

# TUFOIC NEWSLETTER

July 1997

Issue 81

## INTERNET

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Mid June saw a fireball burn up across Bass Strait producing calls from Melbourne and North West Tasmania. The media coverage prompted a number of callers with

## MID-YEAR REVIEW

The UFO wheel has turned full circle following the bumper year for sightings during 1996. Usually in our Annual Report, we provide a list of sightings around Australia, it takes up a page or maybe nearly two. This time the listing was too large to incorporate into our Annual Report, probably for two reasons, improved contact with other groups and more UFO sightings. The listing is on a Microsoft Word document if anyone is interested.

At mid-year the Centre has only three unexplained cases for 1997, incoming calls from the public are lower than last year but well up on average. Some interesting explanations have been the Antarctic Research Centre's green laser beam (Lidar) which they will be testing until later in the year.

In May a number of Launceston and West Tamar residents reported a teardrop shaped object moving silently through the sky. Our Northern Representative, Jacob Willard, did an excellent job in uncovering the explanation which had eluded the media. The teardrop shape was in fact a vintage 1947 Stinson Voyager aircraft heading home to Mt Direction on the middle reaches of the Tamar.

Another recent report came from a group of witnesses who gathered in response to contact over CB radio, however, their large bright light in the sky was Jupiter.

sightings from other localities.

The 'UFO Slime' raised its head we hope for the final time in February, a Burnie resident reported a white substance had appeared on their front lawn one evening. Andrew Mott, our North West representative, was on the spot soon after and able to photograph the lawn. However, despite tests no conclusion could be made as to the source of the substance other than no UFO sighting was involved.

The resultant drop in unexplained cases puts last year's flap into a better perspective. Whatever was the cause for all those calls is no longer around.



The Centre now has representatives in both the North and North West, a luxury we did not have early last year. The Launceston Examiner has again run coverage on reports both explained and unexplained, but none of this has created the skeptics often promoted 'media flap'.

Indication from fellow Australian researchers and the Internet point to an easing in UFO sightings. Reports of Nocturnal Lights seem to continue unabated in some areas, whilst some cases of high strangeness are still occurring. Following trends elsewhere a few tantalizing abduction cases came to the Centre's attention. However, investigation was difficult and the cases could not be resolved.

Despite information elsewhere that aliens are here, abductions are commonplace, governments are covering up, etc: The U in UFO still stands for Unidentified or Unexplained if you like.

## TUFOIC

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# TASMANIAN SIGHTINGS

14 January 1997.

## SIX REPORT SEEING UFO OVER CITY.

*Launceston Examiner - 17 January 1997*

*By Jane Waller.*

The National UFO Hotline has received several reports about an unidentified flying object hovering over Launceston early on Tuesday morning. Hotline operator Ross Dowe said yesterday that he had talked to six people from Launceston who had seen the object between 1.15am and 2.30am. Mr Dowe said that all had given a similar description of the object which has been reported as having three flashing lights. He said that all the callers bar one had also commented on the loud noise made by the object.

Clare Fisher of Invermay, said that she had been woken by a noise around 1am and at first had thought it was a truck idling outside her unit. She investigated, and while she did not see any lights she also found there was no truck outside her home, though the noise persisted for 15 to 20 minutes.

Maggie Ross was also woken by a loud noise around 2.30am in Charles St. She said she had gone to the window and seen three bright lights. "They were huge and the middle one was flashing," she said. "After a few minutes it disappeared down the river but I could hear the roaring noise for another 20 minutes or so."

Heather Whybrow, of South Launceston, was another woken by a weird noise. She saw the object move slowly across the northern part of the city for about 15 minutes before disappearing.

Investigation by Northern Rep: Jacob Willard failed to uncover any known aircraft in the area. The UFO was described as being a round metallic looking object with a number of lights. The blue, orange, and red lights were flashing in sequence from left to right as the object only moved very slowly in the northern sky. After some 15 minutes it suddenly streaked off to the north. \*\*\*

7 February 1997. Westbury.

## MYSTERY CIGAR RETURNS?

A sighting with similarities to the Northern Flap of May/June 1996 occurred about 9am on February 7th at Westbury. Investigator Jacob Willard interviewed the witnesses later that day. The object was first seen by C from the bathroom window, calling to his older sister they then went out into the garden for a better view. A white cigar with some grey below was visible in the clear blue southern sky, it was moving slowly from west to east. Young C ran off to find some binoculars. His sister continued to watch as it suddenly changed to a vertical position. It then made an instant increase in speed descending straight down and being lost from view behind nearby buildings. The object made no noise and left no vapour trail. The sighting lasted 3 to 4 minutes in excellent viewing conditions.

A number of cases from the West Tamar and Launceston area in 1996 also involved a white cigar to pencil like shape, all the sightings occurring on days with clear blue skies. In some cases the object was seen in a vertical position, whilst its disappearance at times seemed to be instantaneous.

## UFO FOLLOWS POLICE CAR IN ARGENTINA

The night of Saturday, June 14, 1997, three police officials drove out of Telen in Argentina's La Pampa province, heading for the nearby city of Victoria. Telen is 655 kilometers (585 miles) west of Buenos Aires, the national capital.

In the car were subcommissioner Galician David, municipal officer Jose Corna and Sgt. Pilar Radel of the Telen police. As they drove out of town "an enormous light" descended from the sky and took up position behind their car.

"It was a light, an enormous and ovoidal light, in a bright orange color and emitting a shaft of light that illuminated the car's windows and the trees along the highway," Sr. David reported.

The UFO accompanied the car during the 13-kilometer (7-mile) drive to Victoria. The UFO flew east with the car "in the direction of Victoria and, after that, it headed to the south and went into the hills," Sgt. Radel reported.

The UFO did not interfere with the radio. The trio used the radio to get in touch with the police in Telen and in Santa Rosa, the provincial capital, 175 kilometers (105 miles) to the south, describing the UFO in detail as they drove along. (See the newspaper La Arena of Santa Rosa for June 17, 1997. Muchas gracias a Eduardo Castor Borgovoni para esta historia.)

Credit: UFO Roundup Vol 2 No 25 June 1997.

Editor: Joseph Trainor

A motorist and his passenger returning to the West Coast encountered some unexplained lights on the high half way between Gretna and Hamilton in the Derwent Valley. About 7.50pm they noticed a red light with a whitish glow about in the northern sky, the light seemed to be moving about a bit. Then the light came down sharply at a 45 degree angle, it now looked to have red and green pulsating lights which were moving around. The passenger had the impression there was a dome shaped area above the lights. The lights were now to their right and looked to be some 20m above the trees.

The driver of the car slowed right down, opening his window for a better view. The presence of the lights made the witnesses a bit scared so they drove off stopping further down the road.

The lights were last seen going down behind the trees and were no longer visible.

24 June 1997. Lachlan.  
**LIGHT PHENOMENA  
AT GROUND LEVEL.**

A second report came to the Centre's attention following publicity on the burn-up over Bass Strait on June 24th.

Mrs B of Lachlan was home alone at 7.30pm on the evening of June 24th. She was in the kitchen and noticed a bright light source on the kitchen blinds. Looking out she was puzzled by a large circle of light seemingly at ground level some 200/300m to the east of the house.

The light circle was in a paddock at a higher elevation above the house. Mrs B could see the fence posts in front of the light which placed it in front of the trees at the other end of the paddock.

She went outside for a better view but could not see any

marks on the circle or hear any sound. The bright white light did not seem to reflect onto any of the nearby trees. She looked out soon after but the light had disappeared.

A search of the area failed to locate any marks or explanation for the source of the light.

**WITNESS REPORTS  
ENGLISH SIGHTING OF 1967.**

In a recent contact with the Centre, J of Wynyard wrote about a sighting he experienced whilst living near Warminster in England. The area at that time was world famous for its sightings, and not long after the famous crop circles made their appearance in that corner of Britain.

**Frome-Somerset-England.**

Working night shift in a four storey factory, I was standing on the top floor of this factory with another worker about 2am. Looking towards the town called Warminster it was a clear night with lots of stars.

I noticed a violet blue light hanging in the sky - we thought it might be connected with the Army who have huge artillery and tank ranges on Salisbury Plain, and who hold all sorts of exercises on these gun ranges 24 hours a day all year round.

Suddenly this thing moved at staggering speed in straight line parallel to the ground for maybe 10 miles and stopped dead without slowing down. It hung there for a couple of minutes and then shot vertically upwards again at staggering speed. Again it stopped dead. It then returned to its starting point only at its present height, stopping dead. Again it shot vertically upwards, stopped, then took off at right angles and sped away from us. It was out of sight in seconds, maybe 3 or 4 seconds.

To my knowledge man has never yet made anything which could reach maximum acceleration in zero time and stop dead without slowing down. Warminster was world famous for its UFO sightings about this time.

**Next Meeting**

**September 11th**

Starting at 7.30 PM  
at the  
**Moonah Community Centre**  
7 Gormanston Road,  
Moonah.

Feature Video  
Roswell: 50 Years.  
Not seen on TV in Tasmania

**Meetings are open  
to members and friends,  
and to the general public.**

**Those orange lights:  
what are they?**

While seeking to ascertain the cause of the large number of orange lights being reported throughout Australia, as overseas sources have been citing "flaps" of "orange light UFOs" in this country. I contacted a number of researchers here for their comments and opinions. I thank those who responded to my request.

On an historical note, looking at my files reveals that significant numbers of orange lights commenced about 5 years ago. The "Research Digest" of the now defunct national group, UFO Research Australia contain numerous sightings of these lights (copies are available on Simon Johnson's website). For example, issue 31, dated Nov-Dec 1992 detailed an outburst of orange lights over Sydney in July through September of that year.

At that stage Bill Chalker went on record as saying that one



possible explanation for some of the reports lay in the balloon hypothesis, but that certain elements of some observation did not fit this. Issue 33, dated Mar/Apr 1993 outlined another outburst of orange lights over Sydney, Perth and Adelaide. In Sydney, the view was expressed that many were hot air balloons.

Newspaper reporting on this issue, and their views as to cause, may be illustrated by a representative sample:

*"Lights in sky just a prank"* (Sunday Times-Perth 16 Oct 1994)

"Strange lights seen over Perth this week were not beings from space but a hoax by school children...a hot air balloon arrangement....we found one about 18 months ago..."

*"The truth is flying out there..."* (The Sunday Age-Melbourne 6 Jun 1996)

"There have been hoaxes played in the east. The fakers send up hot air balloons made from garbage bags..."

*"Fly-by-nights"* (Warrnambool Standard-Victoria-14 Jun 1997)

"...sightings" around Warrnambool last year, which proved to be little more than yahoos releasing garbage bags with fire lighters on wire frames..."

*"Our S-files team uncovers the real "UFO" story"* (The Plains Producer-Balaklava SA 28 Aug 1996):

"...a roughly diamond shaped formation...plastic garbage bag with a firelighter suspended beneath it...Police had a "friendly chat" with the culprits..."

Returning now to the comments I received. Some of us think that the observations of the characteristics of many of these orange lights, namely descriptions of "floating", "drifting", "smoke trails", "slow movements", durations of 5-15 minutes, clusters of lights which change formation, plus the finding of garbage bags by police and researchers indicate the hot air balloon is the overall answer. In South Australia, where UFORSA has kept a close eye on orange light reports, they believe, due to the above reasons, that most if not all orange lights are garbage bag hot air balloons. They have had close observations where the witness tells they could clearly see a garbage bag, and an instance where a bag fell, still alight, on to a house roof.

Others of us mention that the apparent travel against the surface wind directions; the ability to stop for a while then continue to move; and the clusters of lights; speak against the lights being balloons.

## The PLANETS

**MERCURY** reappears in the morning sky and reaches a greatest elongation of 18 degrees on September 16 before once again sinking back into the twilight.\*<sup>1</sup>

**VENUS** is a dazzling object visible in the western early evening sky.

**MARS** is visible in the north-western evening sky. It is easily identifiable because of its reddish colouring.

**JUPITER** is a very prominent object visible high in the eastern sky in the evenings. The giant planet is now at its best for observation, reaching opposition\*<sup>2</sup> on August 9 when it appears due north at around midnight.

**SATURN** is visible low in the north-eastern sky late on August evenings, prominent among the faint stars in the area, and by the end of September the planet appears due north at around midnight. Saturn is at its best during September-October around opposition\*<sup>2</sup>

\*<sup>1</sup> **Elongation:** The angle between a Planet and the Sun, as seen from Earth

\*<sup>2</sup> **Opposition:** when a Planet is 180 degrees from the Sun, as seen from Earth. (It will then be due North at Midnight.

Information provided by:

The Astronomical Society of Tasmania  
Bulletin - August/September 1997

## SOLAR ECLIPSE

A Partial Eclipse of the Sun will be visible from Tasmania on the morning of September 2nd.

The eclipse begins at 8:10 AM.  
Maximum eclipse at 9:35AM.

Ends at 11:10AM. Times are approx, as they will vary by a few minutes depending on your location. About 65% of the Sun will be covered at Maximum eclipse.

**WARNING:** It is extremely dangerous to look directly at the sun, even during an eclipse.

For details of safe methods of viewing a a Solar eclipse, contact: Paul Jackson, at TUFOIC, or The Astronomical Society of Tasmania.

## LUNAR ECLIPSE

A Total eclipse of the Moon will occur in the early hours of September 17th. The Eclipse will be visible from all parts of Australia.

The Eclipse begins at 3:08 AM.  
Totality begins at 4:15AM and ends at 5:17AM. The Moon will set at 6:17AM still in partial eclipse.

It is totally safe to view a Lunar Eclipse with the naked eye.

Even here, people will agree that while some of the orange lights are garbage bag balloons, they however, do not believe that they are all garbage bags.

In summary, we are divided in our opinion as to the degree in which hot air garbage bags are contributing to the observations of orange lights in Australian skies.

Compiled by Keith Basterfield  
AUSTRALIAN UFO REPORTS AND EXPERIENCES.

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# TUFOIC

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TASMANIAN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT INVESTIGATION CENTRE

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## TUFOIC on the Internet

We now have a Home page on the World Wide Web



The URL address is:

<http://server.netspace.net.au/~tufoic/>

The site currently contains:

- The TUFOIC Newsletter.
- News updates, such as an account of last years "Slime" reports.
- Information on Membership and TUFOIC Publications.
- There are also links to other interesting UFO sites on the Net.

The web site is continually being developed and will eventually contain details on all good Tasmanian sightings. We hope to keep the site up to date with the latest Tasmanian sightings and news.

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## Snails go Cosmic

By SIMON BEVILACOUA

The bizarre "cosmic slime" found in Tasmania this year was most likely snail eggs, says the state's UFO investigation unit. The slime, found at Kempton and in the North-West of the state two months ago, was rumoured to have been linked to a number of UFO sightings in the regions. The Tasmanian UFO investigation centre sent a number of slime samples from different locations for laboratory analysis.

Results returned last week revealed one sample to be the eggs of some form of mollusc and other samples to be a jelly-like substance found in potting mix or fertiliser. UFO investigation centre spokesman Keith Roberts said the sample taken from near a Kempton service station, which turned out to be mollusc eggs, sparked a series of slime reports across the state.

"Most of these things have reasonable explanations," Mr Roberts said. A national UFO report body is still waiting on its slime analysis.

The UFO Information Hotline, a national phone operation which charges \$3 a minute to receive reports, sent slime samples to laboratories in Perth and Melbourne. Hotline spokesman Ross Dowe said he believed the slime to most likely be man-made and to have been picked up and deposited by a storm. Mr Dowe said the news of Tasmanian cosmic slime had sparked a series of slime reports nationwide. "We expect to get results of the analysis back before Christmas" Mr Dowe said.

Mercury Newspaper (Sunday Tasmanian) - Hobart - 22/Dec/1996

*Sighting reports Phoned directly to TUFOIC are charged at the local call rate only.*

*This may not be the case when calling other UFO reporting services.*

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