

# MAIL BAG

## Ball Lightning Project

Dear Sir,—‘Ball lightning’ is a short-lived, rare phenomenon often observed in connection with thunderstorms, but also seen under other atmospheric conditions. Its lifetime is of the order of seconds. It is often spherical, with a diameter of several centimetres. Because of its unfamiliar nature and rare occurrence, ball lightning may sometimes be reported in the context of unidentified flying objects, particularly since it can share many characteristics with those reported for UFOs, such as odours of sulphur or ozone, interference with electrical apparatus, burns, ground marks, etc.

A Project has been launched under the auspices of the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA) to collect and evaluate reports of ball lightning. We should be very grateful to receive reports of any observations which may bear relevance to ball lightning or similar phenomena. It

Correspondence is invited from our readers, but they are asked to keep their letters short. Unless letters give the sender's full name and address (not necessarily for publication) they cannot be considered. The Editor would like to remind correspondents that it is not always possible to acknowledge every letter personally, so he takes this opportunity of thanking all who write to him.

is expected that a summary of the Project's work will be published in a scientific journal.

Please address all reports and communications to:

Mark Stenhoff, BSc(Hons)

FRAS AFBIS

BUFORA 'Ball Lightning' Project  
128 Lennard Road, Beckenham, Kent.  
August 1, 1977.

there are far superior ones available for study.

Best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,  
Ray Rimell,  
52 George V Avenue,  
Pinner, Middx.  
May 13, 1977.

## More "solid light"

Dear Mr. Bowen,—After reading the most interesting case history presented by Mr. Ernst Berger in FSR, Vol.23, No.1 (“‘Snail feeler’ enters room”) I have two remarks I would like to make: (1) The Vienna case is remarkably similar to the case reported by Mr. M. Monnerie in LDLN, No. 131 (“‘Un nouveau cas de ‘Lumière solide’ ”). (2) Mr. Berger's theory that non-illuminating light is a “direct” stimulus of the retina is untenable, because, quite apart from how such a “direct” stimulation would work, the resulting image wouldn't fit naturally

## View on documentary

Dear Mr. Bowen,—I saw the BBC documentary and noted with interest the press coverage of the Trident sightings last year. I did not personally favour the BBC production for putting on what I consider three slightly eccentric (albeit sincere to themselves) characters first; it must have given many people the idea that most UFO “enthusiasts” are like this. I know many people at work who turned over after the first ten minutes. The films were interesting, though I suspect

## Burringham encounter (Continued from page 24)

because it has been peculiarly apparent, during early 1977, that an unusual number of close encounters have occurred around the hours of 3 a.m. One can think of the Hainault landing case and the Nelson Vehicle stoppage affair (see FSR Vol. 23, No. 2).

Whilst it obviously remains possible that the military exercise was in some manner responsible for the experience, and was quite probably responsible for the noise, the events seem worthy of recording — just in case.

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