

EDITION 63

TASMANIAN UFO INVESTIGATION CENTRE

NEWSLETTER

JULY 1991

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MID-YEAR SUMMARY

Another decade has commenced but on the local scene we have seen no change in UFO activity. The European flaps of 1989-1990 seem to have faded away although information is still slowly coming through. It has been disappointing that the excellent sightings over Belgium earlier last year do not seem to have aroused any interest outside that country. It was even reported that one United States skeptic said the sightings were a hoax by the Belgian Air Force! Crashed UFOs, abductions, and secret documents seem to preoccupy the United States investigators. We have had no news out of Britain for some time, it will be interesting to see what occurs in the British cornfields in 1991.

We have not heard of any major events on the Australian scene, reports mainly being of nocturnal lights. The Centre has picked up a number of cases from earlier years with a few lights in the sky reports in recent months.

There has been nothing in the media about local UFO sightings, although the Sunday papers on April 7th covered Tassie's mystery space object. Hobart Police received a report of a mass of light going down maybe into the Derwent River. A search by the Police failed to find anything to indicate an accident. It was then suggested that re-entry of the space shuttle Atlantis' fuel tank was responsible for the report. However, the fuel tank had burnt up it seems in the Northern Hemisphere. TUFOIC was able to contact the witnesses and from descriptions provided it was apparent that the case was due to a meteor or re-entry of space junk.

One function of interest will be coming up in Sydney on the weekend of September 7/8th at the "Sebel Townhouse". A seminar headed "The UFO Mystery" will feature a number of Australian and overseas speakers. Two speakers in the forefront of ufology are Jenny Randles (England), and Jerone Clark (Centre for UFO Studies, USA). Strong support no doubt will come from Keith Basterfield (UFO Research Australia), and Bill Chalker one of Australia's leading researchers from New South Wales. (If you are interested in more information on the seminar contact TUFOIC).

Plane wrecks may be 'lost squadron'

MIAMI — The mystery of the "lost squadron" that vanished 45 years ago in the Bermuda Triangle may be close to being solved with the discovery of five navy aircraft sunk off Fort Lauderdale.

The planes' disappearance helped build the myth of the Bermuda Triangle, an area bounded by Bermuda, Miami and Puerto Rico where ships and aircraft were said to disappear mysteriously.

The salvagers, Scientific Search Project, went to court yesterday to stake their claim on the wrecks of the five TBM Avengers.

MERCURY AP MAY

Florida aircraft find not lost squadron

MIAMI — The Bermuda Triangle myth-makers and myth-debunkers were equally delighted yesterday to learn the five Avengers found off Fort Lauderdale do not belong to Flight 19.

Why? Scientific Search Project's failure to find the Lost Patrol is good for business.

Author Charles Berlitz could hardly contain his glee upon hearing the news. "My goodness!" he gushed. "We are in middle of a twilight zone ... again."

Berlitz is the author of the 1974 smash best-seller The Bermuda Triangle and the 1976 sequel Without A Trace.

Both books placed the Bermuda Triangle on the shelf of unexplained phenomena next to the Abominable Snowman, the Loch Ness Monster and Bigfoot.

"I knew it," Berlitz said. "The planes were too close to the shore. It didn't seem right."

EXAMINOR 6.6.91 KRTN

SIGHTING INVESTIGATIONS

The Centre in past months has received a number of old sighting reports, whilst follow up is always difficult in this type of report the details have been recorded due to their similarity to sightings already on our files.

Our oldest case dates back to July 1980 when two witnesses were travelling home on the Tasman Highway to Hobart. Whilst leaving Sorell the wife noticed a triangle shape of red lights to west, almost at once the lights shot off towards the north west going out of sight over the hills in that direction.

Still wondering about the lights they drove on about half a kilometre until they were crossing the Sorell Causeway. At this point a similar light was spotted approaching again from the northern sky. The husband slowed and pulled up the car as an object materialised out of the lights. The object came to a halt above the witnesses' car. The wife now leaned out the passengers window and looked up at an oval object estimated to be some 10-30m above the car. The object was estimated as being about 5m across. The wife said she seemed to be looking at the base of the oval, with part of the sides visible, it was all white except for 5 large red lights around the base of the oval. This part of the sighting seemed to last for some considerable time before the object shot off yet again, this time to the south east, then it went vertically up into the sky and disappeared in a second. The witnesses went at once to the nearby Hobart Airport but there were no aircraft at the the airport. Prior to the sighting the wife had not beleived in UFO reports.



Sketch of UFO as seen over car.

We move on eight years to January 1988 for our next incident. This case had one witness who was sitting on the front step of her Ilfraville home about 9 o'clock one evening. Mrs I was looking west at the sunset when she noticed a round or disk shaped light in a stationary position over the top of the hills. The object had a silvery colour. The witness went inside and watched out a window before coming back out to the fron of her house.

The object now made a move, it departed upwards into the sky at great speed and in a matter of seconds had vanished from sight. The object had looked to be above the elevation of the distant Asbestos Range which are 300-400m high and about 10k to the skyline from the witnesses home.

About a year later (late 89) a witness claimed to have seen an erratic light near Lorinna about early evening. The light was noticed crossing the sky before dropping down in front of a hill less than 1½k from the witness. The light curved around the hill before blinking out. It soon reappeared in the sky above and moved away over the north east horizon.

Write to Tas UFO Investigation Centre, GPO Box 99, North Hobart.7002
Telephone sightings to 002 236009

TWO REPORTS FROM 1990

Not all the unexplained cases were covered in our Annual Report for 1990, investigations can take time to finalise and our next two cases were in that category.

This report from August 2nd (1990) occurred on a lonely part of the West Coast over the sand dunes near the Rebecca River. Our witness was working on a fishing boat some 500m off the coast, the time was about four o'clock on a fine clear afternoon. Initially the witness noticed what he took to be a speeding vehicle at about sand dune height. The dunes in the area are upto 10m high and covered with marram grass or scrub. He then realised there was no road for a vehicle to be on, plus it could not be travelling at the speed of the object visible to his east.

The object appeared to have a squarish shape with a slightly bullet like front. It was silvery-grey in colour with a similar coloured tail at the rear which made the rear end indistinct. The object continued on its rapid movement south, dipping down in front of two tall sand dunes, then rising slightly and going behind another large dune. The object had been in view for about 20 seconds.

The witness waited expecting the object to reappear from behind the dune but nothing happened. An aircraft just could not have turned away in time and the witness was baffled by the disappearance of the object. There were no other witnesses to the sighting as he was alone on deck.

Our second case comes from almost the opposite corner of the state on Tasman Peninsula. There are a number of chicken farms on the Peninsula and some early morning workers at one of these farms reported seeing a mass of bright lights crossing the eastern sky.

The time of the sighting was 2am on a fine but partly cloudy night. Weather details for the area soon after at 3am confirm this with cloud at 1500ft and full cover at 10,000ft. The witnesses talk of the lights passing above the low cloud so that the lights were between the two cloud levels, in which case they should have been under the control of local Tasmanian airports.

Four witnesses in all saw the lights as they moved silently across the south eastern sky for some 2 to 3 minutes, passing away towards the north east, probably out over the Tasman Sea. Two very bright white lights were at the front of some 15 to 20 other white lights. One witness said he could make out no pattern to the mass of lights, whilst a second witness thought the lights had an even base with two humped areas above. The moon was noticed in the western sky but the witnesses said the white lights covered an area many times larger than the moon. Other night flying aircraft noticed over the area usually appear as small dots of light.

Enquiries at Hobart, Launceston, and with the RAAF failed to reveal any known aircraft movements in the sighting area, it seems that a local airport should have known of aircraft movements over the Tasman Peninsula had there been anything "up there" ?

EXAMINED 23/6/91

Secret look at circles

LONDON — Scientists trying to solve the mysterious formation of symmetrical circles in fields of grain launched a five-week vigil at a secret site in southern England yesterday.

They hope to catch a circle being formed on film, using a mobile weather station, thermal imaging, radar equipment and television cameras.

The circles of flattened grain are swirled into precise geometrical formations. Popular newspapers have suggested they are formed by aliens from outer space.

Pilot reports close shave with mystery missile

London

AVIATION experts are still puzzling over the report that a missile narrowly missed a passenger jet flying towards Heathrow Airport near the south of England.

Nearby military airfields confirmed that they use missiles, but only anti-tank ver-

sions which stay close to the ground.

The incident happened two weeks ago when Captain Achille Zaghetti was piloting his McDonnell Douglas MD80 on one of the world's busiest air routes.

He reported seeing a three-metre long object which he was sure was a missile, cylindrical

and light brown, travelling towards his plane but about 300 metres higher.

The aircraft, with 57 passengers, was on the radar screens of the main air control station at West Drayton, which also picked up the mystery object.

The authority said no other aircraft were in the immediate area, and after a controller's

report, an inquiry was immediately set in motion.

Air traffic controllers submitted a report and the investigation was launched immediately.

The jet was flying at 22,000 feet above Lydd Ranges, a Ministry of Defence firing range in Kent.

But an MoD spokesman said the missile could not have been launched from the range because Lydd was an infantry training area and the only missiles used there were anti-tank weapons.

The spokesman said no British missiles were capable of flying at such a height.

NASA SCIENTIST TRACKS PILOT REPORTS

In the past 20 years, more than 3,000 sightings of UFOs have been reported by pilots, according to Richard Haines, a NASA scientist who keeps track of such reports in his spare time. He said the sightings are reported by military, civilian and commercial pilots who fly both national and international routes.

Haines said many of the reports fall into two main categories. One category involves UFOs that suddenly appear within view of the cockpit and then disappear very rapidly. Many other reports involve UFOs that tail aircraft for periods ranging from a minute to more than two hours.

Haines' interest in UFOs results from his more than two decades spent working in NASA's man-in-space program. In the early 1960s, as he began studying visual optics in space, he encountered many reports from pilots who claimed to have seen UFOs.

"I thought I could explain all these strange phenomena as nothing more than strange lighting," said Haines. "But I had to look at the data as an open-minded scientist and pretty soon realized that we are facing something totally different."

NEW SCIENTIST

SUNDAY MAIL, Glasgow, Scotland

Nov. 11, 1990 CR: T. Good

Airline pilot spots UFO

A PILOT who has been flying for 23 years is convinced he saw a UFO last week. British Airways Captain Mike D'Alton said the bright object must have been travelling at a phenomenal speed.

He described it as a large silver disc with three points of light - in arrow formation - in the front, and a fourth light behind it.

"I've never seen anything like it before and can't explain what it was," said the 42-year-old West Sussex flier.

He said it was visible for about two minutes over

Genoa, during his Boeing 737 night flight from Rome to Gatwick.

"My co-pilot and I called in two cabin crew to see it and then it went out of sight."

"Ground radar couldn't pick it up, so it must have been travelling at phenomenal speed."

Captain D'Alton said he has told the UFO Society Research Association about the mystery object.

EARTHQUAKE LIGHTS OBSERVED IN CANADA

Numerous earthquake lights (EQLs) were reported between November 1, 1988, and January 21, 1989, in the Saguenay region of Quebec. These luminosities were associated with 54 seismic shocks recorded in this area. Most were small, but a strong fore-shock (magnitude 4.8) occurred on November 23; the main quake (magnitude 6.5) hit 60 hours later. Through appeals by radio and newspapers, 52 observers of EQLs were located. They reported a wide spectrum of luminosities, some of which were very strange. In the sky, some observed silent sparkings, diffuse glows, and aurora-like stripes. For an account of the more enigmatic EQLs, we quote M. Ouellet:

"Fireballs a few metres in diameter often popped out of the ground in a repetitive manner at distances of up to only a few metres away from the observers. Others were seen several hundred metres up in the sky, stationary or moving. Some observers described dripping luminescent drop-

AN UNEXPLAINED EVENT

September 6, 1990, 2029 UT. Hornchurch, England. "The sky was 'crystal clear' and there was brilliant moonlight, the Moon being 1 day past Full. An object approximately 0.5-0.75 the size of the Full Moon, but a dull, mottled red in colour, was observed to cross the sky from west to east in approximately 3 seconds. As it approached the area of the Moon it faded away, giving the impression of being drowned out by the moonlight. Mr Scarlioli observed the object to be of an irregular shape and says that he could see it 'turning' as it moved along. No trail was left behind the object and there were no 'sparks' normally associated with the fragmentation of a fireball during the ablation process. No sound was heard from this object. There is currently no explanation for this event." ("Unexplained Event 1990 Sep 6, 2029 UT," *Meteoros*, 20:44, Autumn 1990.)