



TOP 2 FAMOUS UFO SIGHTINGS

1. The Kenneth Arnold sighting
2. The Westall UFO incident

FACT BOX

Location

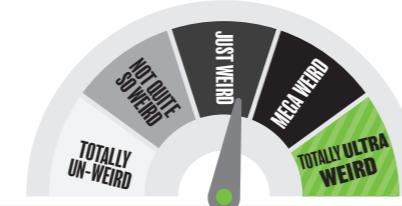
Cascade Mountains, Washington State, USA

Date

24 June 1947

Principal witness

Kenneth Arnold, businessman and amateur pilot



SOLVED or UNEXPLAINED?


ENCOUNTER

Arnold was flying in unfamiliar territory, looking for the crash site of a Marine Corps C-46 plane. Initially blinded by a bright light, he then saw nine bright objects flying at great speed beyond the peak of Mount Rainier. Arnold watched the objects for over two minutes before landing at Yakima airfield and reporting the incident. He estimated that they were 13–15 metres long and described them as being ‘flat like a pie pan’ and that they moved like ‘saucers skipping on water’.

EXPLANATION

Project Blue Book concluded that, given the atmospheric conditions on the day, Arnold’s encounter was a mirage caused by a temperature inversion layer.

[See page 22]

Ha! I have this image of saucers with skipping ropes.

FACT BOX

Location

Westall High School and surrounding area, Victoria, Australia

Date

6 April 1966

Principal witnesses

Students and staff at Westall High School



SOLVED or UNEXPLAINED?


ENCOUNTER

At 11 am, students were out in the playground for recess when they saw a silver disc-like UFO descend from the sky. Science teacher Andrew Greenwood also saw it. It moved about erratically, then flew off towards the Grange, a nearby field. Some of the students chased it to where it supposedly landed on an expanse of grass. The object then lifted off and zoomed away. Some witnesses said there was one disc, while others claimed there were three. Some witnesses also said that the UFO was being chased by light aircraft. Andrew Greenwood said there was initially one plane with the UFO, but then four other planes showed up and chased it. The planes appeared to be Cessnas. Students and local residents reported seeing military vehicles and men in uniform around the landing site shortly after the incident. Andrew Greenwood also claims to have been threatened by government officials demanding his silence on the sighting.

EXPLANATION

There is no definitive explanation. But there are theories:

WEATHER BALLOON

The Weather Bureau released a balloon at 8.30 am that morning, and the wind conditions on the day could have blown it into the area.

TARGET DROGUE

The UFO might have been a nylon target drogue – a fabric target, a bit like a windsock – towed by a plane so that others can use it for target practice. These sorts of drogues were used by the RAAF in the 1960s and would explain the presence of the aircraft and why they were chasing it.

MILITARY TESTING

The sighting could have been the result of secret military equipment being tested.

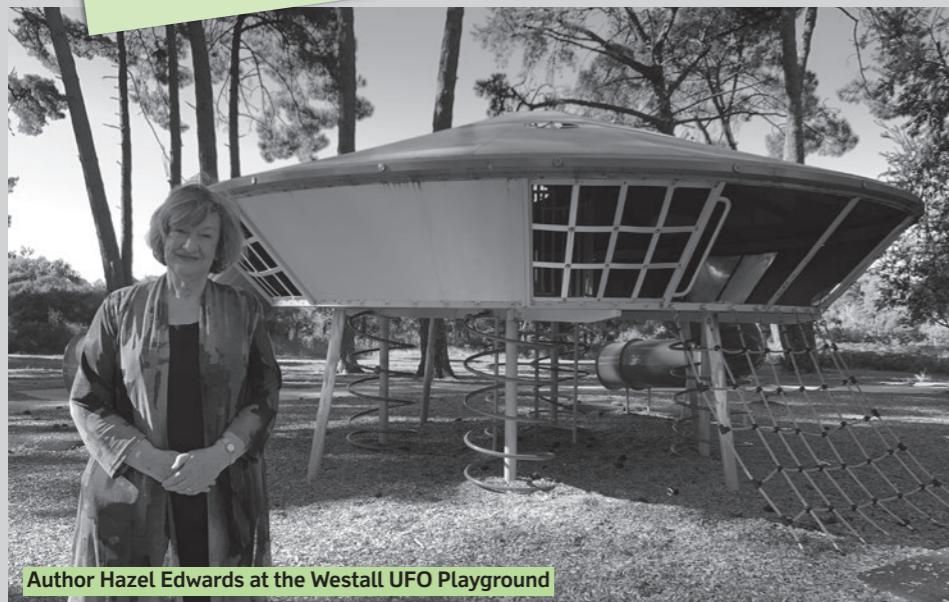
HIBAL BALLOON

The UFO could have been a special balloon used for monitoring radiation. This is the most likely theory.

THERE'S A HIPPOPOTAMUS ON OUR FLYING SAUCER EATING CAKE

Hazel Edwards (bestselling author of the picture book *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake*) was a new teacher at Westall High School during the time of the UFO sighting. Unlike a lot of other people, she thinks it's all been blown out of proportion. And as for the disappearing student? Hazel says the girl just transferred to another school.

The Westall UFO sighting has been commemorated with a playground where the Grange Reserve used to be.



SIGHTINGS ARE CONTAGIOUS

It seems that every time there's a highly publicised UFO sighting, other people start to report seeing them. Prior to the 1947 sighting that sparked the term flying saucers, there were few UFO reports. But after that sighting was splashed across newspapers, flying saucer fever gripped the USA and, indeed, the world.

The April 1952 issue of *Life* magazine ran an article titled 'Have we Visitors from Outer Space?', examining the possibility of some UFOs having an extraterrestrial origin. And their cover features the headline: 'There is a Case for Interplanetary Saucers'. Immediately, the number of UFO sightings being reported to the Air Force skyrocketed.

Statistics show that reported sightings of UFOs increased in Great Britain in the 1990s while the TV series *The X-Files* was being shown on television.

Pentagon Release UFO Footage

April 2020

The Pentagon has released three United States Navy aircraft videos of UFOs. Many UFOlogists have taken this to mean that the US Government has finally provided proof of alien spacecraft in Earth's atmosphere. But is that really the case?

The released videos are of naval aircraft encounters with UFOs during training sessions: one in 2004 and two in 2015. The videos are of cockpit instrumentation, featuring data and infrared imagery.

The three videos were leaked a number of years ago, but have now been officially declassified. Along with the declassification comes the information that these cases have been investigated and the result is that they have been labelled 'unidentified'. That DOES NOT mean that the United States

Navy or US Government believe them to be alien spacecraft. That is just supposition on the part of UFOlogists.

Debunkers claim that the videos are showing instrument or software malfunctions . . . a mistake in the information about an object (possibly a civilian plane or maybe even a bird), or a glitch in the software showing something that isn't there at all. But these are suppositions as well. Investigations have not proved that there were any malfunctions.

So . . . it might have been an alien craft. Or, it might have been a malfunction. Or, it might have been something else entirely, which hasn't yet been discovered. Which do you think is more likely?

Hmmm. I suppose this one might actually be aliens! Dad certainly thinks so.

In 2021, a special report about military investigations of UAP sightings was delivered to US congress. The report did not come to any definite conclusions about whether any UAPs are of alien origin.

I've always wanted to see a UFO. I watch the skies all the time. But all I've seen are funny-shaped clouds, meteors and drones. Sigh! Much as I like the idea of alien spaceships visiting earth . . . I'm just not sure.



I SAW NOTHING!

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE IVANOFF, CHILDREN'S AUTHOR OF BOOKS SUCH AS THE OTHER WORLDS SERIES AND THE RFDS ADVENTURES.

WHEN DID YOU VISIT LOCH NESS?

My wife and I went there in 1999. We stopped in the town of Fort Augustus at the south end of the loch, where we got a distant view of the water. On the way out of the town we parked along the B862 road, jumped a fence into some farmland and made our way (past the cows) down to the shore of the loch for a little look-see.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO TRESPASS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY?

Um . . . well . . . I wanted to see if I could spot Nessie. And this area of shoreline was completely deserted. And I figured Nessie was more likely to show up if there were no other tourists around.

AND DID NESSIE PUT IN AN APPEARANCE?

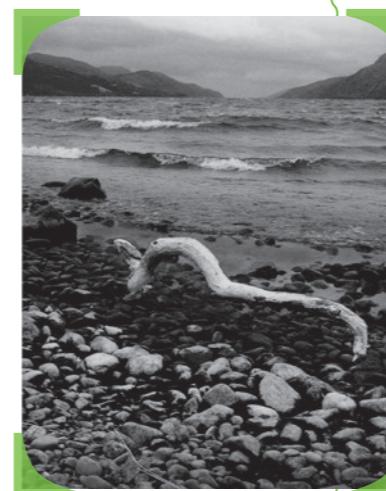
Sadly, no! But I did take a photo of the loch with a piece of wood that sort-of looks a bit like Nessie. At the right angle. With the correct lighting. If you close one eye and squint with the other.

SO, YOU'VE NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN THE LOCH NESS MONSTER?

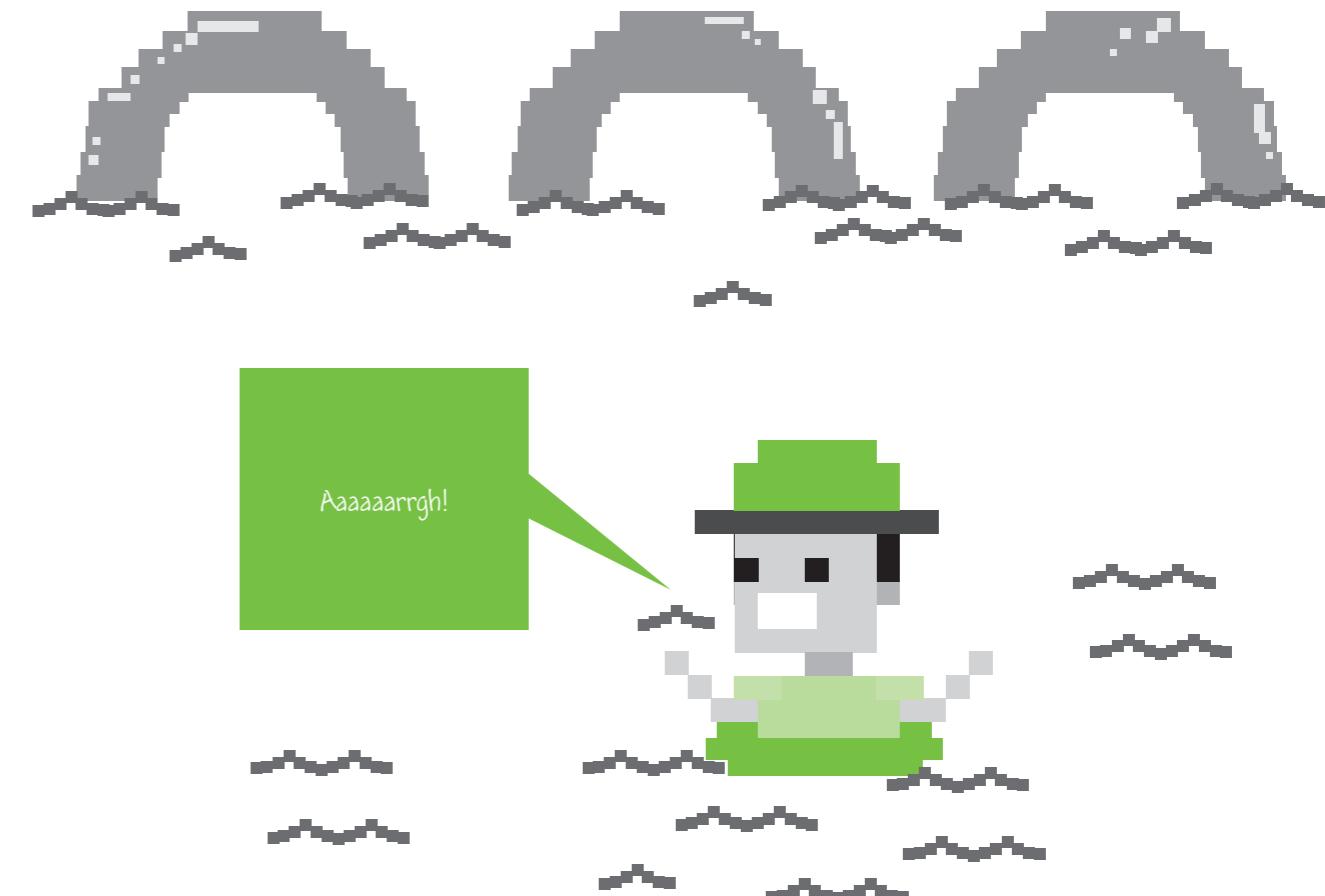
I bought a little Nessie statue in Fort Augustus. Does that count?

NO!

Well, then . . . no. I've never seen the Loch Ness Monster.



OMG! Does
this make
George
Ivanoff a
CRIMINAL?



ECTOPLASM

Ectoplasm is a physical substance supposedly left behind by some ghosts. The term was coined in 1894 by French biologist Charles Robert Richet, who was intensely interested in the paranormal.

Ghost Radio

Ghostly voices and music can sometimes be caused by radio broadcasts, even when there isn't a radio switched on. Lead strips or other thin bits of metal can sometimes pick up faint broadcast signals. This is rare, but it has happened... and frightened people.

Some mediums produced supposed ectoplasm in their seances. (See Chapter 12.) It can be vaporous, fabric-like or viscous. In popular culture it is usually presented as a slimy goo. No one has ever been able to produce any ectoplasm for scientific analysis.

I've always thought of ectoplasm as ghost snot!

There's a famous scene in the movie *Ghostbusters* where one of the characters is slimed by a ghost - covered head to toe in icky, sticky goo! YUK!

Dad once mistook a sheet for a ghost. Mum had hung it over a tall stool. I think she did it on purpose! Grin!

TOP 4 WEIRDEST GHOSTLY MIX-UPS

OMG! Have you ever heard possums fighting? The sounds they make are terrifying.

Just as clouds and birds and weird atmospheric conditions have been mistaken for UFOs (see Chapter 2), there are many possible explanations for ghostly reports. From baby monitors picking up sounds from other electronic devices to disembodied voices travelling from one flat to another via pipes. From a mirror in a darkened room making an eerie reflection to unexpected shadows. From rats in the ceiling and the creaking of old houses causing ghostly noises to the horrifying sounds of possums fighting outside a bedroom window.

But some explanations are unexpected and downright weird and freaky.

1. Infrasound
2. Mould
3. Brain Glitch
4. Carbon Monoxide

FACT BOX

Name

INFRASOUND

Infrasound is any sound that is too low for the human ear to hear. It can be caused by all sorts of things including earthquakes, volcanic activity and lightning storms. But it can also be caused by some types of machinery, diesel engines, wind turbines and some loud speakers.

Some infrasounds can make people feel unwell. It can affect their sense of balance, cause hyperventilation, blurred vision and even hallucinations. It can give them a sense of unease or even fear. Sometimes it can cause objects to vibrate.

The link between ghosts and infrasound was discovered in 1980 by engineer Vic Tandy from Coventry University, England.

For a moment I thought this might be a fencing ghost. But no - it's just infrasound. Which is almost as FREAKY as an actual ghost!

Tandy worked in a laboratory that some people thought was haunted. Many experienced feelings of discomfort and depression, and although they felt cold, would break out in a sweat.

One day, Tandy saw a grey, indistinct, human-shaped apparition in his peripheral vision... but when he turned around, it faded and disappeared.

Tandy was a fencer and one day he brought his fencing foil into the lab to fix. When he put it into a vice it began to vibrate. That's when he realised that infrasound was probably the cause of the lab's haunting. After a bit of experimentation, he discovered the source - an extraction fan. As soon as it was turned off, the foil stopped vibrating. The fan was modified to stop the infrasound and the ghostly experiences went away.



Edinburgh Castle has long been considered haunted, but there's no machinery producing infrasound. Vic Tandy investigated and found that sound in the long stone rooms echoes from one room to the next. The echoing sound can reverberate through the vaults (stone ceiling arches) and change in nature, sometimes producing infrasound.