



ESTABLISHED 1955

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FREEDOM TO THINK AND SPEAK

FOR some years past we have published articles and comments about the on-going phenomenon of the "Rings in the Cornfields", and we shall continue to do so, giving our latest findings as we see them. Other folk may have other opinions. We have ours. And if and when we find that we are wrong, we shall say so and we shall change them. (Or are we all maybe already inside the USSR without knowing it?)

In its Number 234 (October 1987), MUFON UFO JOURNAL carried a letter which was unsigned (maybe intentionally?) but bore the vituperative hallmark of J. Randles.

On November 19, 1987, our Consultant Ann Druffel of Pasadena, a most respected investigator and writer on our subject for many years past (and also, incidentally, herself a Contributing Editor to MUFON UFO JOURNAL), wrote a letter to its Editor in our defence.

The Editor of MUFON UFO JOURNAL has not seen fit to publish Mrs Druffel's letter. So, with her consent, and in order to assist MUFON, we are now giving, (page 18), on their behalf, a photostatic copy of the letter which Mrs Druffel has sent to us.

The affair does not tell us anything about J. Randles, because we know enough about him already. On the other hand, it may tell us a thing or two about MUFON UFO JOURNAL.

THE NIGHTMARE OF THE KNOWLES FAMILY ON THE NULLARBOR PLAIN, AUSTRALIA, AND OTHER RECENT CASES

We have received a mass of material from many quarters (our thanks to all of them) about this extraordinary case, and we have boiled it down and, hopefully, extracted all the essential features.

We kick off with a fine detailed account by our British Consultant Pat Delgado, whom we asked specially to do the job since he actually knows the region of Australia in question, having worked near there for some years at the famous Woomera Rocket Testing Installation.

We then follow up with some splendidly pungent and characteristic comments about the "Professors of the Impossible" from another equally valued Consultant and old friend, the Australian-American Paul Norman, Vice-President of the Victorian UFO Research Society (VUFORS) and an illustrious and veteran investigator, as published in the March 1988 issue of their journal, the *Australia UFO Bulletin*. (Inevitably Mr Delgado's contribution contains more detail than Mr Norman's, because the latter's piece was written much earlier, and had come to us by surface-mail.) — EDITOR

I. THE NULLARBOR ENCOUNTER

© Pat Delgado, FSR Consultant

THE incident occurred on a stretch of the main bituminised highway between Perth and Adelaide in the south of Australia. The actual locality, Mundrabilla, is in what is known as The Basin, and is between the small settlements of Madura and Eucla, Western Australia, on the Nullarbor Plain. It is an isolated stretch of road with the Great Australian Bight (Bay) to the south, and a range of hills to the north.

The persons involved were Mrs. Knowles, 43, and her sons Sean, 21, Patrick, 24, and Wayne, 18. They were travelling eastwards by car, a late model Ford Telstar saloon, from Perth, Western Australia, to Melbourne, Victoria, for a surprise visit to Mrs. Knowles' family in Melbourne. Sean was driving at the time of the incident which was very early in the morning of January 20th 1988.

While travelling along the road they had to swerve to miss a huge bright glowing object on the road. They described it to reporters and police as bright and white with a yellow centre, shaped like an egg in an egg-cup and about a metre wide. It appeared on the road in front of them and was high enough to block their view. Sean said, "It was glowing so bright,

we swerved to miss it and nearly hit a car and caravan coming the other way. It was a weird looking thing and we stopped the car to go back and have a look at it." He said the family became frightened after walking towards the object and ran back to the car to get away. "It chased us and at one stage when we were trying to get away, we were doing up to 200 kms./h," he said. They slowed down sufficiently to do a 'U' turn and went back the way they had come. After some distance they again did a 'U' turn and continued in the original direction. It was not established if this was an attempt to elude or follow the light. They also watched the glowing object chase a truck and a car travelling in the opposite direction. It then turned and caught them up.

"The object landed on the roof and lifted the car from the road," Sean said. His mother had wound down the rear window where she was sitting and felt the top of the car and touched the object. She told him it felt like a rubber suction pad. Suitcases which were tied to a pack-rack on the roof had vanished. "We had a real weird feeling that this thing had control of us," he said.



The Knowles family at the Channel 7 studios in Adelaide the day after their ordeal. From left: Patrick, Faye, Sean and Wayne.

"While the window was down," Mrs. Knowles said, "The car became covered in a black ash-like substance and it came into the car like smoke. We thought we were going to die. We were going silly. Something was going into our heads. We didn't know what it was — it felt like we were dying."

Patrick said, "Something seemed to be on top of us. We looked round but it didn't seem to be there. It seemed to kind of grab the car. The car began to smoke more or less. It felt like something was on the car."

"I couldn't really explain it," he went on. "The dogs in the car started going crazy. I wound up the windows and the car began to smoke up inside. It smelt like dead bodies or something."

The car was dropped back so heavily on the road that a tyre burst. The family scrambled out of the car and hid in the bush (scrubland) for about 30 minutes, after which time the object had left the area.

They returned to the car, changed the tyre and drove on to the Mundrabilla Motor Hotel, a distance of about 40 kms.

It was here that a truck driver, Mr. Graham Henley, 57, was the first person to speak to the Knowles family. He had also driven from Perth and passed through The Basin about 10 to 15 kms. in front of the Knowles' car. He said he had seen in his rear vision mirror a bright white light hovering above the car's headlights.

"It was hovering above The Basin on the sweeping stretch of road, just flickering in and out between the trees," he said. "I had only just been talking to a friend, 'Porky', on the radio, but once I saw that light it all went dead."

'Porky', another truck driver, was travelling behind the Knowles' car and had come along when the Knowles were hiding in the scrub. He said he did not stop as they ran out to hail him. It is the policy of truck drivers to ignore people doing so because of the dangers of stopping for strangers in the Outback.

Mr. Henley said he met the family when they arrived at the Road House. They were in a state of shock and their dogs were cowering on the front seat of the car.

He said, "The whole car smelt like bakelite or just as if you had blown a fuse. A soot was all over the car and there were four dents in the roof, as though the

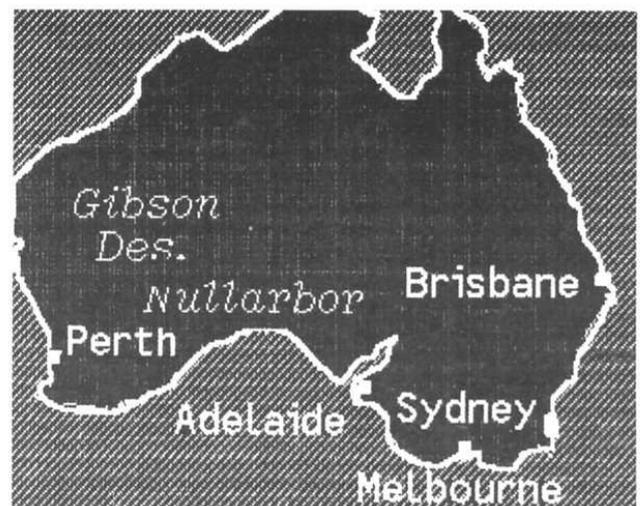
car had been picked up by a magnet." Mr. Henley also said he had checked the tread of the burst tyre and the underneath the car, but there was nothing to indicate it had swerved off the road. He stated, "I cannot explain it but all I know is that I saw four very terrified people at 4.45 on Wednesday morning."

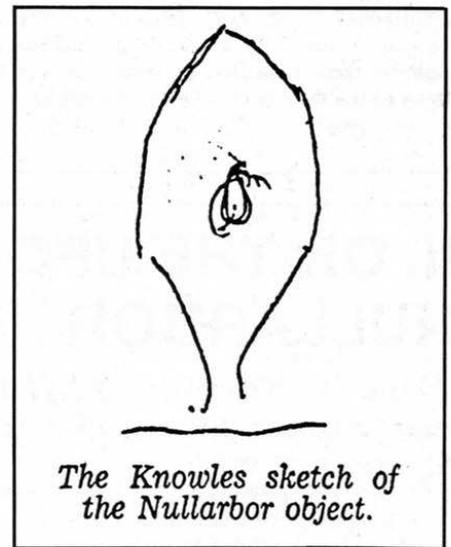
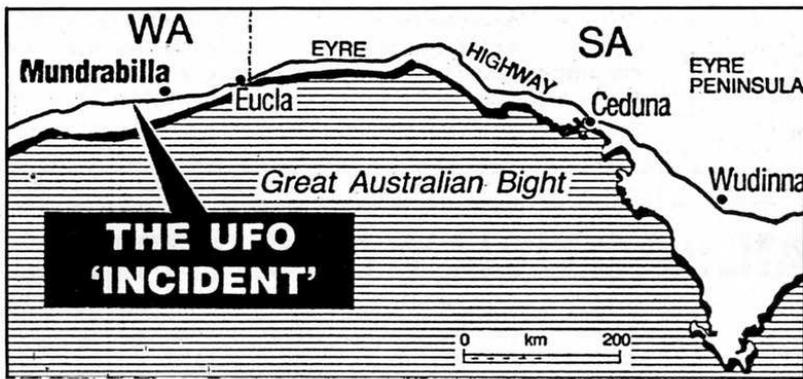
The Knowles said that while they were suspended in the air, their voices were distorted and it appeared as though they were talking in slow motion.

The Knowles family continued their journey from the Mundrabilla Road House to the town of Ceduna in South Australia. Here, reports were made to the police who also took samples of the black dust for forensic analysis.

Ceduna policeman Sgt. Fred Longley said, "These people have definitely seen something. Just what — well I don't know. They were in a terrible state — even though it was five hours after the incident. Very upset — you could say white-faced ... shaking. The woman was just thankful to be alive. These people were in a thousand per cent worse state than other people who've made UFO reports to me. Something happened out there. Their car, even after being driven all that way still had black ash — or dust — over it. Even on the inside. Where did that come from? There's no soil like that out there, only sand."

Attempts have been made to analyse the black dust





The Knowles sketch of the Nullarbor object.

in laboratories in both Western Australia and South Australia but apparently without success.

The story broke to Ray Brooke of UFO Research, South Australia, during that afternoon. The Ceduna police had phoned him while the family were present at the station. Arrangements were made for the family to proceed to Adelaide where they would be interviewed and arrangements made to inspect the vehicle, documenting the physical evidence. Ceduna police confirmed to Ray Brooke that they had secured statements and a sample of the black deposit.

Unfortunately, the story leaked to the media, and the family were intercepted en route and concluded a deal with the Channel 7 television network of Melbourne. It appeared at this stage that 'cheque book' journalism had scored over scientific evaluation.

Ray Brooke managed to meet the family at Channel 7 studios between extensive interviews and got confirmation of the story as related above. He said the family was distressed and tired at this stage. They appeared to him to be down-to-earth people trying to cope with some traumatic episode, and that indications of a hoax were minimal.

Ray Brooke was able to confirm there were four shallow indentations on the car roof and there was no luggage-rack. The black deposits had either been cleaned off or they had dissipated by the time he was allowed to examine the car.

Shortly after the time of the Knowles' encounter, the crew of a Port Lincoln tuna-boat said they were 'buzzed' by a UFO. The crew of the *Empress Star* reported their sighting to a spotter plane. Their position was about 80 kms. off the coast opposite The Basin. A crew member was on deck when a bright light approached the boat. He alerted the six other crew members and all saw the light which hovered above their craft before moving off.

During the encounter the crewmen's voices were reported to have been 'slowed and distorted'.

A third incident was reported by Mr. Pat Gildea of the Victorian (Australia) UFO Research Society. He revealed details given by a Launceston (Tasmania) business man of a sighting occurring on 14th December 1987 which only came to light after the Nullarbor incident.

The prominent business man, who prefers not to be identified, said he saw a coloured egg-shaped object while driving his white Mercedes car on a deserted country road about 10.30 p.m. He thought the 'bright light' hovering above him was only a helicopter but as he drove on he noticed the light appeared to be following him. The light landed on the road in front of him. He stopped the car and put on the handbrake but the engine stopped and the lights went out. He panicked and ran back down the road but then stopped to look back. *He noticed his car was being*

dragged towards the light. All he could make out of it was an oval shaped object.

Another man arrived at the scene just in time to see the object take off at an angle and 'disappear into the night sky'.

When the owner returned to his Mercedes, it was covered in a sooty type of carbon. The car's electrical system had also been damaged. The tar on the road had melted where the light had landed and skid marks were left on the road where the car had been dragged.

Mr. Gildea said the Launceston man was amazed when the Knowles experience was described to him. "It sounds exactly like the same object," he said. Before his encounter he did not think UFOs existed.

The Officer-in-charge of Ceduna police station said, "The second incident was a short time after the first, so there is no way the crew of the boat could have heard about it. From their description of the object and what took place when it was near them, it appears it was the same object. With three independent reports, there is no doubt there was something out there."

These three apparently closely related incidents must rank among the most astounding reports ever made. Certainly the speech distortion must warrant some consideration of a time-warp and the elongation of real time. Hopefully, more details of these cases will filter through and maybe we will also learn of further analyses results of the black dust.

The latest information on these cases is that there is now a complete and total clampdown on the incidents and everything about them, including the progress in the analysis of the black substance.

Attempts are being made to locate the driver of the car and caravan which the Knowles family almost hit when they swerved to avoid the object.

Credits to Ray Brooke and Leo Andrews, both of South Australia, for supplying detailed reports and a great number of news-cuttings.

NOTE BY EDITOR

Starting with the famous presumed teleportation case of the Spanish soldier who, on October 25, 1593, was whisked up from Manila Bay (Philippine Islands) and, in the twinkling of an eye, deposited on the principal square of Mexico City (FSR Vol. II, No. 2, (March/April 1965) we have by now probably published a total of about ten or a dozen long-distance teleportation cases; nearly all from South America and one from China. But in addition we have given two cases, and both quite recently, in which cars were picked up *and the operation somehow went wrong*, and they came crashing to the ground. These were the case of the American lady Catherine Burk on October 15, 1983 (see Mr. T. Scott Crain

Jr.'s account, "UFO Lifts Woman's Car", in FSR 29/6), and the case of the French Naval Arsenal technician who was similarly lifted near Toulon one night in 1971 and let fall again with a mighty crash on to the highway (see Jean-Louis Forest's article "A Brutal 'Touch-Down'", in FSR 32/3).

Were we to hazard a guess, we might suggest that these two cases, plus the recent one on the Nullarbor Desert, were all examples of either planned long-distance teleportations, or at any rate, abductions, which went awry. — G.C.

II. ON THE UFO TRAIL: ACTIVITY OVER THE NULLARBOR

Paul B. Norman, FSR Consultant
Vice-President, Victorian UFO Research Society

By now, most members and subscribers will have noted the press reports, telecasts and radio talk-back programs concerning UFO activity over the Nullarbor. This is the type of mysterious event which makes ufologists out of sceptics and clowns out of pseudo-scientists and academics.

"Explanations"

Already, we have at least five "explanations", following in rapid succession from the scientific community before investigations were even begun. Meanwhile, the UFO phenomenon continues to grind the sacred cow of orthodox science into hamburger.

One of the first "explanations" came from a Professor of Impossibility, PhD ETC ETC ETC, as being consistent with *a meteorite*, in spite of the fact that the object landed on top of a motor car before flying away a while later.

Following this attempt another "solution" was put forward by a second gentleman of learning that, "the description of the event was consistent with *"dry lightning"*, even though other motorists were driving along the road and viewed the manoeuvring object.

After that amusing interpretation, another spokesman came forward with the "solution". *"They were fooled by the rising sun"*. Even though it did fly away in another direction. And even if motorists travelling in the opposite direction observed the manoeuvring object.

Another expert suggested it must have originated at the Woomera Test Range. That statement was followed by another spokesman who said this was not true because it would not be "allowed". In the opinion of this humble ufologist *of course not* — unless it was out of control. But, even so, how could it strike or lift a motor car, and drop it to the ground with only minor damage?

Many previous Nullarbor cases

The Nullarbor vicinity is famous within the UFO research community for sightings and encounters with

unidentified flying and hovering objects. One outstanding account came from an airline pilot who reported an unknown flying object at the same time and location where a motorist was filming the UFO from the ground. Many UFOs are sighted or encountered and never reported until years later because the observers fear ridicule.

Sagan and S.E.T.I.

A world-wide scientific group is in operation which is searching for extra-terrestrials "out there". The system was founded by Dr. Carl Sagan. But Dr. Sagan appears to have the attitude that he will not recognize such existence unless he is first contacted by the life forms through his radio telescopes. Like Frank Sinatra, who sings that he will do it his way, this radio astronomer will not recognize them unless they do it *his way* and secure his permission to land. The facts are that the extra-terrestrials may insist on doing it *their way*, while radio astronomers ignore the activity taking place below their "dishes!"

"Little Green Men"

Yes, we have proof of little green men. They are humans who are so green in fact that they don't realize that something which they do not understand is already happening. These little green men are numbered among the journalists, who write about everything, and are experts on nothing, except misquotations and out-of-context reporting. These little green men are those who insist that they are the cream of human intelligence and know everything, well, almost everything. In short, they say there are no such things as unidentified flying objects.

In all walks of life one can find the little green men, all over the world, who want to remain green. Perhaps because of a subconscious fear of the unknown. Meanwhile, as this article goes to press, the object that was over the Nullarbor has not been satisfactorily identified.

III. — AND YET ANOTHER REPORT FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Gordon Creighton

OUR reader and most helpful correspondent in Western Australia, Mrs. June Hill of Cannington, recently wrote to say that on the whole the year 1987 seems to have been one of the quietest periods in that

part of the world for a very long time — so much so indeed that local interest in "our subject" had begun to fade away, and the UFO investigation group had more or less disbanded. Then, however, on January 20

this year, came the extraordinary Knowles case, in which, if we are to believe all the experts, either (1) a meteorite, or (2) ball-lightning or (3) the rising Sun, or (4) a "dry electrical storm", displayed an inordinate interest in the travellers' baggage and thoughtfully made off with not only their luggage-rack from the top of the car but also all their bags and valises. (Is this, maybe, how Aliens equip themselves with the necessary raiment when planning to appear *in mufti* among us? "CALLING ALL COSMIC TRANSVESTITES").

As the following report (sent to us by Mrs June Hill) shows, there was however, after all, at least one weird series of happenings in the West Australian "Outback" in May of 1987:-

From the newspaper "SUNDAY TIMES" (PERTH, W. AUSTRALIA) January 18, 1988:- (Reporter Gail Williams).

Mysterious Lights Stole his Power!

"Strange things happen when you're minding an oil-rig in the middle of nowhere.

Just ask Mr Doug Hodgekiss, who received some extraterrestrial visitors during a six-month stint at Patience, near the eastern edge of the Gibson Desert.

Doug, a retired clerk, took up a position minding an oil-rig last year, so as to experience the peace of mind that solitude in the desert brings.

Patience — little more than a well in the ground somewhere between Lake Disappointment and the South Australian border — provided the remote paradise he was seeking.

"Desert Doug" — as his friends named him — experienced a lot more.

Stumbling across saucer-shaped burns in the scrub near his hut; being stuck to the spot unable to lift his camera; being woken up in the middle of the night by loud noises; animals dropping dead in his path; and strange lights appearing outside his window were just a few of the eerie happenings.

Solitude

With a ten-hour drive to his nearest neighbours at Carnegie Station, Doug's only contact with humans was the chats he had with pilots who occasionally flew in with supplies from Newman, 700 kms. west of Patience.

On May 21, his tranquility was shattered by flying objects and strange noises.

The night of May 21 began like any others. Doug, aged 60, and until then sceptical about UFOs, explained what happened: "Normally, I would turn the generator off, to conserve fuel, and spend the evenings in darkness. I was standing in front of the gas stove, looking out across the desert

at the beautiful stars, and saw this very bright white light, which seemed to cover miles.

"Thinking it was a convoy of trucks or a truck with huge lights for driving at night, I thought I had visitors. I put the coffee on for my guests. Normally you don't see a soul, and I got quite excited at the prospect of having a chat with someone.

"Then the light disappeared, and I assumed they had broken down. I was disappointed, and sat down. Out of the corner of my eye I saw an eerie box of light about the size of a huge furniture removal-van, a metre off the road, and moving across the desert. After a few minutes, it hovered over the sand-hill horizon, then faded, became smaller, and gradually disappeared."

Over the following few months, Doug said, the strange light appeared more frequently, and in varying forms, until his return to Perth last October.

Sometimes it was shaped like an inverted balloon, at other times like a beam, and it was often accompanied by a loud roar which Doug described as similar to that of a power drill.

One night he prepared to chase a cube of flashing lights in his Nissan patrol-van. But his battery was flat. *It was as if the lights had absorbed his electricity.* The battery was a three-month-old heavy-duty "Truckie", and it was completely flat.

"The next evening", said Doug, "the whole camp area was lit up by a square of very bright, white, light, and the diesel engine and generator went into overload, losing power, and the bright lights of the camp dimmed to very dull glows and died out. The diesel, weighing over 20 tonnes, and mounted on a steel skid, began to bounce up and down, making a real thumping sound on the ground."

Doug photographed three saucer-shaped objects flying in a formation, but the pictures came out a gold colour. Doug said: "The film processor said that meant the film had been subject to extreme heat and radiation".

Blind

He said the desert animals showed strange reactions to the lights and the flying objects.

"I saw night hawks, which have incredible eyesight, fly straight into the side of the drill, and I came across a deaf and blind dingo. Birds just dropped dead in my path."

Doug brought back with him a rock that he had found in a burnt saucer-shaped area which he described as about 14 m. in diameter. He said: "People at the Department of Physics at AAIT (West Australian Institute of Technology) said it had been heated to 1400 °C."

Doug wasn't deterred by his ordeal, and is already restless to "go bush" again.

ANOTHER ALASKAN REPORT?

IN an article by the Spanish reporter Fernando Mendoza carried in the newspaper *El Adelantado* of Salamanca (March 24, 1987) — and not so far as we know yet seen anywhere else — it is stated that at about 11.15 p.m. local time on March 17, 1987, near Anchorage, Alaska, four U.S. coastguards stationed in that region claimed to have observed separately (from different observation sites) a squadron of very brightly

shining UFOs travelling northwards towards the Pole. Mike Haller, a spokesman for the four men, expressed the opinion that what they had seen may have been some Space satellite coming down and burning up, or perhaps one of the U.S. "AWAC" radar early warning

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OBITUARY

Charles Bowen

by Professor R.H.B. Winder

OUR friend and colleague Charles Bowen, Editor of *Flying Saucer Review*, died on the 14 October 1987 after a long and debilitating illness which attacked him soon after retirement from his principal job. He was just 69 years old. Our deepest sympathies go to his Wife, Helen, and their four talented children.

Charles was a Londoner, born on the 21 September 1918 in Bermondsey, educated at Battersea Grammar School. War service took him to Norway and Sierra Leone with the Welsh Fusiliers, as a Staff Sergeant in Intelligence working on radio and radar. He was a man with many interests, and talents, none of them superficial, ranging from music to journalism. He loved Mozart and was a competent pianist, but he also wrote articles on Philately and Football, read (and spoke) Chaucer's English, and lectured on a variety of subjects. It is not surprising that such a wide view should lead him to an early interest in our subject and take him on to edit one of its leading journals.

He told the story of his first meeting with Waveney Girvan, his predecessor at the *Review*, when he wrote Waveney's obituary published in the November-December 1964 issue. They were introduced by a mutual acquaintance and fellow reader, only to discover that they commuted regularly on the same trains between Waterloo and Woking. For several years thereafter our enigmatic subject received regular and intensive airing on the Southern Railway. Charles' innate leanings towards journalism, the knowledge he gleaned from Waveney and the friendship that developed between them out of their shared interest made Charles the ideal successor when Waveney, sadly, died in October 1964.

Charles' twenty years of unpaid active service on the *Review* made him, by far, its longest serving editor. The magazine prospered under his stewardship, steadily increasing its circulation, its influence, and its world-wide circle of associates and friends expert in



the strange and controversial subject with which it deals. He also edited the remarkably successful and widely published *The Humanoids* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. He maintained a consistent commonsense policy in a field notorious for a dotty element which its strangeness is apt to foster. His sensible talks and discussions on television and radio in addition to his sober editing of the *Review* confounded those who would consign us to the madhouse, and contributed greatly to the measure of respect that the subject now enjoys.

We all owe him a great deal.

OBITUARY

Tim Dinsdale

FOLLOWING upon the sad loss of our erstwhile Editor Charles Bowen, FSR has recently sustained another crippling loss of a much loved and valued Consultant, for on December 17, 1987, the newspapers carried the report (*Daily Telegraph* of that date) of the sudden passing — and at the early age of only 63 years — of our old, old friend and colleague, Tim Dinsdale, famous for his books and for his many years spent in investigating the "*Loch Ness Monsters*" and other strange creatures.

Tim, a qualified aeronautical engineer by training, had had an extremely interesting life. Like myself, he spent many years in China, having lived there as a child. He even had the extraordinary experience of being one of 400 British children aboard a steamer which was captured by a huge band of Chinese pirates. (In fact, as a young Vice-Consul, I was one of

the diplomats who had the job of negotiating the children's release!)

Tim Dinsdale had a vast amount of knowledge ranging over a very wide field, not excluding what we term the "paranormal" or the "para-psychological". Like myself, he was a member of that very exclusive little body known as "*The Ghost Club*" (the oldest body of its kind in Britain — older even than the Society for Psychical Research where we were both members too), and I frequently had the pleasure of discussing with him some of the more "weird" features that beset both "our subject" and the subject of "*Fortean*" and mystery animals, etc., and we were in general agreement as to what lies behind it all.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to his wife, Wendy, and their family. — G.C.