

u.f.o.i.c. newsletter.

Unidentified Flying Objects Investigation Centre,
P.O. Box 6, Lane Cove. N.S.W. 2066 Australia

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OFFICE BEARERS

President: Mr. F.J. Phillips, VK2ZQ Secretary: Mr. W. Moser JP
Research Director: Mr. D. Buching Investigations Director: Mr. M. Smyth (B.Bld)
Committee: Mr. W.C. Chalker (BSc.Hons), Mrs P. Buching, Mr. M. Guider, Mr. T.V. Homan, Mr. H. O'Brien, Mr. J. Blattman
Advisers: Dr. D. Herbison-Evans (PhD, FRAS), Dr. G. Stevens (PhD, BSc, ARMIT), Dr. R. Molnar (PhD), Mrs F. Smyth (B.A. Psych), Mr. B. McDonald

EDITORIAL

On the long weekend (October 4-6) a 3 day conference was held at Terrigal, NSW with participants from all Australian UFO groups. The conference, organised jointly by ACOS (Centre for UFO Studies) and UFO Research of South Australia, was the first conference of its type in Australia aimed at uniting all Australian UFO research efforts. A national program of data collection and research was outlined, the clearing house to be ACOS. This data is then to be disseminated to the U.S. Centre for UFO Studies where UFO research is being conducted on an international level.

The theme of the conference was "UFOs - A Scientific Study" and we are pleased to report that it was an unqualified success. Several important papers were presented by both Scientific Consultants and researchers including:-

Analysis of Physical Trace Case Histories - Dr. G. Stevens
10 Years of Investigation in Tasmania - Mr. P. Jackson, TUFOIC
UFO Flaps - A Context for Scientific Study - Mr. B. Chalker
UFO Detection Methods - Dr. D. Herbison-Evans
UFOs and the Philosophy of Science - Dr. Ralph Molnar
UFO Investigation Procedure - Mr. M. Smyth and Mr. D. Buching, UFOIC

The texts of the papers and proceedings of the conference should be available to the public in a few weeks.

A further conference has been tentatively arranged for late October 1976 at Mt. Gambier, South Australia, to co-incide with the total eclipse of the sun next year.

M. Smyth
P. Buching

GENERAL

The Committee is pleased to welcome two new advisers, Dr. Ralph Molnar (PhD) of the University of New South Wales (School of Physical Anatomy) and Mrs Frances Smyth (B.A. Psych), to its growing number of scientific advisers.

Dr. Molnar is particularly interested in examining reports of alleged occupants and their associated physiology while Mrs Smyth, who has a degree in Behavioural

Science, with a major in Psychology, is primarily interested in the effect of personality, attitudes and expectations on the reliability of witnesses.

The Centre is constantly looking for more scientific advisers, especially in the field of psychology, where we are looking for a qualified clinical hypnotist. Any qualified persons wishing to help UFOIC are requested to contact the Research Director at the above address.

UFO INVESTIGATION KIT

UFO sightings are rare. Evidence of them is scarce because witnesses are never prepared for them when they do occur.

Dr. Don Herbison-Evans has modified his Investigation Kit which is again available from UFOIC.

The kit consists of 3 slide mounts, one fitted with a diffraction grating and the other two consisting of different Polaroid filters. By using these 3 devices, it is possible to both identify known phenomena such as reflections, mirages, planes, car headlights etc. and also gain valuable information about unknown objects (UFOs) such as temperature, possible composition and whether or not the object is man made.

The kit is designed to be carried in the pocket or purse and has a life of approximately 10 years. To be of the greatest use to science, photographs of any unusual lights should be taken through these devices for later detailed analysis. The best film type to use is a high speed black and white.

The kit is available from UFOIC for \$1.50 or can be purchased at meetings.

MEETINGS

The next meeting will be on Friday 14th November 1975 at 7.30 p.m. and will be held at Science House, 157 Gloucester Street, Sydney. The topic of the lecture will be "UFOs - Where Do They Come From?"

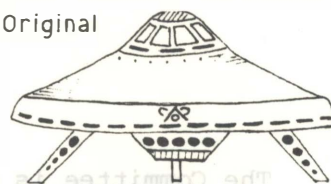
The last meeting for 1975 will be held on December 12th in the small hall.

By the end of this month, we will have to confirm our acceptance of hire dates for 1976. If any members have ideas on preferred days of the week etc. please let us know, otherwise we will book for 1976 along the same lines as 1975.

PERCEPTION - AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

As part of the meeting on 29th August, members of the audience were asked to take part in an experiment to determine their ability to remember and reconstruct the appearance of a "flying saucer". The subject of the experiment was a large drawing of a hypothetical UFO, complete with multi-coloured lights, windows, landing gear, markings etc. Members of the audience were shown the drawing for 3 mins. and then asked to draw it from memory. Afterwards a series of 13 questions were asked about the object, along with the participant's age, sex, occupation and seating row (distance from the drawing). The accuracy of the sketches varied greatly, some bearing little or no resemblance to the original. Of the 13 questions asked, 6 referred to colours of various parts of the object, and one was a trick question, which asked about a non-existent feature (a door). The highest no. of correct answers was 10, with 1 other on 9 and the majority scoring less than 7 correct. Due to the small no. of participants (32) it is not possible to predict any trends other than the expected i.e. older participants tended to notice less features than younger ones, observation of details decreased as distance from the object increased. The experiment indicated that single witness reports are likely to be highly inaccurate, making it extremely difficult for the investigator to identify the object. We intend to conduct this experiment again, with more controlled conditions and more participants to confirm the results above, and possibly to reveal some trends in witness perception.

Original



BEST SKETCH

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CLOSE ENCOUNTER AT BENTS BASIN

The Centre was contacted late in July 1975 by a Mr. S who wished to report a sighting of nocturnal lights over Lidcombe (Sydney). During the course of discussing the sighting it was revealed that Mr. S had been a witness to an unusual close encounter on June 4th 1972.

The close encounter occurred at Bent's Basin, just south of Wallacia and west of Sydney proper. The area where the sighting took place is a popular picnic and camping spot adjacent to a small lake. The sighting occurred overlooking scattered mangroves and a small hill near the lake.

It has not been possible to determine the exact location of the sighting as the area is subject to flooding from the nearby Nepean river and is without any significant geographical or geological features to serve as landmarks.

The witnesses consisted of a party of 6 people (names on file), 4 young men and 2 young women. Mr. S, one of the main participants in the sighting, does not have any great knowledge of the subject apart from reading reports in newspapers etc. and therefore would not appear to have an "a priori" interest in the phenomena. The events described below can then be interpreted without colouring from knowledge of similar events, which appear in the literature.

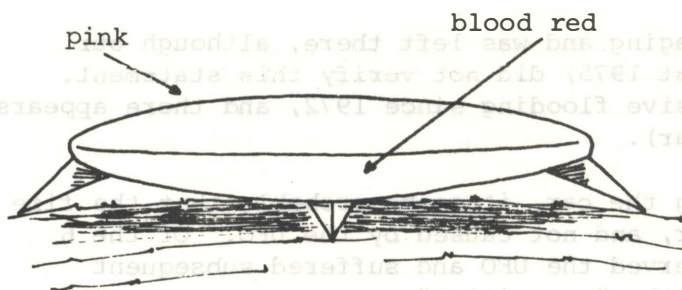
THE SIGHTING

The witnesses decided to "investigate" Bent's Basin, known for its "unusual" reputation for anomalous phenomena. The party drove to the area in an ageing Hillman sedan (circa 1962 model) arriving before dark.

They parked the car facing downhill about 100 yards from the body of water and 200 yards from a small hill. The inclination of the car was such that the top of the hill was not visible unless one crouched down and looked over the dashboard, or got out of the car altogether. The party remained in the car for about 45 minutes and consumed some food they had brought along. As the lake area was in fact their destination, they decided to move closer, as by this time it was nearly 6p.m. and dusk was approaching.

The driver, Wayne B attempted to start the car, but without success. One of the others, Terry B got out of the car and opened the bonnet to see if he could find the problem. The driver apparently responded too quickly in trying again to start the engine, causing Terry to jump back with a yell. He then turned around and noticed an object on top of the hill opposite.

Moving back to the car, he called the others out to have a look. Some got out of the car, while others crouched down and looked out the front of the windscreen. One of the girls refused to look and hid under the dashboard. The object was approximately discoid in shape looking like 2 saucers stuck together, but being somewhat flatter in the middle, resembling "a small football". It appeared about 20' wide and 4-5' high. The top and bottom halves were pulsating alternately with a pink (Pantone 231), and blood red (Pantone 213) colour respectively, giving the impression of a line or colour division about the middle of the object. The lights did not illuminate the surrounding area (see sketch)



It appeared to be resting on at least 3 (probably 4) legs, the middle one appeared to be inclined outwards towards the observers and was bisected by a line, suggesting triangular shaped legs. The object was sitting just to the left of the top of the hill, the ground beneath it being in shadows.

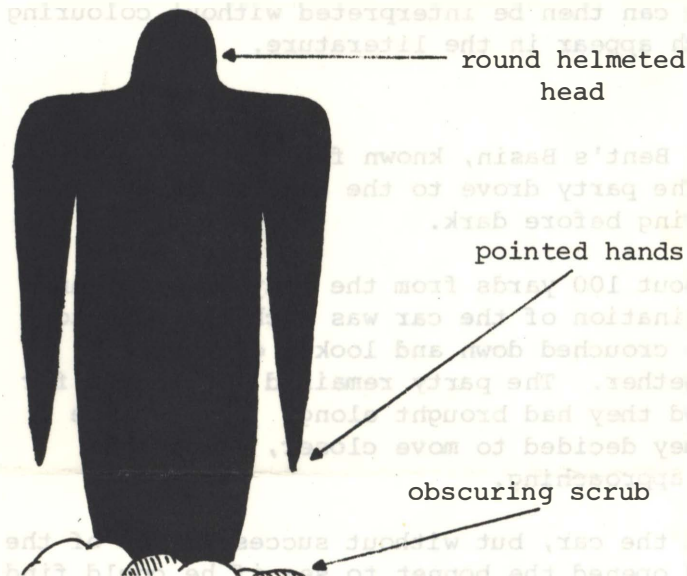
The observers noticed a strong pulsating hum, which appeared to be in synchronisation with the alternation of the two colours. As soon as he noticed the object, Mr. S. began to have a severe pulsating headache in the vicinity of his upper forehead. He did not think it was synchronous with the humming from the object, although it was not impossible. He later learned that all the other witnesses (except the girl who hid under the dashboard) experienced similar headaches. The group were frightened so much by the sight of the object that one girl fainted and one of the men allegedly came very close to doing the same thing.

The group managed to get the car going, and in a panic, took off downhill into the basin proper. They had not travelled very far, when they heard a distinct thumping on the roof, then a little further on, the engine caught fire!

The party jumped out of the still moving car which ran onwards and into some trees, near the camping area. They then decided to walk out of the area, two of the men, Wayne B and another setting off up the road to get a lift.

Shortly afterwards they came rushing back to alert the party to the approach of a huge "shadow" which appeared to be the "figure of a man". Wayne's attention had been attracted by a whining noise (distinct from that heard earlier) like "a soft whirling windy noise". Mr. S and another of the party then observed the silhouette approaching from the direction of the initial UFO observation.

They could make out the figure which was about 200 yards away in the fading sunlight. It appeared to be 8-10 feet tall and looked glossy (black?) but not shiny. It had "a round helmeted head, broad shoulders and arms that came to pointed hands". The body "tapered in at thigh level and the legs were not visible, perhaps because of obscuring scrub. The figure slowly approached the vicinity of the car,



its slow movement suggesting movement on rollers, rather than leg motions. Mr. S. later drew an analogy with the robot "Gort" in the movie "The Day the Earth Stood Still".

The group were by now hiding in longgrass by the edge of the road, waiting for the "man" to set upon them. However they were astonished to observe the figure disappear as it came closer. One witness thought it disappeared like a light being switched off, while another thought it disappeared from the bottom upwards, like a screen rolling upwards.

The apparition of the approaching figure lasted approximately 30 seconds. The terrified group of people remained hidden in the grass for about half an hour during which time nothing further happened. They then made a hasty retreat out of the basin area, past the site of the earlier UFO encounter. The object could no longer be seen, in fact it had not been noticed after they tried to escape in the car.

The group managed to get a lift out of the basin with a man who said he had also heard strange noises in the area at the time of the incident. The group returned to the site with Wayne's father in an attempt to salvage the car. Nothing was noticed at the spot where the UFO had been observed and the fire in the car had by this time extinguished itself. However, Wayne drew everyone's attention to a large pair of "eyes" about 6" apart, in the trees. Wayne threw a stick at them and they immediately vanished.

The car was considered not worth salvaging and was left there, although our preliminary field investigation (August 1975) did not verify this statement. (The basin has been the site of extensive flooding since 1972, and there appears to be little chance of locating the car).

Due to the earlier trouble in starting the car, it seems probable that the fire was attributable to a fault in the car, and not caused by the UFO. Of the 6 people present at the sighting, 5 observed the UFO and suffered subsequent headaches. Only 3 witnesses observed the "apparition".

At this stage it is not possible to arrive at any conclusions regarding this incident, further documentation from the other witnesses is required, together with further field trips to the area concerned. Suffice it to say that this case is one of the more incredible reports of late, and it appears to bear some resemblances to overseas cases.