

“sightings of.” If such events are rare, how come FSR’s editor was able, in 1966, to compile a book, **The Humanoids**, devoted to such cases? The chapter closes, as does every chapter, with a few well-chosen words by Arthur C. Clarke.

As for UFOs, he tells us that “the subject bores me to tears,” after which confession we can hardly expect a dispassionate summing up of the evidence. He appears to accept that hitherto unknown phenomena and

psychological aberrations are to blame for the reports. Throughout this book, Clarke’s comments jar somewhat, as he is scathing and sceptical about most of the inexplicable phenomena competently described by Welfare and Fairley. It would have been a better book if Clarke’s comments and photographs (there are two of him) had been omitted, and the title reduced to ‘Mysterious World’ — but then it would not have received such wide publicity nor sold nearly so well!

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# THE BOTTOM OF ANOTHER BARREL

**Review of a new novel which conjures up a nightmarish picture of ufology.**

*Jenny Randles*

**N**ORMALLY *Flying Saucer Review* would not concern itself with books of the fictional kind, for that is what **Genesis**, a new Corgi paperback by **W. A. Harbinson** (published October 1980, 612 pages, £1.75) turns out to be. The theme, however, is UFOs, so it merited a mention.

For me it proved to be a horrifying book. Not only horrifying because its content is a kind of souped-up horror story conceived around the UFO mystery, but also because of the dreadful image it conjures up both of the subject and the people involved in it. Again there must be UFO enthusiasts who, weaned on the cover-up idea that so obsesses the author, will find sinister undertones in what Corgi Books label “. . .the epic novel of the world’s most fearsome secret.”

Novels based on ufology are rare: the theme of the very reasonable *Miracle Visitors* by Ian Watson (Panther Books) was written around the Vallée/Jung school of thinking. This new offering, however, seems to be culled from the hard-line ufology of Keyhoe, Stringfield and Co. There was scope for a literary exploration of the cover-up mythology. *Genesis* tries to do that, but its idea isn’t entirely original, for our own Gordon Creighton touched on it — albeit in a light-hearted manner — in his article “Those cunning British: the truth at last.”

The complex plot introduces elements from all over the world, but is centred on Britain — an abduction in Cornwall and regression hypnosis by a London doctor — and the plot revolves around the activities of two full-time American ufologists-cum-scientists, whose role is never quite explained. Apparently they do not work for the government, yet they stroll in and out of military bases with a freedom that is ridiculous to say the least. Nor is it explained who pays these redoubtable workers during the course of the action between 1974 and 1978. One of them is an older man with an incurable disease; the other is a whizz-kid who either spends a globe trotting life following up UFO incidents, or wallows in strong drink or drugs. This younger one is hell-bent on breaking the great cover-

up mystery before his buddy dies, and one is forced to assume that his methodology is standard both for him and other associates of his: in one scene he beats the truth out of one percipient who, soon afterwards, dies of a heart attack. Other methods involve getting his witnesses drunk, or drugged, and then hurling four letter words at them; he even resorts to rape to elicit the truth from one unfortunate.

In parts of the text Mr. Harbinson actually intermingles real events and characters with fictional ones, even the late Ed Ruppelt of Project Blue Book fame, and poor James E. McDonald who, unhappily, can no longer speak up for themselves. Other characters are paraded who seem to parallel living investigators, and FSR also gets a mention, but fortunately only in the author’s notes, where it is recommended as “mandatory reading” — but with a “selective eye.”

Basically the author presents a theory (based on obscure documents said to have been discovered in West Germany) that everything which we link with UFOs — 19th Century airships, the Tunguska explosion, Foo fighters, ghost rockets and the Bermuda Triangle — are the work of a mad genius, at one time associated with the Nazis, who has discovered — and applied — secrets of longevity, and who has found a hide-out in Antarctica. Naturally this person is bent on world domination, but I’ll leave the rest of the story for anyone who may wish to read it.

For myself, all I can do is shudder at the false picture of UFO investigators and researchers that will be created by this monster novel. The horrifying aspect is that many may read it who could well have their own UFO experience at a later date, and keep their peace when they recall the behaviour of the fictional investigators. My only hope is that many readers will not be taken in by the fanciful and artificial nature of the book, which as far as the painstaking researchers and careful documenters of ufology are concerned, belongs to the murky waters at the bottom of another barrel.

# LOW-FLYING TRIANGLE IN ILLINOIS

*William Retoff*

**D**URING a four-month span in 1979, at least ten incidents involving unexplained flying objects occurred across north central Illinois in the midwestern United States, an area previously unscathed by intense, unusual aerial activity. One of the ten known events happening between July and October was a near-landing.

That took place on Saturday night, July 28. A lone woman, 26-year-old Pattie Ong, witnessed a low-altitude unknown descending for a field while she drove her van down a secluded country road near the tiny farm community of Wenona, Illinois.

"I was going down to this friend's party," Pattie explained in a lengthy talk with your writer; "...this friend who lives in Toluca was havin' this party." (Toluca lies six miles southwest of Wenona.) "I was goin' down this stretch of road and seen it and stopped. You know, it was by accident. This thing was comin' at me real fast like a low-flyin' plane."

Pattie recalls the weather as being "pretty windy out" and probably cloudy as she didn't see any stars or the Moon. She later stated in follow-up correspondence that she first caught sight of the object at 9.50 p.m., local Central Time; she had checked her watch.

As for the object. . . "All I could see was like a triangular shape. Not saucer-shaped, it was like a diamond or a pyramid — like an outline — of real white lights. It had lights placed along it. I couldn't see anything solid; just lights. Inside the outline was dark. So it really could've been any shape."

"It was real big. It seemed about a half-block long" (approximately 210 feet). "I didn't hear it make any noise."

Asked about its direction when she initially viewed it, Ms. Ong, answered with a gesture, "It was comin' at me" (travelling from out of the west). "It was comin' towards me at low altitude. See, I thought it was this friend of mine who has a private plane. Thought he was just buzzin' me for a second — and I said, 'Aw my god, it's gonna hit me?'"

"And then all of a sudden it just stopped."

The apparently-soundless unidentified object, now positioned "about a half-mile" north of its lone spectator, began descending. At the same time, its lights switched from a steady glare into a rapid blinking mode.

The pace of action quickened. Pattie observed "lines of light" protrude from the subject's undercarriage. These lines of light buckled in below the pulsing structure as it dipped towards a bean field.

"It was like strobe light," declared Pattie, "—bam, bam, bam. It happened in about four seconds. It was real intense."

"You saw it flash — you saw this triangular shape?"

"It flashed — you saw these, these things comin' out. . . it flashed — you saw 'em down. Then that was it. There was no way you could get a good look at it because it happened so fast. I just saw the shape and those lines, and that's it. It kinda just faded down in the field."



**The arrow points out the scene — indicated by the black box — about 1.5 miles from Wenona, Illinois, which is seen in the foreground, where the July 28, 1979, incident unfolded.**