

Flaming orange ball a UFO?

By Richard Spiro
The Daily News

ST. HELENS — A "flaming orange ball" that was seen early today here and at Ridgefield, Wash., remained classified as an unidentified flying object this forenoon.

The best guess offered by authorities is that it might have been a helicopter taking part in some illegal activity.

Officer Tom McCartney, of the Oregon State Police Columbia City detachment, was with Sgt. Russ Yocum of the St. Helens Police Department at 4:25 a.m. today at the Columbia County Courthouse, when they spotted a bright orange light coming from behind a hill on the Washington side of the Columbia River.

According to a statement issued by McCartney, the object was "domed shape as if the moon was coming up behind the hill" in the distance. Other officers and some bystanders saw and heard what McCartney and Yocum did.

About that time, CB operator Lucky 13 came on the air from Ridgefield, saying the object was near his house. McCartney and Yocum moved to a street above the courthouse trying to get a better view of the strange light. Again they saw it, brighter than the first time.

McCartney said the second sighting was over Sauvie Island in the Columbia River, which runs from the northern end of Columbia County toward Portland. McCartney used a tape recorder to get the noise of the craft on record, but the sound was not identifiable.

About the time the officers lost sight of the light, Lucky 13 was back on the air saying he had heard the craft hit water. McCartney called OSP in Portland, the Coast Guard and the Portland Airport. There were no reports of downed aircraft or sinking vessels. Donald Atkin, the CP operator using the Lucky 13 call signal, continued to report hearing the sound, however.

McCartney drove to the Reeder Beach area of Sauvie Island hunting for the UFO, but found nothing.

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard sent a boat toward the island from Portland and called for a helicopter to join the search from Astoria. However, due to fog, the helicopter did not take off before Lucky 13 was back on the air saying he heard the craft start up at 5:37 a.m., the last known contact with the UFO.

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Two pilots have close encounter with UFO

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TWO PILOTS flying a light aircraft late at night are convinced a mysterious object that buzzed them was a UFO.

And they have been backed up by two veteran air traffic controllers who also saw the flashing red UFO — even though it didn't show up on their radar screen.

The two pilots were practicing landing exercises in a rented Cessna over San Jose Municipal Airport, California, last month when they had their weird experience.

Gary Rounds, a 21-year-old student, was flying the plane and had fellow licensed pilot Charles Shackelford, 20, along with him.

Rounds said: "We were climbing out at about 600 ft. when we saw an object coming straight towards us.

"It was just one pulsating red light getting dimmer and then brighter, like a heart was beating.

"I couldn't see any outline above or below it. I think the light was some kind of craft."

The UFO, which the witnesses estimated to be about 10 ft. in diameter, passed about 800 ft. above the Cessna.

"It went over us and then came back at a right angle turn," said Rounds, of Cupertino, California. "As we turned towards the airport, it followed in behind us.

"I was thinking maybe it was a balloon or a hang-glider, but it couldn't have been either one because of the size of the light and the maneuvers it was making."

Fearful of a collision, Shackelford, who is also from Cupertino, radioed in to the airport control tower.

The mystery deepened when the tower reported that no other craft was showing either on their radar or in the wider area of the Oakland Bay Radar Control.

Then the two controllers radioed that they could see the mystery red light themselves, although it was still not being picked up by radar.

"At that time they were really excited about it," said Rounds. "They just didn't know what it was. They really acted amazed. Then they said 'It's leaving the airport area at incredible speed.'"

Rounds said later that though the sighting was officially reported by the tower he was reluctant at first to talk about his "close encounter."

"I figured they would think I was nuts and take my license away," he said.

Shackelford said: "Whatever it was, it really did appear to be following us. I was worried that it was going to descend on top of us.

"When it finally took off at that incredible speed we knew it was something not known on Earth. We knew we were witnessing something not known to man."

The two air traffic controllers who saw the UFO were Randy Blount and Rich Gutterud.

Blount recalled: "I walked out on the catwalk and saw it — a large red light pulsating three or four times every five seconds."

Because of his long service in air traffic he was skeptical.

But he admitted: "I don't know what it was. I have no explanation."

Gutterud said: "Together we have 20 years of experience with the Federal Aviation Administration and neither of us have seen anything like it before."

Odd lights in the sky

An unidentified flying object was reported over Taunton last night, by Mr. David Thomas, 20, of Duke Street, Taunton. He saw two orange lights

watcher for eight years, added: "They were making the characteristic U.F.O. movements of banking and zig-zagging." A spokesman for air traffic control at Bristol said no

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