretch of the imagination.

Such an example is the account of Elias Seixas, who was interviewed in Brazil in September 1988 by Good and Dr Richard Haines.

Seixas claims he and two other men were abducted by aliens in the State of Goias, in Brazil's north-west, in September 1980.

Although he initially was only able to recall the first and final stages of his abduction, Seixas's most disturbing memories emerged after hypnotherapy. The beings he encountered were 2m-tall, with elongated heads, dark, almond-shaped eyes, and a pale, almost white, skin. They had large, thin, white, hairless hands and feet. They were dressed in simple, white, form-fitting clothing. The background was a dark, starry space with a large, bright, circular object in the distance.



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"Despite the outrageous nature of this story — which, of course, guarantees that it will not be believed — Dr Haines and I remain impressed with Elias Seixas's integrity and intelligence," Good writes.

Perhaps in anticipation of the incredulity that Good's book would provoke, the British Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Hill-Norton, wrote a foreword to it which seems aimed at assuring the reader of Good's reliability.

"I have known Tim Good for about 10 years, during which I have formed the opinion that he is both honest and reliable," writes Hill-Norton.

"I am quite sure he is not a 'nut case'."

Despite the admiral's words, it is inevitable that any reports on UFOs, now matter how sensational or low-key, will attract ridicule and *Alien Liaison* is no exception.

Adrian Berry, reviewing the book for Britain's respected *Daily Telegraph*, wrote that "only mentally subnormal people could believe in it".

But it's water off an extraterrestrial duck's back to Good, who points to the fact that, in October, American scientists will begin a 10-year, \$100 million project, using the most sophisticated devices, to search for alien civilisations. The NASA project will be called Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI).

And Good's belief in what he is doing is reinforced by reports of sightings sent to him from around the world, which he publishes in an annual UFO report.

The weird and wonderful aside, much of *Alien Liaison* is concerned with matter-of-fact and quite believable reports of sightings of UFOs and associated equipment, such as the account by a South Australian radio technician of an object which was found at the Woomera rocket range in the late 1950s.

Employed as a radio technician at the Weapons Research Establishment at

a number of trips to the Woomera test range, which had been set up with Britain in 1946 to test military missiles and, then, the Blue Streak, Black Arrow and Black Knight launchers.

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Numerous sightings of UFOs apparently were made at Woomera during this time but were seldom reported due to people's fear of persecution.

"I made a sighting but never reported it because of the pressures that existed as a result of sightings that had been reported by others," the informant continued.

"A point of interest is that the sighting frequency rose dramatically whenever high-altitude trials were in preparation and readiness.

"While I was at Woomera, the Americans were there in force for a number of reasons: we wanted them to use the range more, they wanted to sell us the Sidewinder (missile).

"One particular man whom I saw regularly in the plotting room was never seemingly employed on the actual trials, he was just there, perhaps as an observer.

"I one day broached the subject of UFOs with him. He said in part (my

recently. It was sighted over Fort Knox and he was sent to intercept. He reported that he was diving on it, reported opening fire, and then the aircraft was seen to crash in flames. We have no idea of the cause."

While working at Woomera in 1958 or 1959, the informant revealed, an object was recovered on the range, outside any trials zone, by a helicopter involved in a search for a missing girl.

"The object eventually turned up in the workshop I was employed in at the time because of its presumed ancestry. I am telling you that I saw this, touched it, worked on it," he emphasised.

"It was a sphere about 2ft 9in (80cm) in diameter. Its color was a mid-grey metallic, somewhat darkened, perhaps by extreme heat. It was very light.

"I have never been a good judge of weight but it was disproportionately light, easily lifted by one person, easily supported from underneath by one hand.

"The initial assumption was that it was part of Black Knight, for that was the only missile here at the time that could have contained anything of the size, and it was left to languish uninvestigated for several days until one of the Black Knight experts disclaimed it.

"We then assumed it to be Russian or American and had a closer look.

"Quite simply, there was not then the technology to produce what we had in our hands and I frankly doubt that there is yet.

"We tried to cut it and could not even mark it with hand tools — saws, drills, hammers, chisels — nothing. We heated it with an oxy torch and could put a hand on it the minute the torch was removed. I did, several times.

"Oxygen applied at cutting volume made no difference — not that one would expect it to as we could not get it anywhere near oxidising heat.

BY THIS time we were curious, to say the least, and examined it much more closely. Please remember that while we were dealing with an unknown, we had no doubts at this time that it would be explained by investigation.

"To the naked eye, and in any way we could measure, it was a perfect sphere. No dents or bumps, however tiny. It appeared as one piece.

"There were no lines, no dust, no

nowhere that pipes could have connected, no sign of any open

"It had no radiation — a counter registered zero — no background, although we were in it was a faulty instrument and ground was normal. Dinosaur perhaps?"

"At this point we sought advice on high — I don't know who, it handled by an engineer. The next I knew was that it was removed security staff, along with the Americans mentioned earlier.

"Some weeks after it had been moved I asked the engineer who object had been. He told me that Americans had claimed it as their space debris and that it had returned by them to the State Wright-Patterson AFB.

"Some years later, I encountered chance another of the people who saw the object but who, unlike me, still employed at Woomera. I ask about it.

"He told me that as far as I concerned there had never been an object and strongly advised (i.e. a not threatened) me to adopt the line 'if ever I was asked'."

The finding of the sphere was reported in *The Advertiser* and months later another similar find was mentioned in the newspaper witness recalled, although he could remember the dates.

And during the 1960s yet a sphere apparently was discovered south-west Queensland and reported in the *Brisbane Courier-Mail*. The finding was not linked with the two, he remembered.

The witness left the electronics try and joined the police force, rise the rank of inspector, and was in charge of the Governor General's City until he retired due to injury in

"I put it to you that my special VIP security and counter-terror must suggest that I am both a sharp observer and stable," he emphasised.

"Perhaps this is foolish but for years now I have believed that what held in those several days was merely space debris, was perhaps even some material left by a UFO that it was perhaps some form of itself."