

Was it one of ours?

Brick family sees strange craft in sky

By Richard McDonald

Staff Writer

BRICK — Bill and Cheryl Cook say they saw a round metallic craft in the sky Tuesday night, and they don't think it's one of ours.

Frankly, they're not sure exactly what it was.

"I know what I saw," says Cook, a 24-year-old welder, "and I'll never forget it."

What he and his wife saw, on first glance, was a row of lights in the sky.

The Cooks were sitting on the back porch of their house near Oceanville about 11 that evening, gazing up at the sky.

"Then I noticed these lights that were just sitting there and not moving," Cook said.

"He came and got me and said, 'Look at this. What is it?'" said Cheryl Cook.

Bill Cook grabbed his 1,200-millimeter U.S. Army telescope for a closer look.

He peered through the viewfinder and saw, off in the sky near

Point Pleasant and the ocean, an oval-shaped craft "that looked like stainless steel — it was almost blue it shined so bright."

The body was shaped the way outer space ships are frequently drawn: oval — almost like a hamburger — with the corners turned up in a point.

In the middle of the metallic hull were three horizontal black lines skimming across the craft's center. Pulsating across the base were three rows of lights.

The object stayed in one spot, without a sound, for at least 20 minutes, say the Cooks.

"Then it took off across the sky like it had been shot out of a rifle," Cook said. "And it stopped on a dime."

"It shone so bright when it took off you hardly see — it was so bright," he said.

"It left a trail of a white line in the sky," said his wife.

Then it began moving in a triangular formation, says Cook, flashing four lights in sequence:

red, yellow, green, blue.

It would move to the next point in the triangle, then flash its four colors. Then it would go to the next point and flash. And the next.

Cook said he watched the craft for about 90 minutes. And then:

"Just as fast as I saw it," he says, "it was gone. It just shot straight up. I watched it until the lights disappeared."

"Then I went back inside and turned and tossed until 4 a.m.," he said.

Not too far away — and unbeknownst to the Cooks at the time — her father, John Butler, saw the same lights in the sky.

"I was just out walking the dog and a couple of lights caught my eye that were kind of unusual," Butler said.

"It was like a plane but it wasn't moving. That's what was unusual. And they were lower in the sky than stars would be."

"Then all of a sudden when I came back in the other direction," he said, "the lights are in the op-

posite direction — a mile apart."

"And the lights just hung there and that was it."

It was about 1,500 feet high, he estimated, and maybe a bit more than a mile out.

This happened from about 11:30 to 11:45, when he usually walks his dog, he said.

Neither Lakehurst's Naval Air Engineering Center nor McGuire Air Force Base reported having any planes in that location at the time.

"The only thing I'm aware of in the Northeast has been a lot of meteor showers," said Nick Grand, public-relations officer at Lakehurst.

"In all the 35 years I've been doing this," he said, "I've never had a military person say that they've sighted something."

An air-traffic controller at McGuire said civilian planes are in that area most nights.

"It doesn't sound like one of ours," he said.