



BLUE BOOK PEARLS - Seven Islands, Labrador
By Dr. Willy Smith

Capt. James Howard and crew sight large dark UFO with several satellite objects. (Illustration source: FATE Nov. 1954)



IN THIS ISSUE: P. #2 - From The Letter Box; interesting Gulf Breeze, FL. observations in this letter, from Carol & Rex Salisbury. p. #3 - Blue Book Pearls; by Dr. Willy Smith-UNICAT Project; new insight into the 1954 BOAC airliner/crew sighting case. P. #4 - Photo #19....In Question Again; by Barbara Becker, more damaging analysis on the infamous Ed Walters 'road shot'. P. #6 - More Gulf Breeze critique; Open Letter from Zan Overall to Bruce Maccabee. P. #7 - In the Nostalgia Department a reproduction of The American Weekly (19 Apr. 1953) article Burned by a Flying Saucer; a UFO-lore classic. P. #10 - Orbiter Book List. P. #12 - Comment on letter section of The Boston Herald.

FROM THE LETTER BOX

Investigating the reopened Gulf Breeze events are Carol and Rex Salisbury who write:

"A friend here in Ft. Walton Beach (FL.) is doing some very original analysis and computations of the photos, which at this point, show photo #19 and others to have fatal flaws....

For the record! We continue to receive questions from around the country concerning Donald Ware's claims that he has evidence that we are agents on the government payroll. We would hope that he would furnish his 'proof' to the paymaster as we are not receiving our 'salaries'. We expect that his 'proof' again falls short, as his 'proof' of the authenticity of the Walters case. Paranoia?

We sent a letter to the MUFON Journal outlining some of the data which we have generated to disprove the Walters case. We claimed the right to do so under the 50% rule which allowed responses to articles printed in the Journal. Our letter to the editor was basically a response to Maccabee's article of last Nov. Andrus called us about the letter a couple of months ago and asked for documentation to support the letter. I told him that I had never heard of the need to document letters to the editor so we ended the call with the understanding that our letter would not be printed. We were then surprised to get letters from Stacy and Andrus indicating that our letters would be printed in the June issue.

The local MUFON contingent are claiming that there is an on-going spate of 'red light' sightings.... Last year we were able to determine that some of the lights were hoaxed, although some of the sightings seemed to be legitimate. One of the witnesses to a recent sighting (using binoculars) told Carol that she distinctly saw a lighted kite. We have not been directly involved with the investigations so have no opinion on the authenticity. One has to note, however, that the lights started appearing at about the same time as the paper back version of Walters' book hit the stands. (Ed. emphasis mine.) Several of the Gulf Breeze residents have also noted that the lights seem to appear whenever Hank Boland is back in town. This all doesn't really add up to much except to indicate that most of our local residents now seem convinced that the Walters case is a hoax. I should add, on the red lights, that they seem to appear on cue whenever a visiting TV crew is in town...."

** The following is a partial letter, dated 1 Apr. 1991, to Dennis Stacy (Editor MUFON Journal) from Carol and Rex Salisbury: **

"Last July, we were asked by MUFON to take the lead in the investigation of the reopening of the Walters case after the UFO model was found in the attic of the Walters previous residence and a young man, Tommy Smith, had made allegations which cast doubt on the authenticity of the case....

After weeks of frustrating effort, we arrived at the conclusion that the Walters photos were probably faked which was reported to MUFON, by telephone, on 9 SPT. 1990. Although there is considerable evidence to doubt the credibility of the case, one of the deciding factors for us was our analysis of photos #14 & #19....

Careful reading of Maccabee's new analysis and Walters' account of the event show that there are major discrepancies between the two which makes them mutually exclusive. If Maccabee's new scenario is 'possible' as he claims, then Walters' account is impossible and Dr. Maccabee is 'hoist on his own petard'. He has effectively impugned his own witness...."

BLUE BOOK PEARLS
Seven Islands, Labrador
By: Dr. Willy Smith - UNICAT Project

In this incident the crew of a BOAC Stratocruiser en route from the United States to England reported a sighting while flying near Sept Isles in the province of Quebec. One large central object surrounded by six globular smaller ones paced the aircraft for about 18 minutes and finally disappeared in the distance when an F-94 fighter approached.

One of the discrepancies for this case is the date. While the majority of the authorities, including the narrative by Capt. James Howard (Ref. #1), indicate June 29, 1954, others list the date as June 30, 1954. The most prominent of those is the Condon Report (Ref. #2, p. #139), in which the case is discussed by Gordon D. Thayer and dated 30 June 1954, 21:05-21:27 local time.

The source of that error has been traced down to the case summary card in the Blue Book microfilm files (Ref. #3). This card was rewritten long after the events, and carries the date June 30, 1954, or July 1, 1954 at 01:09Z (GST).

Careful reading of the official files confirms the case card is incorrect, and that the actual date and time of the incident was June 29, 1954, at 21:05 local time, or what is the same, June 30, 1954, at 21:05 Zulu. The error appears only on the case card, and one wonders how Thayer could fail to notice it. The case was evaluated by Blue Book as "Mars".

The explanation is simple. Both Thayer and his predecessor in Blue Book were determined to attribute the sighting to a mirage of the planet Mars, which, according to the official files, had been spotted and identified by a ship in the area. The conditions for a mirage, the files add, had been good.

Now, the files reveal the name (USS Edisto) and position (55/55 N, 58/10 W) of the ship, as well as the exact time of the observation (30 June, 01:15 Z). Using this information, it is easy to determine that Mars indeed was in sight, except that it was rising at azimuth 144. The unknown was to the NW, almost in the opposite direction (about azimuth 317).

Since G.D. Thayer has a B.S. in Physics, one hardly would expect him to make such a blunt error. It is obvious that he didn't bother to verify the "Mars hypothesis", but simply lifted it from the BB files. Had he attempted to calculate Mars' position, he would have discovered the mistake.

Apparently neither did Mr. Thayer bother to verify if a mirage was possible at all, as he states (Ref. #2, p. #139), that "certain facts in the case are strongly suggestive of an optical mirage", although admitting in the same paragraph that very little meteorological data were available. In a way, he is correct, because the ship was quite distant, and even if the conditions were suitable for mirages at its location at sea, Thayer knew nothing about the conditions over land at the plane location (51/33 N, 63/10 W). Moreover, a mirage is essentially a transient phenomenon, requiring a static situation to take place. This requirement is not met with a moving plane, and the length of the event rules out the mirage possibility.

I believe that Thayer knew that he was just following the official line, and got very frustrated when he could not verify the Martian hypothesis using the incorrect date. He then attempted to squeeze out of the difficult situation by writing the following words, which constitute his claim to fame. (Ref. #2, p. #140):

"This unusual sighting should therefore be assigned to the category of some almost certainly natural phenomenon, which is so rare that it apparently has never been reported before or since."

REFERENCES

1. FSR Vol. 27/#6, 1982, p. #2 (Capt. James Howard).
2. Condon, Edward U.; SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS, 1969.
3. BLUE BOOK PROJECT FILES MICROFILM, Roll #21.

PHOTO 19...IN QUESTION AGAIN
By: Barbara Becker

In November of 1990, the MUFON UFO Journal published an article entitled THE "ROAD SHOT" REANALYZED by Bruce Maccabee, Ph.D. In it, Dr. Maccabee reanalyzes the notorious Ed Walters/Gulf Breeze Photo 19, refuting claims by Rex and Carol Salisbury that the photo is a hoax, a double exposure. In their report to Walt Andrus dated 23 September 1990, the Salisbury's state, "Our analysis of Photo 19 of the Walters' case indicated a very high probability that the reflection on the road could not have been made by an object hovering over the road as described by Mr. Walters and validated by Dr. Maccabee." The prior conclusions was that both the 'UFO' and the reflection on the road were at the same distance from Walters, approximately 185 ', placing one over the other. It was only after the Salisbury's report that another possibility was considered by Dr. Maccabee.

In the reanalysis, Maccabee claims that indeed the UFO was NOT over the reflection but instead some 65 ' beyond the back edge of it toward the tree line. In order to arrive at this conclusion Maccabee takes data from Walters' May 1, 1988 photo taken with a "stereo" camera. The photo shows what Maccabee believes to be the same object as the one in Photo 19. Taking measurements from the photo, he calculates the size of the bottom ring of the object to be 14.8 ', almost twice his original estimate for the size of the object in Photo 19. This manipulation allows him to move the object to 370 ' from Walters, maintain the reflection at a distance of 179 ' to 305 ' (the entire length) and keep the measurements made on the photo the same. One would think this new revelation would end the debate, however, one key figure is still in question...the height of the camera.

In his original work, Maccabee used the figures of the sighting-line, an imaginary line drawn from Walters across the road to a point where the curve begins to break, to place the height of the camera. In a series of calculations based on "on-sight" measurements and "photogrammetric techniques" he determines the height of the camera at the same time the photo was taken to be 4.1 '. In a draft sent to Walt Andrus, October 26, 1990, Maccabee concludes that the height of 4.1 ' agrees "perfectly" with the other measurements and further states that figures only in the range of 3.5 ' to 5.0 ' "would be reasonable". He is correct... 4.1 ' does work, but only if the sighting-line figures remain the same.

On March 7, 1991, a survey commissioned by Walt Andrus was done on the section of Soundside Drive where Photo 19 was taken. The survey has determined that the original sighting-line measurements were quite a bit off. The closest edge of the road from Walters now becomes 150 ' and the furthest edge becomes 400 '. (The original measurements were 90 ' and 490 '). What effect does this have? Using Maccabee's own formula and plugging in the new sighting-line figures yields a camera height of 8.9 '. (Other methods of calculation agree with this figure).

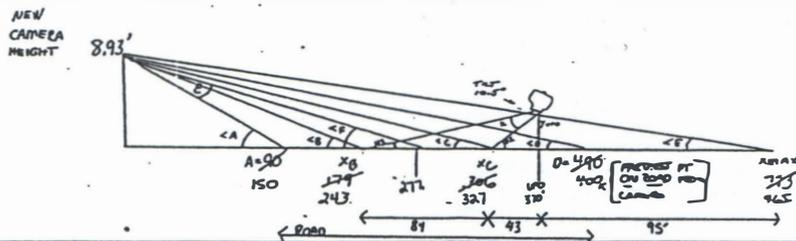
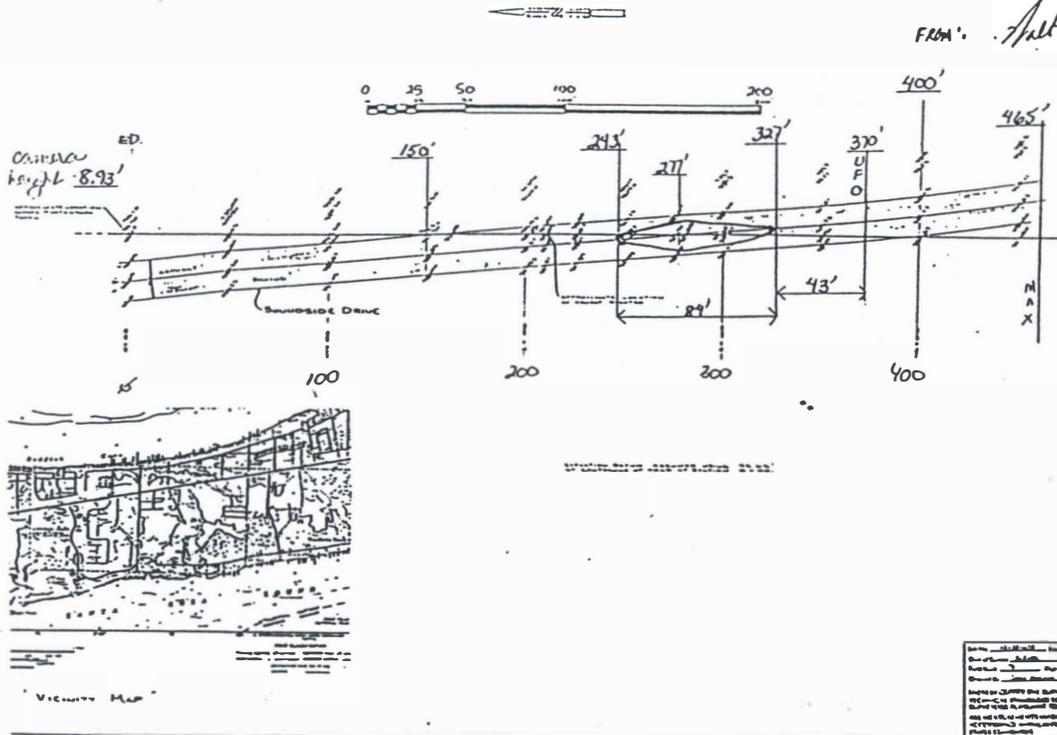
A look at Photo 19 shows that the image was made in Walters' truck, over the dashboard and out of the front windshield. An examination of a similar vehicle shows the actual height, from that perspective, to be 5.4 '. This figure has recently been confirmed by Rex Salisbury using survey equipment. The survey, commissioned by MUFON, does take into consideration a slope of 0.9 ' on the easement beyond ten feet of the pavement, but even that variance will not adjust enough to bring the new 8.9 ' camera into a "reasonable" range.

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(The above paper assumes the survey data to be correct).

** Analysis Graph Next Page **

FROM: *Alt*



ANOLES FROM THE PHOTO COMBINED WITH FOCAL LENGTH.

$$Q = (A \text{ to } X_8) = \frac{2.5 \text{ mm}}{110 \text{ mm}} = .0227 \text{ RAD}$$

$$\beta = (X_8 \text{ to } X_c) = \frac{1.05 \text{ mm}}{110 \text{ mm}} = .0095 \text{ RAD}$$

$$\gamma = (X_c \text{ to } D) = \frac{.34 \text{ mm}}{110 \text{ mm}} = .005 \text{ RAD}$$

$$\delta = (D \text{ to } \text{MAX}) = \frac{.34 \text{ mm}}{110 \text{ mm}} = .0031 \text{ RAD}$$

$$\angle A = \frac{h}{150} = \frac{8.93}{150} = .0595 \quad \angle D = \frac{h}{400} = \frac{8.93}{400} = .0223$$

$$\angle B = A - Q = .0595 - .0227 = .0368$$

$$\angle C = \gamma + \beta = .005 + .0095 = .0145$$

$$\angle B - \angle C = .0368 - .0145 = .0223$$

CHECK FROM FILM DATA $\beta = \frac{105 \text{ mm}}{110 \text{ mm}} = .0095$

$$X_8 = \frac{h}{\angle B} = \frac{8.93}{.0368} = 242.6' \quad \text{[CLOSEST EDGE OF REFLECTION TO CO.]}$$

$$X_c = \frac{h}{\angle C} = \frac{8.93}{.0145} = 327.1' \quad \text{[FARTHEST EDGE OF REFLECTION TO CO.]}$$

$$X_c - X_8 = 327.1 - 242.6 = 84.5' \quad \text{[LENGTH OF REFLECTION]}$$

$$E = (A \text{ to } F) = \frac{3 \text{ mm}}{110} = .0273 \quad \frac{8.93}{110} - \frac{8.93}{110} = .0595 - .0273 = .0322 = 277.3' \quad \text{[DISTANCE AS IN PHOTO]}$$

$$\frac{3 \text{ mm}}{110} \times 277.3 = .0363 \times 277.3 = 10.06' \quad \text{[WIDTH OF REFLECTION AT 277.3']}$$

$$X_{MAX} = \angle E - \angle D - \delta = .0273 - .0223 - .0031 = .0019 \quad \text{[FARTHEST PT ON ROAD UFO COULD TOUCH GROUND]}$$

$$X_{MAX} = \frac{h}{\angle E} = \frac{8.93}{.0019} = 465.1'$$

$$Y_{UFO} = (.0031 \text{ RAD}) \times 95' = .50' \quad \text{[HEIGHT OF LOWEST PART ABOVE ROAD]}$$

$$\angle H_2 = \frac{.5}{43} = .0116 = .6612^\circ$$

$$\angle H_1 = \frac{.5}{43 + 84} = \frac{.5}{127} = .0039^\circ$$

$$\angle K = \angle H_2 - \angle H_1 = .6612^\circ - .224 = .4372^\circ = .0076 \quad \text{[BEAM OVERSICKE - VERTICAL PLANE]}$$

$$\text{[BEAM OVERSICKE PERPENDICULAR TO PLANE]} \quad \frac{.3}{370 - 277} = \frac{.3}{93} = .0032$$

$$\text{[ALT W/ RESPECT TO LINE OF SIGHT]} \quad \sin^{-1} \frac{.3}{4.4} = 10.5^\circ$$

22 May 1991

OPEN LETTER

Dr. Bruce Maccabee
Sabillasville, Maryland

Dear Bruce,

I note you're giving a "Gulf Breeze update" at the upcoming MUFON convention.

Last year in Pensacola you and Ed Walters attempted to discredit my paper, Gulf Breeze Double exposed (GBDE). In your talk there you presented an argument based on a totally false premise: that the "ghost-demon photo" was the third picture taken at "Carol's" seance.

Ed Walters took this same tack in a letter published in the July/August 1990 IUR. I replied in the November/December 1990 IUR.

I believe my letter totally invalidates the attack you and Mr. Walters so precipitously made on GBDE. (You hadn't laid eyes on it till that weekend in Pensacola).

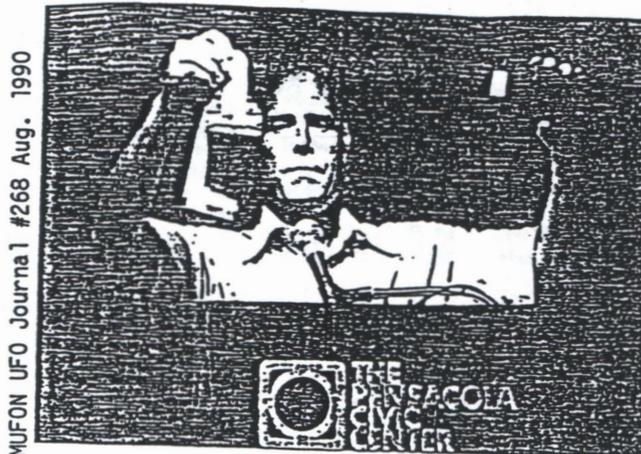
Your ill-judged presentation at Pensacola baselessly denigrated my work and, more importantly, misled and misinformed your audience. Many of the people who heard your "third photo" nonsense in Pensacola will be in Chicago. You caould make amends to them there for your misstatements in Pensacola.

This is a formal request that in your talk in Chicago you rectify the situation either by admitting your error or by replying to the points I raised in my letter in IUR: there is no evidence the "ghost-demon photo" was taken third; the quote of Carol's refers only to the order in which the backing was peeled from the three pictures (as is clearly evident from the quote on its face, from the description in GBDE of the picture-taking at the "Linda" seance, as well as from the routine supposedly involved in Mr. Walters' taking and "developing" of the first series of "UFO" pictures).

For your ready reference I am enclosing copies of Walters' letter and my letter, with the sections of my letter in red, should you choose to defend your position in your Chicago update.

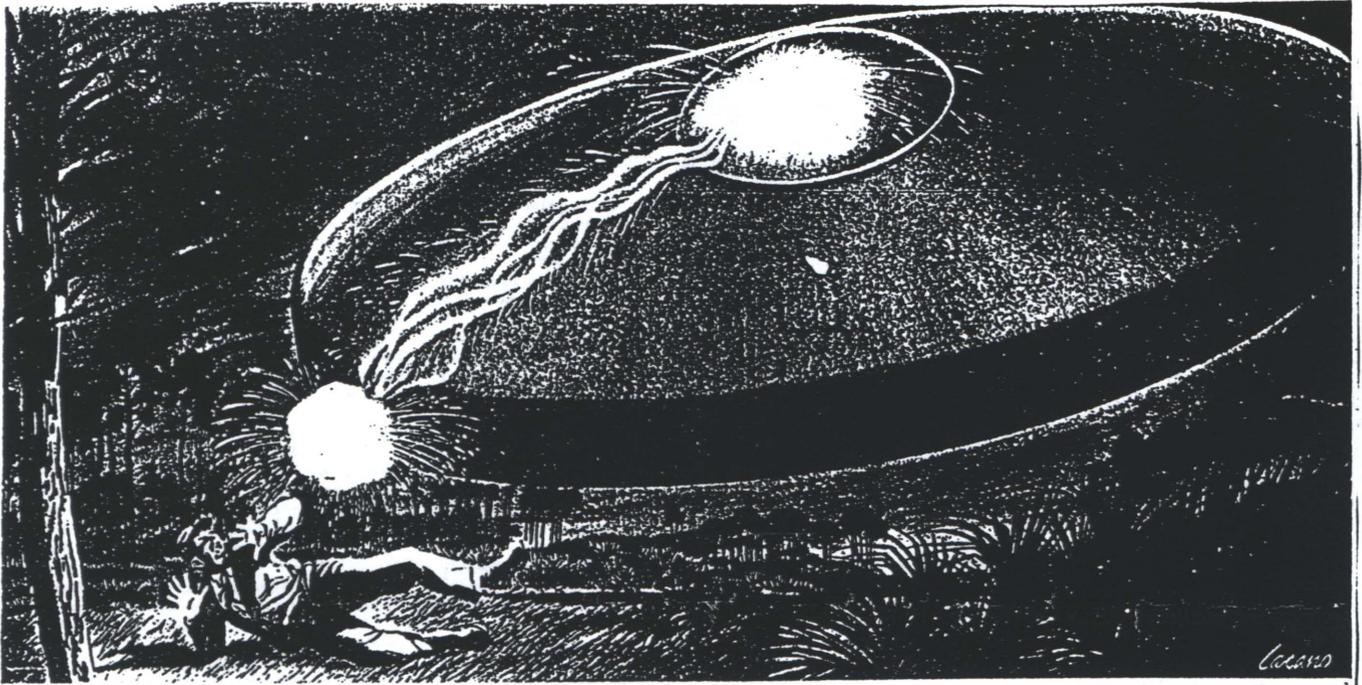
The enclosure also contains corrections of some errata in GBDE and references to events that bolster the argument of the paper, notably Pensacola TV newsman Peter Neumann's testimony re Ed Walters' admission of familiarity with double exposure technique long before Mr. Walters convinced you he knew nothing about it.

In explanation of the wide distribution I am giving this letter: your Pensacola presentation was very public. I am making this open letter in reply. If you respond in a letter to me, I would like to make your letter available to the people on the list and to anyone in the field to allow them to judge your argument.



Dr. Bruce Maccabee with Polaroid film pack.

(Dr. Maccabee giving his third-photo-in-the-pack talk. 2.0.)



"An opening suddenly appeared in the dome. A ball of fire drifted toward me... a kind of misty fire that gave off sparks. I threw my arms over my face and fell back."

Burned by a Flying Saucer

The amazing story of a man who chased mysterious lights and came face to face with the terror of the unknown

by *Marta Robinet*

I'd heard about Sonny DesVergers' encounter with the flying saucer. The whole country had. The news had flashed out from West Palm Beach, Florida, the night of August 19, 1952—a 30-year-old scoutmaster had entered a palmetto forest to investigate strange lights and, after 40 terrifying minutes, had come staggering back, his arms burned, mumbling dazedly of a weird, dome-shaped craft hovering above the ground and a creature that sprayed fire at him from an open hatch.

It was another saucer story, stored away by the Air Technical Intelligence Center, forgotten within 24 hours after it found its spot in the news.

Hoax? Psychological aberration? Hallucination? Publicity stunt? Or none of these? Was it one of those unaccountable saucer experiences reported by honest, reputable persons which even the Air Force, checking relentlessly, cannot puncture?

I was in West Palm Beach to find out. Six months had passed since DesVergers' brush with the unknown. How much could he remember of it now? Had it had any effect on him? What did it feel like to be so close to a flying saucer that you could reach up and actually touch it?

I saw Deputy Sheriff Mott Partin, who'd been there when Sonny DesVergers staggered from the woods. He was a small, alert, practical man, leather-faced and friendly. Did he think DesVergers had been acting?

"If he was, it was the best darned acting I ever saw," Partin answered, shaking his head. "In 19 years of law enforcement, I've never seen anyone as upset as he was."

He said he would drive me down the Dixie High-



Sonny DesVergers points to where his arm was blistered by the fireball. The sparks also burned his cap.

way that afternoon to talk to DesVergers. Then we'd go on to Boynton to see Bobby Ruffing, one of the three Boy Scouts DesVergers had been driv-

ing home when it had happened. After that, Partin promised, he'd drive me over and let me have a look at the spot off Military Trail where DesVergers had stumbled on the saucer.

"Was the grass in the woods really scorched?" I asked.

"Lady, I only know what I saw," Partin said. "It was burned in patchy areas."

And the burns on DesVergers' arms? The hair had been singed off and the skin was red. That much he could vouch for, Partin said.

We drove to the shower door factory where DesVergers was sales manager. He came forward to meet us, a tall, slim man with a boyishly earnest face and a clean, scrubbed look. He and Partin pumped hands.

I was introduced. DesVergers hardly looked old enough to have served as a Marine in the last war. He wore a wedding band on his left hand. I'd heard there was a year-old son.

I told him I wouldn't detain him then, but would like to interview him at his home that evening. He complied cordially, but suddenly the boyish look was gone. A grim, unhappy expression took its place, as if my request had resurrected memories forcibly buried. Haltingly, still trying to be pleasant, he explained that he didn't want to bring his family into this again. He said there'd been "...well, social changes," and I realized with a pang of pity that a certain amount of ridicule and perhaps ostracism would be bound to follow in the wake of such an experience.

"I wish it had never

★★ Nostalgia Department:★★



Bobby Ruffing and two other Boy Scouts saw the same lights as DesVergers. Bobby, who says, "I wish it had never happened," reluctantly shows Deputy Sheriff Mott Partin the size of the lights. There were about six, strung out.

happened," he said solemnly. "I like my job. I have six mouths to feed." Six? That surprised me. I asked him, "How come so many?"

His eyes crinkled. He ticked off the list on his fingers. "Me, my wife, boy, dog, bird, goldfish."

when the thing shot at him there were sparks."

We came into the town of Boynton, turned into a homey residential street and stopped again. We spoke to Mrs. Ruffing first, explaining why I was there. A quiet-spoken, attractive woman with a

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We laughed. Then Partin asked, "Did you ever get your cap back from Washington?"

Sonny appeared startled to have this mentioned in front of me.

Partin said, "This will interest you. His cap was burned. They sent it away for analysis."

Sonny said no, he hadn't gotten it back yet. We set the time for the interview and left.

"Those people who scoff should have seen the cap," Partin said, when we were under way again. "It was a yachting cap. The hole in the bill hadn't burned through, but two in the cloth had. He said that

sincere, level glance, she was frankly hesitant as she peered out at us from behind her screen door.

"Bobby has been in bed with the flu," she explained, then added: "I'll see if he wants to talk."

She reappeared and led us into a room charming with bright chintzes. Bobby was on a davenport, under covers.

"He's an intelligent lad" Partin had told me before we arrived. "He's older than the other two Scouts. I was particularly impressed with the way he gave me his story that night."

Bobby's reticence to discuss the affair was marked. He kept looking toward his mother.

"Sonny had been in the habit of bringing Bobby home after Scout meeting," she began for him. "When Bobby didn't get home that night, we were terribly worried. It didn't help much when we got the call that they were at the sheriff's office."

"Why don't you want to talk about it?" I asked.

He looked straight at me. "I've been teased at school," he said simply. He studied his hands. "I wish it had never happened," he said, word for word Sonny's statement.

They'd been driving down Military Trail toward Boynton, he said, when Sonny first saw the lights. There were six or so of them, strung in a level row, like the windows of an airliner, and they

plunged right into the woods. Sonny thought it was a plane crashing. Excited, they talked of investigating the strange sight.

A quarter of a mile further on, Bobby saw the lights again. Now they seemed to be right in the tree tops, back about where they'd first been spotted. Sonny turned around and went back a quarter of a mile.

He got out his lantern, pocket flash and machete—for hacking through the underbrush.

"If you don't hear from me in 10 minutes, go back up the road to that house and call the sheriff's office," he told the three Scouts. Then he plunged down the road embankment and off into the woods, his lantern bobbing between the trees.

When he failed to return, Bobby and the other two boys ran to the house and called the sheriff's office. Partin, who was cruising nearby, was contacted by radio and reached the scene about half an hour after Sonny's departure. While he was trying to get a story from the boys, Sonny suddenly appeared at the bottom of the embankment.

He was white-faced and shaking and kept repeating: "I'm coming, here I am!" His lantern was gone, but he still had his machete.

"He was a sorry sight," Partin put in. "He was talking a blue streak but he didn't make any

sense. I backed away from him. That machete . . ."

Mrs. Ruffing said she'd seen Sonny's singed arms. He'd come down the next evening to apologize for making Bobby late. She'd seen a seeping blister near his watchband and he had mentioned a tingling feeling in his arms.

We said good-bye to the Ruffings and drove back down Military Trail. We stopped just before sunset, where Sonny had stopped that night. We went through the woods—those lonely, dismal palmetto thickets—to the clearing where Sonny had known terror. I saw where his lantern had been found, where his elbows had made an imprint when he fell to the ground and where the burned patches had been.

It was good to leave that grim place. Three hours later, I sat with Sonny DesVergers in his



Photograph by Angela Coleman

DeaVergers, in the clearing where he encountered the gray disc, tries to reconstruct for Deputy Partin the size of the strange object. He also showed Partin patches of burned grass in the area to substantiate part of his amazing story.

neat living room. His little son was in bed. His wife and dog were absent. I studied his honest face. Here was a man reluctant to relive an unpleasant experience, yet determined not to run from it. He warned me

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in advance that there were some details he would withhold. "I'm not here to challenge," I said. "Just tell me your story."

He had run into the woods with his lantern and machete, he said, leaving the boys by the car. He looked up at the stars for his bearings.

"I went about 200 yards," he said. "In Florida there are apt to be swampy areas and quicksand. When thick palmetto growth stops abruptly you can step into anything. When I realized I was in a clearing, I kept my eyes on the ground. I walked about 20 feet into the clearing and stopped."

He stopped talking and looked at me. "It was a funny thing. I had the feeling I wasn't alone. Nothing to account for it. Just a feeling. And suddenly the atmosphere was insufferably hot."

"I looked up at the stars. Darned funny... it was black up there. There were no stars. I shone my lantern upward. About four feet above my head there was a dirtyish gray metal surface. It couldn't have been more than a few seconds I stood looking, but it was all so clear. I remember noticing that the metal's grain ran north to south and there were no seams."

"You'd walked in under it?" I asked.

"I could have touched it with the machete. My whole body tightened up with fear. I remember thinking, 'Get out of here!' I must have been very close to the outer rim of the thing because, when I hurriedly backed off, I was in the open and the thing seemed to be backing off from me at the same time. Like it was taken by surprise. I could see the silhouette against the sky... dome-shaped with a flat bottom, about 30 feet across. There were no lights. The rim began to tilt up."

He stopped again, groping for some way to go on.

I remembered the original story. "Did you see someone?" I asked.

He thought about that. "Yes," he said, at last.

A living creature? He nodded slowly.

Would he describe what it looked like? No, he said emphatically, that was one of the things he wouldn't tell me. People would think... well, he'd just rather not.

"I saw it when an opening suddenly appeared in the dome," he said. "It was like a hatch that flew open. And at the same time that I saw it, a ball of fire drifted toward me from the opening. It's hard to describe... It was a kind of misty fire that gave off sparks. It seemed to float toward me and envelop me and a stench filled my nostrils and throat. I threw



DesVergers—"I thought I was dead. I couldn't even feel the ground. My whole body was numb."

my arms up over my face. Then I staggered and fell and everything went black."

When he came to, the thing was gone. Just black stillness. He was dazed and his arms hurt and his throat was raw.

"I was afraid I was dead," he told me. "Really," he emphasized, as if fearful I would not believe him, "I thought I was dead. I didn't seem to be walking on ground. I couldn't even feel the ground. My whole body was numb. All I could think of was the kids, waiting for me out by the car. I ran into the woods, feeling my way in the darkness. I made it to the car. I don't remember what I said. Afterwards they told me I still had my machete. Everything was kind of hazy."

He sat there, his story ended. I made some small talk about the bird and the goldfish. I wanted to leave, so Sonny's wife (who had left us alone during our interview) could come home and they could turn out the lights and go to bed and forget once more. And though he said nothing, I could feel his yearning to be believed, his desperate, unspoken plea for my faith.

I shook his hand and thanked him and went out. The stars were bright and symbolic of all the mystery of the future. I thought of Sonny DesVergers' story, and what Bobby Ruffing had said, and the supporting testimony of Mott Partin. I thanked God that I was not a judge and jury charged with ruling on whether the scoutmaster did or did not actually come face to face with a flying saucer. I had only to set the facts down, as I have done here.

But I will tell you this: I have complete faith in the integrity of all three—DesVergers, Bobby and Partin.

NOW YOU KNOW!

Shuttle firsts - The space shuttle Challenger mission of 1984 was one of many firsts: it had the first seven-person crew; it was the first time two women were aboard the same spacecraft (Sally Ride and Kathy Sullivan); it was the first time a U.S. woman (Sullivan) walked in space; and it was the first demonstration of a satellite refueling technique in space.

BOOK SALE

The UFO book list has been refurbished with a few hard cover books and a small assortment of paperbacks. Happy pickings!

PB = Paperback, SB = Softbound, HC = Hard Cover, BL = Booklet

Condition of book - E = Excellent, G = Good, F = Fair
PR = Poor but Readable.

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What next? 'Tot snatched by aliens'?

Apparently a resolution to the crisis in the Middle East has left the Herald with little to print. The June 25 issue made this quite obvious ("Doc's sex arrest sparks AIDS fears"). The man pictured on the front page was a doctor arrested for hiring a prostitute. And since the prostitute claimed she had AIDS, all of the doctor's patients were assumed to be put in jeopardy of contracting the virus.

This doctor (a gynecologist) must have been either engaging in sexual activity with his clients or "shootin' up a little friendly doctor-patient heroin;" otherwise, the idea that anyone could have contracted the disease from him is absurd. Nevertheless, the Herald once again proceeded to write a sensationalized, tabloid-like story intended to perpetuate ignorant notions about AIDS and the type of people it affects.

Personally, I found the other front-page story that day about the "tragic struggle" over a single-digit license plate much more newsworthy. I mean, after panicking all day long about contracting AIDS from your gynecologist, who has time to memorize six numbers?

Please stop the yellow journalism before there is nothing left but stories about UFO's, reincarnations of JFK and Elvis Presley, Dolly Parton's "miraculous" diets, and a baby with six heads raised in the Amazon coming back to find its true mother who is really Madonna.

S. C. Gallo,
Dorchester

Newsclipping: Boston Herald
2 Jul. 1991

Ed. comment: This irate reader of the Herald is not far off base in his claims. Like that of abductionists/hybrid baby theorists, etc. Gallo's letter reveals the "unproven sensational claims" quickly capture the Fast Sell Headlines and assign the dry, yet factual data to the back-burner. No one asked just my opinion.

NOW YOU KNOW!

Star Quality - The planets move rapidly among the stars because they are nearer to us. The stars are also in motion, some of them at tremendous speeds, but they are so far away that their motion does not change their apparent positions in the heavens sufficiently for anyone to perceive that change in a single lifetime. The very nearest star is about 7,000 times as far away as the most distant planet.