

THE PARANORMAL INFORMANT

Volume 5, Issue 1/4

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PART TWO OF TWO

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THE ENFIELD POLTERGEIST

ENCOUNTERS WITH ALIENS

HISTORIC HAUNTED BORLEY RECTORY

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Read an exclusive interview with Rock Paranormal's Founder and lead Investigator Robert J. Markin about his upcoming book, titled "Ghosts in the Graveyard: My Scariest Paranormal Encounters", which is based on actual events that took place in southern Wisconsin!



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LEGAL JARGON

The Paranormal Informant is written and published for Rock Paranormal by it's founder, Robert Markin, and contains comments and opinions of members, writers, and featured guests/interviewees that do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Rock Paranormal itself, or it's members. Rock Paranormal publishes the Paranormal Informant on a Quarterly basis via free PDF downloads and subscriptions. By submitting works or correspondence in regards to topics featured in the Paranormal Informant, you give Robert Markin and Rock Paranormal permission to print your correspondence in any issue of the Informant. The Paranormal Informant is published for informational and educational purposes.

MEET THE WRITERS

ROBERT MARKIN acts as writer and editor-in-chief to the Informant, in addition to his duties as team Manager, Administrator, and organizer. He has been researching and investigating the paranormal for nearly twenty years. He is the Founder and Team Manager at Odd Bob Investigations and is the sole-proprietor of Odd Bob Collectibles.

ERIN ROSE TOLLEFSEN is the Assistant Lead Investigator at Odd Bob Investigations and has researched and studied the paranormal for also nearly twenty years. She works from home as an Artist for her own company, Kooky Spooky Arts. She has investigated the paranormal with Bob for over 10 years.

RUSSELL TOLLEFSEN is Odd Bob Investigation's acting Equipment Manager. He is in charge of maintaining and setting up investigation equipment, and acts as "video documentarian" during

the team's investigations. . He is married to Erin Rose., and is eager to join the hunt.

JOSEPH HERNANDEZ is Rock Paranormal's Historical Researcher and Chief Skeptic. He doesn't normally participate in many of the investigations, but he loves researching history and mythology.

SAMANTHA YONTS joined Rock Paranormal/Odd Bob Investigations as Investigation Photographer. She has had an interest in the paranormal for several years, and takes wonderful investigation photos for the team.

MELISSA LeBARON rejoined the team as an Editor's Assistant. She helps Robert and the rest of the team proofread their articles and format them for this publication! Melissa has a degree in Journalism, and has worked as a reporter for multiple publications. She is a welcome asset to the team!



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The Borley Rectory, Cont'd...

... It was then that Mr. Harry Price, the now world-renowned paranormal investigator and one of the fathers of modern-day ghost-hunting, stepped in. The Borley Haunting would be Price's most infamous case, and would propel him into the spotlight and pave way for future paranormal research.

THE PRICE PHENOMENON

Shortly after a newspaper circulated a story about the phantom nun, Harry Price was contacted to investigate the property. He was intrigued by the reports of phantom footsteps, strange lights, and the alleged apparitions of a headless man, a girl in white, a phantom coach, Henry Bull and the nun.

During his initial investigations into the case, Price attributed most of the poltergeist-like activity as having been caused by Mrs. Foyster herself, who was acting as an unknown agent for the phenomenon. He pointed to the fact that Mrs. Foyster seemed to be the focal point of all the phenomenon, and that she was most likely unknowingly causing the occurrences through spontaneous telekinesis.

The Foysters moved out of Borley Rectory in 1935, and Harry Price decided to rent the rectory for a year so that he could conduct an "around-the-clock" year long investigation of the location. He placed an ad for willing participants and investigators in the local newspapers.

Price hand-selected forty participants, and printed the first-ever "how-to" booklet on ghost hunting that detailed how they should pursue their investigations and how to operate the equipment they would be using during their investigations.

Over the course of the year, investigators would conduct wild experiments to try and debunk or cause phenomenon to occur. Others kept accurate and detailed journals about their experiences, which contained many strange and bizarre accounts

of the previously reported phenomenon manifesting itself repeatedly.

Harry Price and his investigators also began pioneering experiments in spirit communication. They began using a spirit board and planchette (the Ouija) to form words and communicate with the other side. Allegedly, the group made contact with a spirit named "Maria".

Price and his investigators would have many sessions over the course of several months with "Maria". During these sessions, they learned that Maria was a young woman who was strangled to death by her husband and then buried her remains in the cellar.

This seemed to fit reports of the spirits that had been previously encountered on the location. Price was pleased, and they continued to contact "Marie". However, a short time later, "Marie" made a prediction that changed the fate of Borley forever.

A TRAGIC PREDICTION

During one of the many "spirit board" sessions Price and his investigators conducted with "Marie", the intelligent entity they made contact with, she indicated to them that danger lay ahead.

"Marie" informed Price and his team that the Rectory would be burned and destroyed in a fire, and that after the fire, evidence of her murder would finally be found.

Well, time passed and the rectory did not burn down. A few months later, Price's lease was up on the property, and the year-round investigation concluded.

A short time later, the rectory came up for sale, and new owners purchased the home. When they were moving in, one of the new owners accidentally kicked over an oil lamp, causing fire to spread quickly throughout... CONTINUED ➡

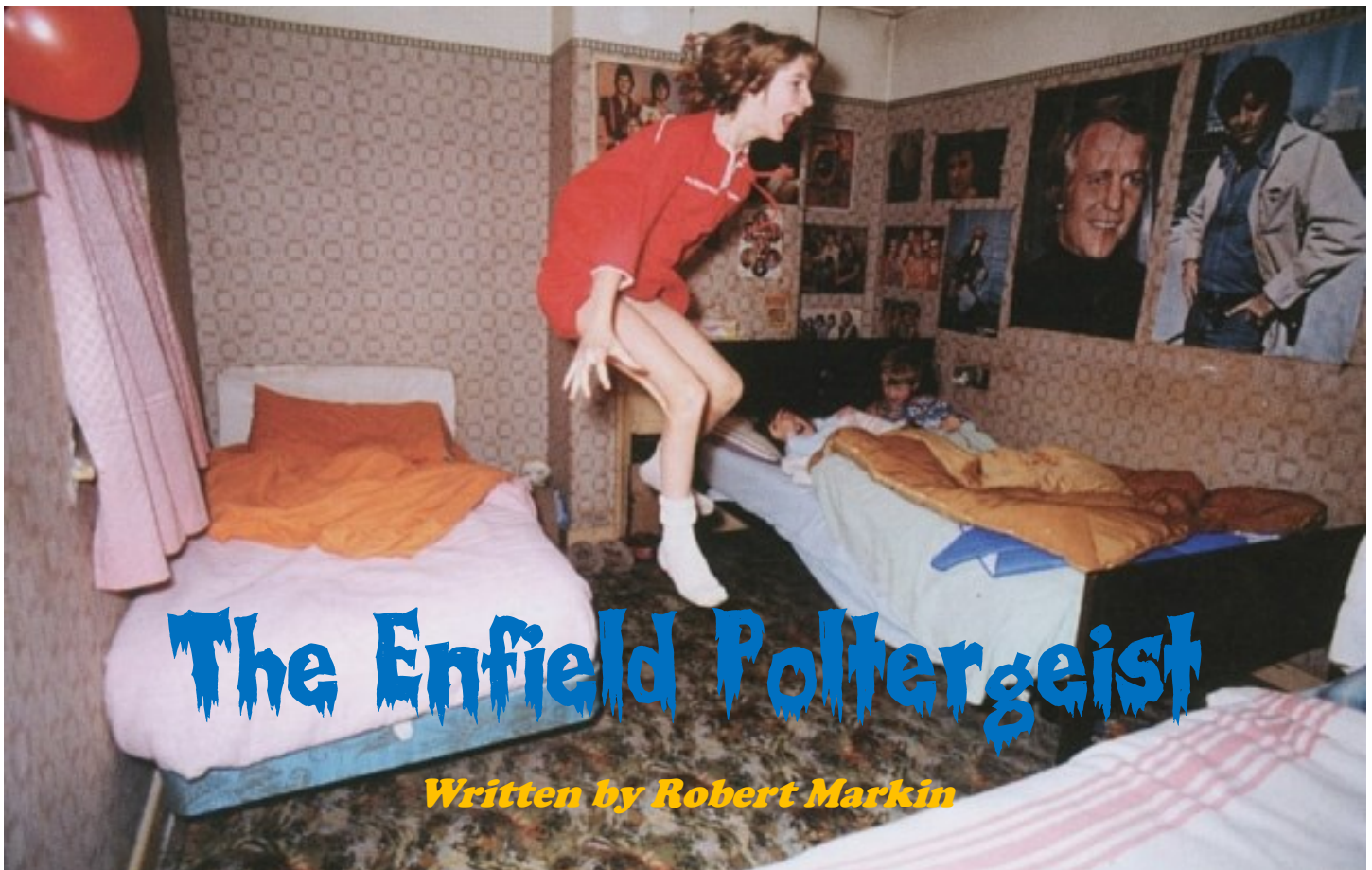


Photo taken during an episode of poltergeist activity outbreak, taken by investigators during a visit to the home. This case is one of the most well-known and controversial poltergeist cases of all time. This photo was sourced from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/11571607/The-real-story-of-the-Enfield-Haunting.html>

It all started in August 1977, when a single mother named Margaret Hodgson rented a small home on Green Street in Enfield, England for herself and her four children. Her children consisted of two girls, Peggy and Janet, the oldest of the children, and two boys, Johnny and Billy.

It started with a shaking bed, and quickly escalated into strange noises, raps, and other instances of poltergeist-like phenomenon. Peg was terrified for herself and her four children, and made a plea for help. She called the police.

An officer dispatched to the residence reported witnessing a chair moving of its own accord. The next day, lego's and marbles seemed to appear out of no where and bounce off walls through out the house.

Eventually, the Society for Psychical Research sent investigators Guy London Playfair and Maurice Grosse to pursue the case. Grosse and Playfair lived with the Hodgson's for a period of time to observe and record the phenomenon.

In the course of their investigation, reports of knocking noises, flying objects such as toys and furniture (and even a brick once seemingly targeting the mother) were all witnessed by multiple witnesses. Large furniture such as sofas and beds would move and seem to float of their own volition. The sound of "dogs barking" in a "dogless" room could be heard.

It was also reported that Janet had violent trances where she spoke in a strange, guttural voice for extended periods of... CONTINUED ➡

“The Enfield Poltergeist” Continued...

... time, which would normally cause irreparable damage to the throat and tissues. Once, an iron fire-place was pulled straight out from the wood framing in the wall.

Even the infamous Ed Warren said he witnessed Janet, who seemed to be the target of nearly all of the occurrences, floating above her bed while she slept, and said that it appeared to be a type of demonic possession to him.

WAS IT ALL A HOAX?

Some investigators argue that Playfair and Grosse exaggerated many of the claims they made in the case about phenomenon and activity that they encountered.

Janet and her sister admitted to pranking some of the activity. Playfair himself, while maintaining that the activity was genuine, indicated in his own book about the case, *This House is Haunted: The True Story of a Poltergeist* (1980), that he doubted whether the children were telling the truth at times, and even witnessed Janet bending spoons with her hand, moving and hiding objects, and rapping on the floor with a broom handle.

Although the girls admitted to hoaxing some of the activity, they also claimed that they didn't fake all of it. Playfair and Grosse both agreed with this, and argue that there was just too much evidence pointing towards genuine paranormal activity for the two girls to be the cause.

THE EVIDENCE

The reasons that some argue that the phenomenon are genuine include that Janet and her sister were not the only two to experience phenomenon. Their brother Jimmy also reported that his bed was shaking on the very first night, and activity did continue in the household (although to a much smaller degree) when Janet wasn't present.

One of the best known photographs comes from this case. It has been critiqued and examined over the years. Some researchers say that the photo shows “genuine poltergeist activity”, while others insist that it confirms that Janet was hoaxing nearly all of the activity.

Paranormal Researcher Joe Nickell drew the following “forensics” copy of the image, and illustrated why many believe that Janet was faking the incidents where she would be propelled across the room. He and others use the photo to demonstrate that she in fact, jumped and propelled herself from her bed, as illustrated in the image below.



Illustration by Joe Nickell illustrating how the photo appears to show Janet jumping from the bed. Source: http://www.csicop.org/si/show/enfield_poltergeist/

Still, others insist that even if this photo demonstrates that only this particular phenomenon was hoaxed, it still doesn't explain how furniture and other objects would move of their own accord, seemingly appear out of thin air and be hurled across the room, or how a small child could rig large pieces of furniture ... CONTINUED



“The Enfield Poltergeist” Continued...

... to move across great distances or be turned over on it's side.

Others point to the sheer number of witnesses that reported experiencing some type of phenomenon, including the police officer that first visited the house when Ms. Hodgson called them when the activity first began to occur.

OTHER THEORIES

However, some researchers also point out that Janet may have been the cause of the poltergeist herself. It is widely-accepted that some poltergeist activity is the result of a human agent.

Over the years, researchers have determined that a wide-range of cases of poltergeist activity are caused through telekinesis, the ability to move objects with one's mind. Because most cases of poltergeist activity occur in instances involving teenagers (especially those beginning puberty, which Janet was), it is theorized that when a teenager begins to experience these changes in the body, the hormones and chemical changes can cause them to temporarily access a part of the brain that causes spontaneous telekinetic activity.

Usually, when the subject, or focal point, of the phenomenon, becomes upset or angered, there has been a noted increase in the level of poltergeist type phenomenon. It has also been reported that the activity subsides after the agent confronts what-

ever is causing them to have such strong feelings, or when the child gets through the largest transition period.

Pubescent women are the most likely to experience poltergeist phenomenon, and many times it ceases or becomes less active after the arrival of the victim's first menses. This was also true in the case of the Enfield Poltergeist.

After Janet had her first period, much of the activity in the home diminished, and by 1979, all of the activity in the home had stopped.

CONCLUSIONS

Can we say for certain that the Enfield haunting was faked in it's entirety by Janet and her sister? No. There are many instances where Janet and her sister were not present, and activity was still reported. Can we say for certain that the Enfield case is a legitimate poltergeist phenomenon? Unfortunately, since Janet and her sister did confess to hoaxing at least a portion of the events, no, we cannot say for sure that it is a genuine phenomenon.

This case has left some researchers baffled. Some believe that Janet was the “agent” for some of the poltergeist phenomenon, and even Janet herself admitted that she only faked about “two percent” of what was encountered during the two years of recorded occurrences.

No one can say for 100% certainty, however, either point-of-view. It depends on who you believe? The skeptics who say it was all faked... or the believers and witnesses who say that it is genuine. It's up to you to decide...

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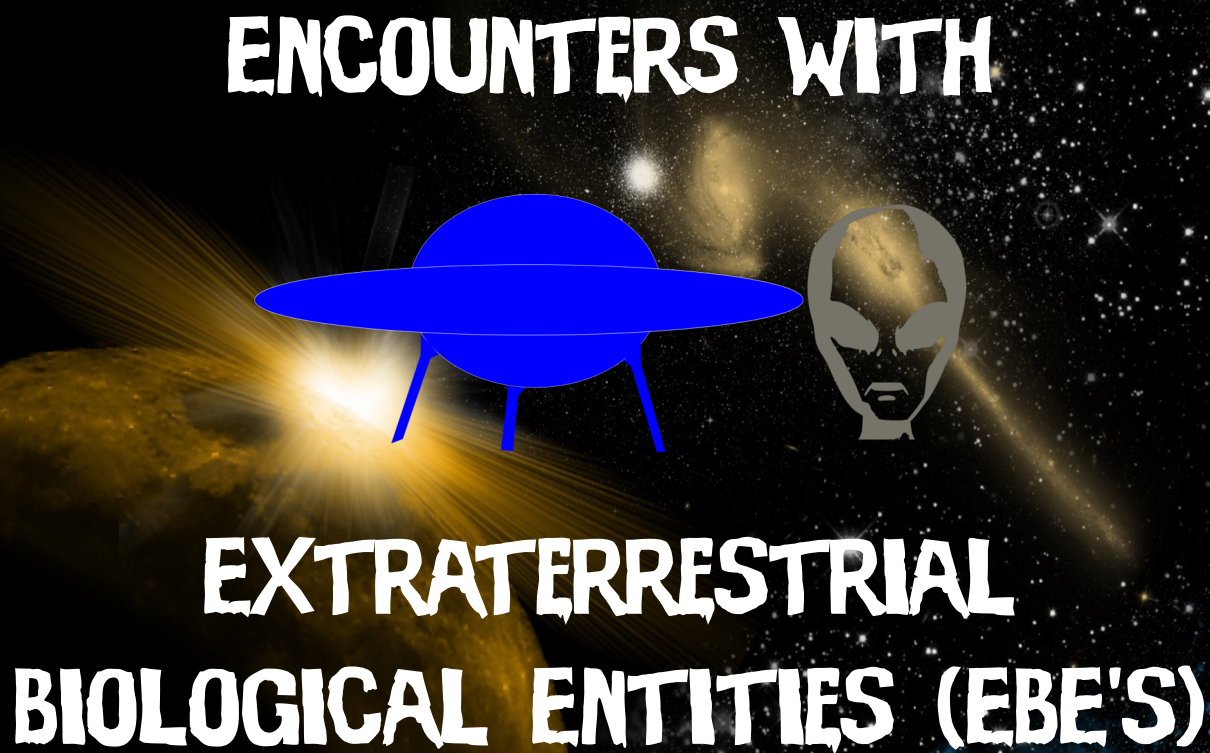
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ENCOUNTERS WITH EXTRATERRESTRIAL BIOLOGICAL ENTITIES (EBE'S)

By Robert J. Markin

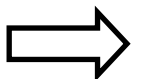
Did you know that over half of the people in the world believe in the existence of UFOs and/or alien civilizations? Did you know that of those billions of people, a very large percentage of them claim to have witnessed an Unidentifiable Flying Object in the sky? And did you know that a small yet increasing number of those individuals also claim to have made contact with or been abducted by Extraterrestrial Biological Entities (EBEs)? Well, if you didn't, you do now.

UFO sightings and encounters with EBEs have been reportedly steadily throughout nearly all of recorded history, dating back to ancient times when descriptions of strange objects in the skies or beings descending from the heavens were described. They were farther and fewer between then than they are today, or at least less known than in today's speedy internet-based instant-gratification culture where anything can be shared instantly without bor-

ders, across the globe for everyone to see. You don't have to do too much Google searching to come across a recent report, photo, or even a video shot using today's smart phone technology.

UFOs increased in popularity very much after the crash at Roswell in 1947. Although the government made several attempts to study and/or debunk the phenomenon, it has continued to be a part of our worldwide culture since the first news story ran detailing the crash. There isn't a person alive today who doesn't associate the word "Roswell" with aliens and UFOs. It even spawned a TV-series of the same name for a period of time.

However, some scientists and government officials want us to think that there is no possibility of life outside of our own planet, contrary to what we know (we've found microscopic life on other planets.. And where there is bacteria, there is life...) We've had enough... CONTINUED



Extraterrestrial Encounters, Cont'd...

... encounters that have been accumulated and studied that we've been able to make a classification system for not only the types of craft and EBEs sighted, but also the varying degrees to which an individual encounters the phenomenon.

THE CLOSE ENCOUNTER CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The original Encounter Classification System was developed by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, one of the world's most infamous UFO Researchers. His system has been built upon over the years by other researchers and investigators to more clearly separate certain aspects of some encounters from others.

Currently, the generally accepted classification system has six parts, known as CE's. The first is a general sighting of a UFO in the sky or from a distance. This is the most common type of sighting witnessed in the world. This is known as a CE-1 (Close Encounter type 1).

A CE-2 would involve the UFO leaving some type of trace or physical evidence behind such as a burn, crop circle, or other chemical/physical evidence. This type of encounter is rare, and only a handful of sightings ever produce physical evidence such as a burn or spot.

There have been a few cases through the years, however, where physical evidence has been left behind. Some locations have alterations to the magnetic fields in the area, others simply have burned grass and a bad smell. Any time there is physical evidence left behind by the UFO, this is considered a CE2.

CE-3's are a little more intense. This involves either a CE-1 or a CE-2 type scenario, but also requires that the witness be able to see a vehicular occupant or EBE. This is also a rare phenomenon, as most often UFOs are too far away to "look in the

windows". However, there have been reports of close-range sightings where witnesses indicate that they either witnessed beings inside the craft or emerging from/going into a craft.

CE-4's are where the encounters start to become a little more disturbing. Close Encounters of the Fourth kind are associated with the abduction phenomenon. People are taken from their homes, and taken on board

CE-5's are a relatively new category of encounter, and deals with the abduction scenario, but adds "medical experimentation or examination" to the repertoire. In these encounters, witnesses are either willingly or (most often reported) unwillingly forced into medical exams and experiments by the abductors.

CE-6's are also relatively new, and deal specifically with abductees who report sexual experimentation during their abduction experiences that have resulted in offspring. These offspring are usually considered "hybrids", and are often introduced to the witnesses as their children by the beings after the initial abduction and experimentation.

REPORTED TYPES OF CRAFT

Most often, UFO sightings are some type of light or strange shape in the distant skyline. However, there are encounters and sightings where the witness gets an excellent look at the craft or object in question, and still can't identify what they are seeing.

Craft have been reported through out time in various shapes. The shape that most often comes to mind is a saucer- or disk-shaped object, as that is what pop culture has told us to expect. However, although disk- and saucer-shaped craft have been and are reported, they are not the most commonly witnessed craft shape. People report all types of shapes and sizes, ranging... CONTINUED ➡

Extraterrestrial Encounters, Cont'd...

... from triangles to cubes, spheres and ovals to strange, interconnected geometric configurations that are simply mind-boggling. The most commonly reported shapes are Triangles, discs, spheres, and “cigars”.

There isn't just one shape or another, however, as UFOs have been reported to come in all sizes, shapes, colors, and styles over the years. Many people believe that certain shaped craft belong to certain “species” of aliens, and that identifying the correct shape of the craft can help identify the type or “species” of the EBE inside.

WHAT DO EXTRATERRESTRIAL BIOLOGICAL ENTITIES LOOK LIKE?

When you think of an alien, do you think of a little green man? Or perhaps it the gray aliens that are so common in pop-culture. Well, in either case, you'd be right. Many reports of EBEs include the stereotypical figures I mentioned. From the reports I have read, the grays seem to be the most commonly encountered “species” of EBE that humans have made contact with. Although, they are far from the only type of alien that may be encountered.

Lizard People, or Lizards, are rumored to be around 6'-7' tall and are resemble raptors that have a slightly more human-like stance and subtler features. They are supposedly an insidious species that has plans to conquer our planet, as reported by many witnesses.

Other species include “Nordics”, or tall, blonde-haired, tan-skinned aliens with piercing blue eyes that have been reported by multiple witnesses. They are said to be a peaceful race that is concerned with helping us advance past our technological infancy and usher us towards a new era of peace and space exploration. Although they aren't encountered nearly as much as Grays, if I had to encounter an

alien species, I'd prefer to meet the Nordics.

Again, these are just some of the most commonly reported examples. Beings of all types, shapes, sizes, and lineages have been reported in the hundreds of years that people have been seeing UFOs. It would seem that the diversity of life in outer space is just as diverse as the types of life we have on planet Earth.

Aquatic beings, ethereal entities, bipeds, quadrupeds, octopods (squid-like) and more have all been previously reported.

WHAT DO THE EBE'S WANT?

That is a good question, and one that we just can't answer with any certainty. Some people who have encountered EBEs insist that they are here to help us evolve so we can become part of a galactic federation of peaceful aliens. Some say that they are here only to conduct experiments on us in an attempt to cure some disease or genetic problem the as a race are experiencing, and that our blood and genome is the key to finding a cure. Yet, others insist that it is for a far more sinister purpose.

Some witnesses attest that the aliens are breeding us to be a slave race, and that once we have grown to be a certain size or possess a certain level of technology useful to the species, that we will be “harvested”. Others say it is because we are destroying ourselves and our planet, and due to our selfishness and greed that we are a threat to other civilizations, and that they are studying us to find ways to efficiently “wipe us out” so they can take over our planet and it's resources for themselves.

Whatever the case may be, until one of them actually lands on the White House (Or UN) lawn, and says what their actual intentions are, we can only speculate about the nature of the UFO Phenomenon and what these... CONTINUED



Extraterrestrial Encounters, Cont'd...

... beings true intentions are. Hopefully, they are peaceful ones, otherwise, we might be in trouble.

THE BETTY & BARNEY HILL INCIDENT

There have been a wide range of credible sightings over the years, many with expert, trained witnesses such as police officers and armed forces pilots. Many of them have been documented and have had books written about them or movies made based on the accounts.

One of the most famous cases and most investigated cases of all time is the Betty & Barney Hill Incident. In September 1961, in the state of New Hampshire, the couple were driving home after taking a vacation in Canada.

It was just past ten in the evening, when the couple saw what they described as a 'bright star' that was moving 'erratically' (CE-1). They began to observe it, and watched as it appeared to move in and out from behind trees in the distance. After a short time, they decided to pull over and attempt to view the object using a pair of binoculars.

They described the object as being "flat with windows and multi-colored lights". They also indicated that they could see occupants inside the craft (now the case has become a CE-3). They became frightened, and ran back to the car and sped off. That's when things got really weird.

The next thing they knew, they had driven thirty miles and couldn't remember the last two hours of their lives. They didn't remember anything strange, but couldn't see the craft anymore. It was only after Betty started having disturbing dreams involving the couple being abducted that they started talking about their experience.

It was eventually uncovered through hypnosis that the couple remembered being abducted, taken aboard an alien ship, talking with the EBEs, and

having medical experimentations completed on them. They provided explicit details, and even recalled being told that they wouldn't remember the incidents.

One of the strangest pieces of evidence has popped up more recently, as our technology has advanced. The Hills provided a drawing of a star system called "Zeta Reticuli", which only after we started gazing into the stars in recent decades, have we discovered that the drawing provided nearly exactly matches what we can see through our high-powered telescopes today.

How did the Hills provide a map of a star system not yet viewable from earth using current technology in the 1960s? Did they actually visit another planetary system as they describe? The evidence seems to point to a big fat 'yes'.

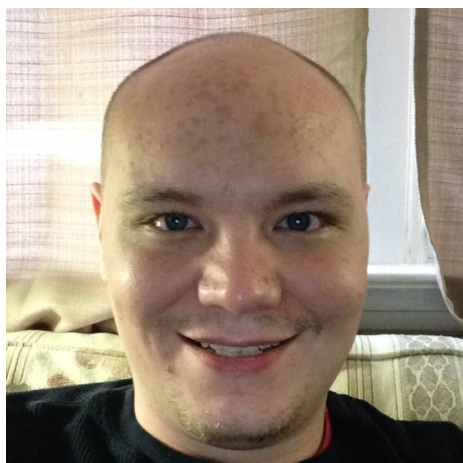
Overall, more and more people have a UFO Sighting or EBE Encounter. Today's age has made it easier for us to share our sightings online, but has also made it easier to fake videos and images, making our job as investigators more difficult to pick out true UFOs from hoaxes.

UFOs aren't limited to discs and grays aren't the only aliens that are out there. Evidence is continually mounting which points towards the likely probability that life outside of earth exists, and an increasing number of people believe that such life may be visiting Earth.

However, with all of our knowledge and experience, and all of the data collected, we still can't know for sure what their intentions are. But, hopefully, with enough collected evidence from everyone's encounters, we will be able to get a better picture of the other types of beings and life that inhabit our galaxy. Perhaps one day, they will just come knock on our door. The question is, however, are we prepared to answer it?

FOUNDER BOB MARKIN RECOUNTS TALES OF TRUE PARANORMAL ACTIVITY IN HIS UPCOMING BOOK...

A PARANORMAL INFORMANT EXCLUSIVE!



“Once you’ve had enough encounters, you just want to tell people about them, especially to people who laugh in your face when you tell them you’ve seen a ghost.” Bob

Markin, author-in-the-making started explaining. “You want to be like, ‘Here, see, I saw these things, and I wasn’t the only one... we all can’t be crazy!’”

Bob Markin is a life-long paranormal researcher, and founder of Rock Paranormal Research & Investigations, and owner of Odd Bob Online Stores. He began studying the supernatural with a “more serious attitude” about seventeen years ago.

“I was a teenager, and my friends and I were considered ‘weird’ because we all loved horror movies and paranormal shows. I decided that I wanted to actually study and investigate reports of ghosts and UFO sightings, and once my friends joined in, we formed the first paranormal group I was ever a part of, and we started checking places out.”

“We would visit the library and talk to other

people, try and find out stories about haunted places. We hung out in cemeteries a lot, so it was only natural that we had our first experiences as a group in a few of our favorite ‘haunts’.”

What Bob and his friends and fellow investigators experienced over the years has changed them all. “I can’t tell you too much without giving it all away, but some really strange and creepy things have happened to us over the years. There are a few incidents in particular that were kind of disturbing, as well.”

Bob had previously published two e-books, titled “Ghosts in the Graveyard” and “The Tree Street Haunting”. They were fictionalized accounts of the experiences the group had.

“After talking with some of the witnesses, I decided to pull the e-books from the publisher, as I wasn’t very happy with how they were handling the projects anyway. I decided to incorporate some more of the details and recollections of the other witnesses, and take more of the fictionalized elements out of the book.. I wanted to present the facts, and not just an amped-up version of events.”

Bob is working with fellow witnesses and investigators who were present during the events in question ... CONTINUED ➡

“Founder Bob Writes Book” Cont’d...

... to gather as much information about the events. “I’m a reader and I enjoy writing. I’ve been publishing the Paranormal Informant for over five years, but I don’t want it to be my only body of work.”

“Everyone sees things differently. My version of events will be slightly different from everyone else’s versions, and I wanted to make sure I incorporated everyone’s individual experiences to help corroborate my retelling of events.” Bob said.

Bob did share some information about the upcoming book, which is still being drafted and information collected. The book will have multiple sections and parts, most of which will deal with certain “cases”, others dealing with other aspects of paranormal phenomenon.

“There are going to be at least five sections, the first is called ‘Haunted Roadie’, and will recount a series of terrifying events that we encountered on a seemingly inconspicuous evening. Another section will deal with some possession incidents, and another will cover one of our biggest and creepiest cases we’ve ever investigated.” Bob noted.

“I’m really excited to create this more complete version of the book. It’s really what I wanted to do in the first place, but kind of went another direction. Finally, I’m back to my first idea, and I’m thankful that I have friends and witnesses who are willing to contribute.” Bob smiled.

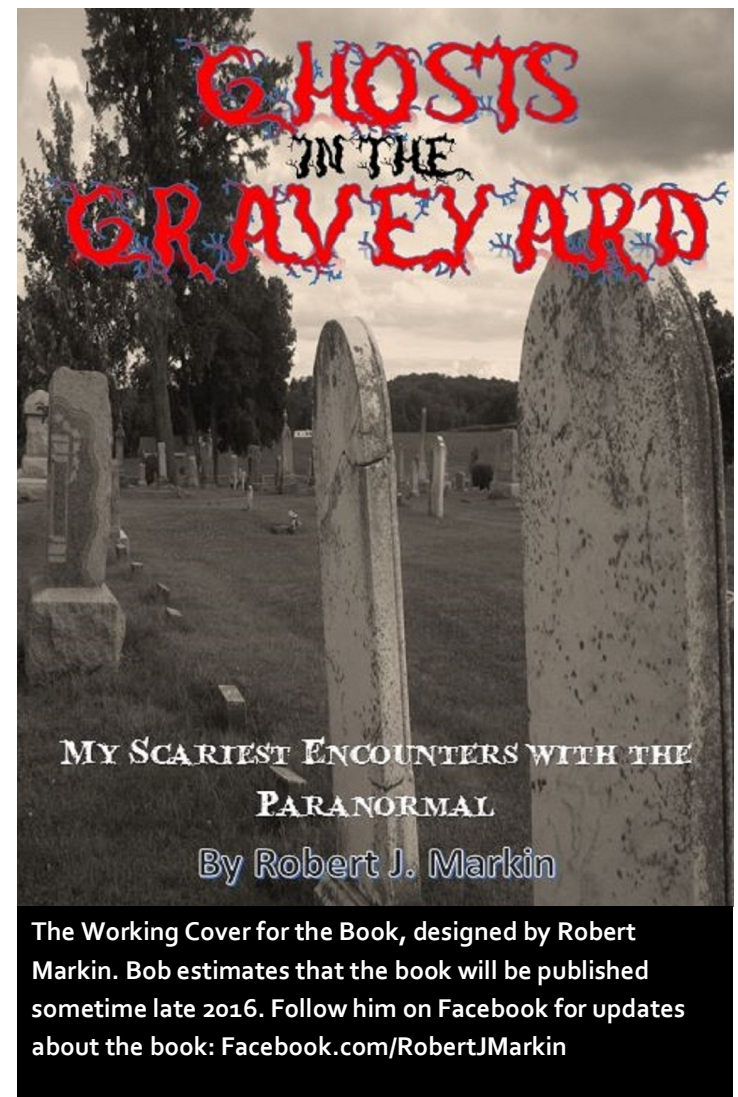
“We are still writing our individual recollections of certain events, and scouring through our own archives for pictures and the like. This may take some time, but I know when we are all finished, it’s going to be amazing.” Bob added.

“We’re also planning on making another trip or two to all of the locations (if possible) to get new photos for the book. We will also possibly take some photos for ‘re-enactments’ of particular events to help demonstrate our encounters.”

The book, once published, will be Robert’s first book, but he also promises it’s not his last.

Robert hinted that he is also working on a few other projects, namely a science fiction story and a collection of some of his short stories. “I’ve been writing forever, just never really tried to get published. I’ve got a collection of work from over the years that I’ve been sorting through. Some of it is actually pretty good and I think worthy of publication. But, we will have to see what happens!”

Ghosts in the Graveyard is still in the drafting phase, but is estimated to be completed and submitting for publication no later than Fall 2016.



INVESTIGATION TIPS & TRICKS:

Conducting Background Research

By Robert J. Markin

Conducting background research for the case you are investigating can be a very daunting task. Sure, you can conduct a few internet searches, but chances are most of the information you will really be looking for hasn't quite made it to the digital age of technology and the internet yet.

Millions of records are stored and archived in places other than some online storage facility, and are only searchable through manual means. Yes, I said manual. This means you will have to leave the house, which I know for some of us is quite a chore in itself! But don't worry, we're going to give you some tips to make it easier for you!

ONLINE SEARCHES

Although you aren't likely to find all the information available about a case online, you can al-

ways start there. It is important to know, however, how to tell a bad source of information from a good source of information. This can be tricky, and by all means should deserve an article all to itself, but here are a few tips:

1. Check the URL. Is it a .com, .gov, .org or .edu website? Is it the actual official website of the source it claims to be?
2. Are there a lot of ads and "click traps" on the website? Although sometimes you can find some good information on these sites, most of them are only to "trap" you into clicking ads. Avoid these whenever possible.
3. Check your sources source! That's right, see where they got their information from. Is it a reputable source? Or are they just passing along misinformation from an unreliable source?

These are just a few of the things you can look for in your web searches to make sure you are getting "good" sources for your information. You can also use Boolean Operators, such as the words "AND" or "NOT" in your search engine, which will help it narrow down its search parameters and eliminate a lot of excess "junk" that will come up.

LOCAL SOURCES

Once you have scoured the internet, it's time to hit the stacks. Go to your local library, Historical Society, or municipality records office. (You may have to pay for records through the municipality, whereas you may only have to pay for copies through the libraries or historical societies).

Often times, you will find that one or the other (or often both)... **CONTINUED**



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INV. T&T: Background Research, Cont'd...

... have either a records room or other types of archives that you can manually search through. Many also have large volumes of microfiche, which is a tape which contains photos of publications like newspapers and other periodicals. You can search through them for articles relating to the background of the location and case(s).

Many also have many paper books filled with copies of land deeds, cemetery maps, old zoning maps, construction blueprints, and the like, just waiting to be explored. My personal favorite is the Genealogy room, which studies families and family histories. You can also do research to see if you can find any living descendants of previous occupants of locations using these techniques, which can help you build a case/spirit profile if they have encountered similar events previously.

Also, local authors often publish books about legends, lore, and the paranormal that are often out-of-print or otherwise hard-to-find and may only be available at your local library. Sometimes, members of the Historical Societies may also have heard a tale or two about your case, and can point you in the right direction (as long as you speak with discretion and respect to your client's confidentiality wishes, of course!).

When you are researching a property or location, it is important to get as "big" of a picture as possible. This means you may have to go back through hundreds of years' worth of records. Using keyword searches and browsing through card indexes can help you narrow your search parameters.

It is also important to "leave no stone unturned" as they say, meaning you will want to ensure that you have researched every possible angle you can think of about your case/location before incorporating your findings into your spirit profile.

The key is to be accurate and efficient with your searches, which can sometimes be hard to do with centuries of data to sort through.

INCORPORATING YOUR FINDINGS

After you've completed hours upon hours of research, you are ready to add to your spirit profile. What did your research reveal? Are there previous reports of activity on the location? Do they match what is being reported? Does the location have a strange or violent history? Were there any known deaths or tragedies on the property? Who built the property? If it is a commercial building, what other businesses have operated in this space? Who owned them and what are their histories? The list of questions you will find answers to in your research goes on forever and ever.

Incorporate what is most important and pertinent to your case. If there was a fire a hundred years ago on the property and the current occupant keeps smelling smoke, chances are they could be related phenomenon (further research/investigation would be required to confirm this hypothesis). However, finding out someone is behind on their mortgage and could be looking for a quick money-making scheme can be helpful in determining the direction your investigation will take as well.

Figure out what fits and does not fit "the puzzle", and include it in your spirit profile. Keep all your case-related research for later review. You may find something useful later in your investigation that you may have thought was useless earlier, or something that didn't apply previously that may now fit the spectrum of the phenomenon.

In the end, your research can make or break your investigation. Poorly done or a lack of research can lead to inaccurate results and finding(s). Good research, however, gets good results.

SPIRITUALISM



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY & BELIEFS OF THE RELIGION...

By Robert J. Markin

When you think of the word Spiritualism, what comes to mind? If you said anything to do with ghosts, you may be correct. Spiritualism is the belief that spirits of the deceased have the ability to communicate with the living.

Spiritualists, as they are called, believe that ghosts not only can talk to the living, but that they whole-heartedly want to talk to the living. The entire belief system is based around these ideas.

PRIMARY BELIEFS OF SPIRITUALISM

There are three primary beliefs of Spiritualism, in addition to the belief that spirits are capable of contacting humans, but that the spirits are also more advanced than we are, and that they also have useful knowledge about moral and ethical issues and the nature of God.

Many spiritualists talk to the spirits using a “spirit guide”, or a specific spirit that provides them with their “connection” to the other side. These spirits are also often called upon for guidance. Other branches of Spiritualism, namely Spiritism, also emphasize the concept of reincarnation.

GROWTH OF THE RELIGION

Spiritualism started to develop quickly in the 1840s up until about the 1920s. In the 1890s, it was believed that there were some eight million Spiritualists in the United States and Europe alone, mostly from middle and upper class families.

There was no formal organization or empirical doctrine/texts to follow, which allowed the belief system to flourish for a half a century. The religion attained cohesion... CONTINUED



Introduction to Spiritualism, Cont'd...

... by the use of periodical publications, lecture tours, holding camp meetings, and through the missionary activities of accomplished mediums. However, by the late 1880s, the movement was suffering from its lack of credibility due to fraudulent mediums and accusations of fakery.

It did not die out, however, and is still practiced today in much of the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. I myself have several Spiritualist beliefs, partly due to my pagan background.

HOW DOES A SPIRITUALIST COMMUNICATE WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD?

Most often, a medium, or person who is sensitive to the spirit energy, or who can talk to the spirits, is used to facilitate such communication. Not everyone can openly communicate with spirits, as people's levels of perception differ. I myself can only "feel" presences, and may get emotions or feelings, but I do not "talk" with any spirits such as this.

These mediums, usually through some form of trance or other meditation, connect with their spirit guides, and then look for the answers to the questions asked. At times, they can contact specific people by name, other times they can only contact

who chooses to come forward at that time.

All the persons in the party would sit around a table, hold hands, and meditate (and sometimes chant) to help induce the trance like state needed by the medium to make the connection. Once the connection was made, the members of the party could ask questions to the medium, who was either communicating the words for the spirit, or may even become temporarily possessed by the spirit itself and speak directly to the participants.

At times, a substance known as ectoplasm was produced by certain mediums (most of which later turned out to be fraudulent). It was said to be a natural by-product of the human/spirit interaction. [Most times, however, the medium swallowed the cloth before the séance, and threw it up during/after to make it seem like it was expelled by an unknown entity or caused by the interaction, which is was aided in discrediting the field].



Photographic image of a séance in progress. The light objects in the photo are alleged ectoplasmic objects that are created by the spirit interaction. Image Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritualism>

THE DOWNFALL OF SPIRITUALISM

Many individuals contributed to the downfall of Spiritualism's popularity. There were a large number of accusations made about fakes and hoaxes, and even mediums who... CONTINUED ➡

Introduction to Spiritualism, Cont'd...

... were caught faking previously reported “real phenomenon” such as glowing lights, tapping noises, voices/laughter, and even ghost photos.

THE FOX SISTERS FAUX MEDIUMSHIP

The Fox Sisters, Margaret and Kate, of New York, were one of the most noted, publicized, and rebuked Spiritualist groups of their time. In the late 1840s, they sensationalized Spiritualism by conducting a series of séances for on-lookers where they “made contact with spirits” who responded to their questions through series of tapping and rapping sounds which seemed to come from nowhere.

However, in 1888, they admitted that the contact they made with the spirit was false, and that they faked the whole thing, only to recant their confession shortly after. This incident, and other incidents like it, were the primary causes of the downfall of Spiritualism. People just couldn’t get past the amount of fakes and hoaxes there were, and how easy it was to fake a séance.

In the years that first followed their sensationalism, mediumship was a profitable business. It’s easy to see why one would want to try to “cash in” on it’s success through hoaxing phenomenon. Although, thankfully, many times the hoaxers and fakes got taken to court, it caused a bad name to be spread around for true mediums and true spiritualists.

The final contributing factor to the fall of Spiritualism was the lack of organization of the religion. There was no official doctrine to follow, no official rule book, and no true way to test and confirm mediumship, making it easy enough for anyone to claim to be a spiritualist who had a table and chairs and a spirit board handy.

SPIRITUALISM SURVIVES DEATH

Although it became pretty much non-

existent after the 1920s, some Spiritualism centers continued to operate and teach the teachings of the “church”. Later, an actual “Spiritualist Church” would be founded (such as the William T. Stead Center, founded in the 1920s in Chicago, Illinois), which would help to carry on the ideas into the next century.

Later, in the 70s, 80s and later as paranormal research became more popular of a subject, Spiritualism and it’s ideas were brought up and studied. Mediumship became a more commonly accepted gift, and some of the basic beliefs of Spiritualism were again put into common practice: communicating with spirits. Attempting to record EVPs (electronic voice phenomenon) is a standard task in every ghost hunters investigation. It stands by the belief that the spirits are able to communicate with the human world, which is the founding tenement of the Spiritualism belief system.

Many churches continue to operate today, although spread far and few between. Ghost hunting groups also regularly call on mediums and psychics to aide them in their paranormal investigations today. I myself have several friends who are gifted mediums or possess other psychic abilities. It’s beginning to be a new resurgence as more and more people begin to question and study the afterlife, spirits, and the unexplained. And I personally can’t wait to see what we find out...





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Rock Paranormal Team Events Calendar

JANUARY 2016

Paranormal Informant Issue 5:1
Quarterly Publication Schedule Resumes
www.rockparanormal.net

FEBRUARY 2016

Team Meeting & Investigator Training
Sat, Feb., 20th, 6p-9p, Location TBA
Date Subject to Change, please RSVP

MARCH 2016

Team Meeting & Training Investigation
Location will be outdoors, weather permitting.
Sat. Mar. 12, 4p-7p, Please RSVP

Grand Opening Celebration!
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APRIL 2016

Paranormal Informant Issue 5:2
Packed full of Paranormal Goodies!
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2016 Find-A-Grave Cemetery Roadie!
Back to Oakwood Cemetery for Find-A-Grave!
Date/Time TBA. Check back soon!

Team Meeting & Movie Night
Location will be announced. Time/Date TBD.
New Positions and Members will be announced!

MAY 2016

Team Meeting & Training Session
Location, Time, Date to be Announced
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IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE PARANORMAL INFORMANT

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ARTICLES IN NEXT ISSUE INCLUDE:

Famous Case: The Bell Witch Haunting

More Chicago Haunts, Local Legends & Sightings!

The Haunting of Black Hope

New Team Member Announcements!

Paranormal Tips & Tricks: Paranormal App Reviews

Methods for Communicating with Spirits

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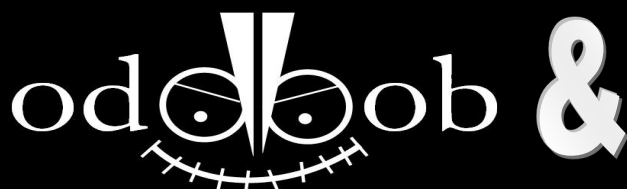
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Rock Paranormal & Odd Bob Online Stores were founded and are operated by Robert "Odd Bob" Markin. You can contact him with questions in regards to this publication, the organization, it's activities, or for investigation team membership information. Please email him directly:
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If you would like to submit something for the Paranormal Informant, such as a classifieds ad, column response, or any inquiries to the editor/publisher of the Paranormal Informant, Robert "Odd Bob" Markin, can be directed to:

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