



SHORT STORY

Even now, a full week after the event, I am not sure what happened or what I saw that night in August.

I was on my way home from the office after a busy day. It had been hot, it was even hotter here in the crowded underground carriage, so when we reached East Finchley station I was glad to get out in the air and escape.

I was thirsty, hot and tired. What better to revive me than a cool drink in the nearby White Lion. After a couple of pints and in the company of congenial friends, I was feeling more relaxed and refreshed.

The talk turned to recent sightings of UFO's in North London, strange lights and discs seen in the sky. Were we alone here on earth or were there other forms of life out there in the vastness of space? Most of us around the table drinking that night were pretty cynical and deep down I didn't really believe these reports were anything other than illusions and imaginings.

One young lad with us, Ronny, told of a circular craft that hovered over him on his way home one night. He told

how he had lain low, and of how the craft then moved off at great speed into the blackness of the night sky. "And do you know", Ronny said, "I am sure I saw faces looking out from the port-holes." We laughed and jeered. "Take more water with it", we told him. The talk continued. Before I left I had ridiculed the whole thing.

Walking home

It was a lovely summer evening, cooler now, the sun setting in a blaze of red and pink. I would walk home through the park and on via the nature walk towards Muswell Hill, where I lived.

Feeling tired after the walk and drink, I rested on the soft grass.

I thought I heard a humming noise. I stood up and it was getting louder. There was a movement of air but the night was windless. The moon shone over the empty park and the noise was getting louder.

I was full of fear now. Was this really happening or was I asleep and dreaming?

Almost above me I saw a huge flying machine, circular and grey. I shut my eyes, opened

them again; it was still there. It was huge and round, a grey metallic colour and all around it were lighted windows or port-holes. I was sure I could see forms, shapes and shadows, moving behind those windows.

A brilliant white light shot from the craft. I was being observed. Unable to move, that light held me in its blinding glare.

The visitor

I sensed a presence by my side. Then my mind became calm and relaxed, a feeling of peace and serenity came over me. I knew they meant no harm and were not evil. I turned to see a tall figure, perhaps seven feet tall, towering over me. It was clad in a smooth silver suit and carrying what looked like a helmet under its arm.

I looked into the face that was observing me. It was deeply tanned, mahogany in colour with long, flowing, pure white hair. It was the eyes that held me. Deep blue and clear. When I looked into those eyes I felt calm and secure.

I sensed I was looking at a being from a higher and better world. Even had I wanted to, I couldn't walk away. I was held

The UFO by Len Willcocks

by an invisible force. Thoughts came into my mind. The being was speaking to me, but the lips did not move.

Take heed

"Take heed my friend, we are watching over you. The evil that is in your race could destroy your planet. We will not let you do this. One day when you are ready you will join us and the Universe will be your home. Meanwhile, for those who are receptive to us, and listen, remember, love rules all, from us you came and when you are ready you will join us again.

Suddenly, the messenger raised an arm in a salute. The light was still blinding and I shut my eyes. When I opened them he had gone. There was nothing, just the empty park and the moon casting shadows over the trees, a lovely starlit night.

I felt dazed and confused. I looked up at the sky. The disc was now a pin-point moving in the starry sky; a star amongst stars.

Deep in thought I continued homeward. Did it really happen? Was it a dream? Many times since that night I have

walked this way home, always expectant. One day I know I will see him or others of his kind again.

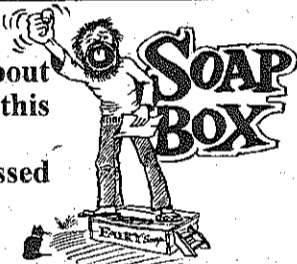
Model Railway Porter

The late very fine actor, Eric Porter, who memorably played Soames Forsyte in BBC TV's *The Forsyte Saga* was a model railway enthusiast.

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Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column. Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



The many encouraging responses from the unemployed to my proposal for the introduction of a concessionary fare for the unemployed to travel on London Transport (SOAPBOX *The Archer*, June edition), including from MPs Hartley Booth and Labour's Harriet Harman, convinces me that my proposal would definitely assist the long-term unemployed in their search for employment.

I have recently received a letter from David Chidgey, Liberal Democrat spokesman for unemployment which reads:

"Thank you very much for your recent letter and enclosed copy of *The Archer*, the East Finchley community newspaper.

I was very interested to read the article which you wrote, and your suggestion about a concessionary travel fare for the unemployed was a helpful contribution. However, the basic problems of skill shortages and skill deficiencies remain, and the first priority must be to ensure that people are employable."

As a volunteer with the Community Action Scheme, just a few of the people seeking help in finding employment include: a medical doctor, two barristers, a number of accountants, a highly efficient secretary, brickies, carpenters, plasterers, painters and decorators, talented graphic artists and photographers, salesmen and saleswomen, former civil servants, a linguist, a television studio manager and even a croupier! If casinos are laying off, times really must be bad!

If the cross section of unemployed listed above are unemployable, Mr Chidgey should reveal where the jobs are to be found, or will be created to train those workers he considers suffer from "skill shortages" and "skill deficiencies".

ANTHONY ATTARD

PSI was profoundly shocked to be told by an informed source that were the unemployed on training schemes, those registered in a "multiple" claim and the unemployed who do not register to be taken into account, the true figure for the unemployed would amount to nearly 8 million. The same informed source told me that it cost £95 of tax payers money every time a Member of Parliament writes a letter. Readers must judge for themselves as to whether Mr Chidgey's response is value for money

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

The Archer is re-launching this section as part of the expansion of its services to the East Finchley community.

Now, however, advertising in this section is absolutely free to any private resident of N2. Sorry, businesses, you will have to pay but only at the rate of 50p per line - unless you place a job advertisement which is always free.

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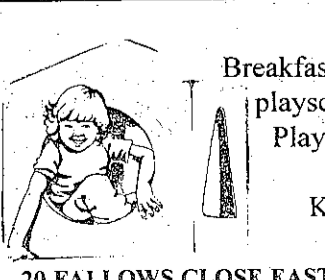
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