

UFOs spotted

Arkansas people see strange lights & shapes in the night sky

airborne craft last summer and later in November which puzzled them. At the time they discounted the sighting as strange but not noteworthy. More concerning all these incidents, including what the three women saw, will follow later in this series.

Sightings reported

Since the Jan. 19 report of this car chase, at least 200 residents of Little



Map shows location of Little River County.

1st of a 5-part series

River County have called the local sheriff's office to say they have seen something in the night they cannot identify. No one knows how many more have seen something but refused to report it for fear of ridicule. Those who claim to have seen unidentified flying lights and objects near Foreman include teachers, engineers, a doctor, several newspaper reporters, a former military airman and at least one elected member of the local town council.

Though it cannot be confirmed, there are reliable reports that at

least one sheriff's deputy and a drug enforcement agent have also made sightings. Both men are understandably reluctant to have their names made public.

So far no one has offered an explanation that would explain all the sightings.

Initial Associated Press reports based on phone calls to Foreman told of the car chase and subsequent sightings. Soon after, the Arkansas



Carol Whisenhunt of B&B Barbecue at Foreman says UFO souvenir tee-shirts, eggs (which are really ball bearings) and newspapers have been selling like hotcakes there.

Timesphotos by Bill Macomber

A Little River News photographer took this 20-second time exposure Jan. 23 of one of the strange lights. The light was 20 degrees above the horizon and made two 90-degree turns.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Residents of the small southwest Arkansas town of Foreman began spotting unexplained lights in the night sky late last December. Since then, the local sheriff's department has received more than 200 reports of unidentified objects flying over the Foreman/Ashdown area just north of Texarkana. Several residents have reported that the objects do more than simply fly over at night. The Foreman sightings are unusual in the history of unexplained aerial phenomena. Rarely do such episodes continue as long as this one or involve as many people. Unless otherwise noted, all episodes recounted in this five-part series on the Foreman sightings were told firsthand to Times reporter Bill Macomber there by eyewitnesses. At press time the sightings continue. Efforts to find military or commercial air explanations have yielded no answers.

By BILL MACOMBER
Times Staff Writer

Reports of the unexplained Foreman sightings in southwest Arkansas reached the attention of the media after a Jan. 19 incident in which three Foreman women said a "bright light" chased their automobile on a two-lane highway. The three women were driving home from a local basketball game when the incident occurred. All three have lived most of their lives in the Foreman area just north of Texarkana. They are mothers and businesswomen. Those who know them well affirm they are not heavy drinkers, nor are they drug-takers. The three women themselves say they don't know what it was they saw. They just know they saw something they have never seen before that frightened them very much.

Two of the women involved in the chase say they had already seen an



MUFON field investigator Charles Huffer looks over UFO photos in The Little River News office.

Gazette ran a story in which a Little Rock astronomer offered an explanation of what people in Foreman, Arkansas, were spotting. Though the astronomer himself had not visited the area, he said the sightings were probably misidentifications of Venus and Jupiter. In a later article, the same astronomer said the reports could well be the result of the moon shining on the belly of a snowgoose.

Newspapermen contest

Jim Williamson and Gerald Stripling are co-publishers of the Little River News, the nearby Ashdown newspaper which first took the story seriously. When asked if the lights could be planetary activity or snowgoose, as the Little Rock astronomer said, Stripling replied, "That's totally, 100 percent, absolutely dyed-in-the-wool wrong. Any idiot who took one look would know that's not what it is. People don't know what it is, but it's not that."

Ashdown, the home of the giant Nekoosa Paper Plant, is fifteen minutes away from Foreman via two-lane Ark. Hwy. 32. The majority of sightings have occurred on a dirt farming road (the Anderson lateral) that intersects Hwy. 32 between Foreman and Ashdown.

In a telephone interview with the Times on Wednesday, Jan. 27, Stripling, who sells advertising for the Little River News, confirmed that local residents were indeed consistently spotting "a series of lights." Some lights blinked and others remained constant. Colors seen, according to Stripling, included red, yellow, orange and white.

Stripling added his brother-in-law, Jim Williamson, who writes and takes pictures for the paper, had photographed the lights for the Little River News. One photograph was a 30-second time-exposure of a brightly lit object making two 90-degree turns while the camera's shutter remained open.

Activity continues

Stripling added the activity was continuing almost every night in Foreman. The earliest sightings, according to Stripling, were in November, though few knew about them until much later. He attributed this to the fear of ridicule.

"For a long time people didn't want to say anything," Stripling said. "They think you're crazy."

Estimated altitudes of the sightings ranged from treetop level to 4,000 feet, Stripling told the Times. Later, in Foreman, people said that since the initial sightings at least two reputable witnesses have placed the bright lights either on the ground or hovering two or three feet above it.

The nearest Air Force installation to Foreman is Barksdale Air Force Base near Shreveport, La. The Air Force spokesman could not account for what people around Foreman were seeing. He said there has been

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