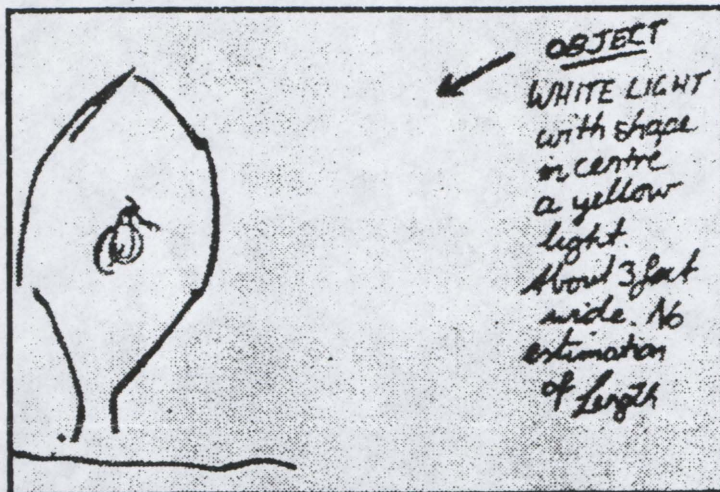


THE MUNDRABILLA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, INCIDENT

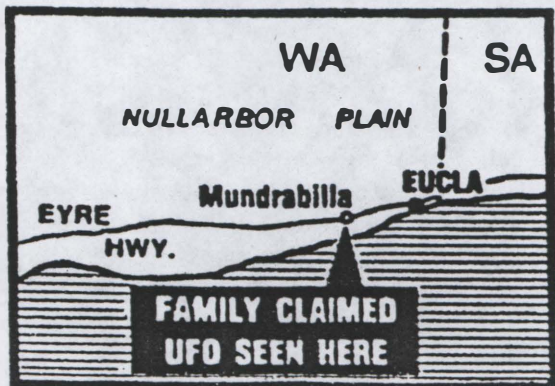
Poss. CE2 20 Jan 88 Mundrabilla WA approx. 0500 hrs



Drawing by Knowles family given to police

The front pages of many newspapers of the 21st of January reported provocative details of a family's alleged encounter with a UFO. The glowing object resembled a giant egg in an egg cup. It allegedly stopped their car and left behind physical traces. Follow-up reports gave details on other alleged witnesses. The unidentified driver of a car with caravan travelling in the opposite direction to the Knowles family, reportedly swerved to avoid the object. Graham Henley, driving a truck 10-15 km ahead of the Knowles, saw in his rear vision mirror, a bright white light hovering over the car's headlights. Another truck driver, probably John De Jong, travelled some distance behind the Knowles' car. There was possibly one other unidentified truck driver who may have first reported the incident to the Eucla police. Other reports came from Alan and Tina Parkes, who saw a very bright, greenish-bluish object stationary on the horizon while driving from Mt Gambier to Melbourne on 16 Jan. Two separate tuna boat crews reported sighting UFOs in the Great Australian Bight.

The following details on the central Knowles family sighting are derived from preliminary reports compiled by Keith Basterfield and Ray Brooke of UFO Research (South Australia) and kindly provided by Vlad Godic of UFORA, and from media sources. Ceduna police telephoned Ray Brooke some 10 hours after the incident had occurred, whereupon an interview with the family was arranged for when they reached Adelaide. Unfortunately, TV Channel 7 intercepted the family enroute and arranged an "exclusive" deal with them. After negotiations with the network, Keith and Ray were able to informally talk with the Knowles, though in a hectic atmosphere sandwiched between TV studio interviews.



DESERT: Where UFO was sighted

Mrs Fay Knowles and sons Sean, Patrick and Wayne were travelling in a 1984 blue Ford Telstar from Perth, Western Australia to Melbourne, Victoria. At a point some 40 km west of Mundrabilla, Sean, the driver, saw what he at first took to be a truck's light approaching

along the road from the E. It was "jumping about a bit", disappeared, became visible again and continued to approach their vehicle. Sean commented that it looked like a "spaceship". It became bigger and brighter. They kept driving towards it. It then disappeared.

The next thing they knew it was behind them. Sean accelerated the car in an attempt to get away from it. Suddenly it was in front again. At some stage, Sean did a U-turn and travelled W for a while, then did another U-turn to resume the original E travel. It is not clear whether this was an attempt to elude or follow the light. At another time, the light was seen close to their vehicle and they swerved to miss it and nearly hit a car and caravan coming the other way.

The exact sequence of events from here is very confused, but included:

- The rear right tyre blew out whilst they travelled at speed. Sean braked the car to a halt.
- Mrs Knowles placed her hand on the car's roof and felt a "spongy substance". She retracted it after feeling the material. Immediately the back of her hand felt warm for a few seconds, then the sensation of heat faded.
- The family wound down the windows and a "greyish-black mist" came into the car.
- The sound of their voices changed in pitch and appeared to slow down.
- They believed the object had landed on the roof of the car, although upon questioning, they said they did not see anything protruding front, rear or over the sides of the car.
- A humming sound was heard.
- Sean blacked out for a period.
- They all became hysterical, shouting and crying. Mrs Knowles said she believed they were going to die.
- They believed the car was lifted off the road. However, when asked if they had looked out and saw the car off the ground, they said they had not done so.
- They reported the vehicle dropped to the ground and the tyre burst.
- Their two dogs went "crazy".
- They reported a smell like "dead bodies" in the air.

After a period of time, Sean stopped the car and they all got out to hide in adjacent scrub. They reported the light/object remained in the vicinity of the car and then departed. Some 15 minutes after stopping, the family returned to the car and rapidly changed the tyre. They proceeded to the Mundrabilla Motor Hotel in W.A.

A sample of the "soot/ash" found on and in the car was collected 10 hours after the event by a police forensic squad officer who was at Ceduna police station on another matter. Results of the analysis are still awaited. On 25 January, Channel 7 announced that its experts said "analysis of black material on the car reveals that it is mostly iron oxide consistent with residue from worn brake linings" and that the almost perfect cut on the right rear tyre was probably caused by running a considerable distance on the rim. This could likewise explain the shaking and smoke. There were also four slight indentations discovered at the four corner points of the roof. It is possible, though yet to be confirmed, that the marks may have occurred when the family's two suitcases strapped to the roof disappeared, presumably by being ripped off at high speed.

The UFOR(SA) investigators have emphasised that "the physical evidence is not as strong as the media have reported and caution is urged until technical reports are in". They concluded that the family appeared to be down to earth people trying to cope with some traumatic episode. Indications of a hoax are minimal. At this date, the entire incident is still open to a number of interpretations. Investigations are continuing and a more detailed report is in preparation.

(Media sources include: "Daily Telegraph", Sydney "Sun" and "Daily Mirror", 21-22 Jan; "Sun-Herald" and "Sunday Telegraph", 24 Jan 88; and Channel 7 "Nightly News" and "Newsworld", various dates.)