

no unusual military activity in the region. While mid-flight refueling operations over the sighting area have been common for years, those operations take place at altitudes of 20,000 feet and up, according to the Air Force. Foreman residents have grown up viewing such night-sky maneuverings. They know what a refueling operation looks like, they say, and that isn't what they are seeing.

The Air Force also said no one from the military would be traveling to Foreman to look into the matter. Project Blue Book, the official Air Force study of the UFO experience in America, officially closed its files in 1969. The Air Force is no longer in the UFO business, at least publicly.

Regular air traffic

Other regular air traffic over the sighting area includes Air Life, a hospital helicopter operating out of Texarkana. Air Life shuttles regularly to and from rural car wrecks and other medical emergencies in the Foreman area. There are also commercial airline flight patterns approaching the Texarkana airport over Foreman. Area natives recognize these nocturnal lights for what they are. They aren't what people are seeing either, they say.

To the south of Foreman is the Red River Army Depot. Most of the activity at the military base revolves around the restoration of army tanks. A public affairs official at the depot told the *Times* there is a heliport on the grounds, but that night flights are extremely rare. The official knew of no night exercises which might involve the use of flares.

In a long-distance phone call later on Wednesday, Jan. 27, Williamson said the episodes, which had become almost nightly, appeared to be "snowballing." He said a Southwestern Electric Power Company rural electric substation seemed to be "a pivot point" for the sightings. The substation is located along the Anderson lateral, a dirt road running through the Red River bottoms. The bottoms, like most of Little River County, are flat with tall pines growing almost anywhere not cleared for houses or crops. Farmers in the bottoms grew cotton before switching recently to wheat and soybeans.

In the midst of these flat fields, according to Williamson, cars were lining up each night along the dirt roads leading to the substation. People were waiting and watching. Williamson said the substation had turned into a "cheap date." The view from the substation allows for a nearly 360-degree view.

Saw bright light

"We saw it Monday," said Williamson, adding he spotted the object (which he photographed making 90 degree turns) while in the company of an emergency medical technician and an employee of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commis-

sion. All three saw the bright, oddly behaving light which shows up on Williamson's film as a zig-zagging streak of light.

On the phone Wednesday, arrangements were made for Williamson to meet the following day with a *Times* reporter who would travel to the Foreman/Ashdown area in the company of a Fayetteville man, Charles Huffer, a Mutual UFO Network member who was fascinated by reports he had read of the sightings. Huffer, 47, is a math teacher who taught in West Berlin the last 19 years before returning recently to Fayetteville. He is a mathematics graduate of the University of Arkansas. Huffer has studied unexplained aerial phenomena for more than a dozen years now. A member of Mensa, Huffer expressed interest in making the trip to Foreman, noting the episodes there showed every sign of ranking among the most noteworthy in Arkansas history because of their duration and the number of people involved.

Before hanging up Wednesday, Williamson told the *Times* that stories coming out of Little Rock concerning Venus and moonlit snowgeese deeply hurt the feelings of people who were seeing things that could not be accounted for by such simpleminded explanations. He referred to Bob Taaffe, a Foreman man who has logged 1,800 hours in the military aboard B-52 bombers. "He (Bob) knew from the beginning it wasn't Venus or Mercury," Williamson said.

Williamson also mentioned an amateur astronomer in Texarkana who had studied the phenomena since the sightings began. Williamson said the astronomer was personally convinced that something extremely rare was happening in Foreman. The astronomer added, according to Williamson, that the lights and objects being seen over Foreman were very possibly "nothing in our solar system."