



□ John Parsons (inset, above left) studying his film and (above) the developed print of his 1974 snapshot.

Cloud snaps developed into UFO mystery

ON a June afternoon in 1974, John Parsons was in a window seat on a BOAC jumbo jet flying across the Indian Ocean from Bahrain to Singapore.

He spent considerable time photographing attractive cloud formations beyond the jet's wing tip.

His 35mm camera also captured something his eye had not seen — a UFO.

A few days later in Perth, Mr Parsons, a British migrant, gave his roll of color film to a professional photographer friend to process.

When he collected his film, he discovered a strange dot in the centre of one negative. An enlargement revealed the mystery object.

For 12 years Mr Parsons kept the photograph and negative filed away. He brought them to the *Sunday Times* this week after

his father, a retired flight sergeant with the RAF long-range desert group, rang us to discuss the photograph after reading about the face on Mars.

No trick

John Parsons, 38, a freelance photographer who lives in Kalamunda, said: "At the time I took the photograph I was well aware of UFO incidents and the world-wide interest in them. However, I didn't do anything about it because I didn't want to be bothered by sceptics dismissing the object as a shirt button or a door knob."

He is adamant the object was not the result of trick photography. He said: "I would be quite happy for the RAAF or any other scientific body to examine

my negative, provided I am guaranteed it will be returned to me."

And he added: "I am convinced UFOs do exist, even if most reported sightings can be explained away as natural phenomena or man-made objects seen from odd angles."

"It is hard to believe we are the only intelligent beings capable of travelling through space. But until it can be proved UFOs do exist, all we can do is accept these sightings at face value."

Mrs Joan Johnston, of the Perth UFO Research Group, said John's mysterious

object was typical of the type reported in WA over many years. She said the negative and photograph could be examined by researchers in the eastern States and the US.

The Perth UFO Research Group has catalogued more than 80 incidents in 10 years.

UFOs have been reported in areas throughout WA by a variety of people including policemen, farmers and professional fishermen. Information on some of the incidents have been requested by RAAF headquarters in Canberra.

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★ OUR story last week about the face on Mars, photographed by NASA's Mariner and Viking space probes prompted a strong response from readers. The story of the fascinating picture was based on a book by Brian Crowley and James Hartack, published by Sun Books. The picture was one of many taken in 1974, but it was not until later that they became crystal clear after two scientists devised a computer image enhancer which showed the object on Mars had obvious human features. Sutherland Primary School pupils in Dianella are studying the riddle of the red planet, and a Perth man suddenly remembered a photograph of a UFO that appeared on a roll of film he shot while flying to Perth from the UK in 1974. Here are their stories.

