

SUNDAY EXTRA

Family's trip of terror on the Nullarbor

FORMER US Navy man, hydro electric and thermal electric engineer, Paul Norman, couldn't believe his luck on the morning of January 21, 1988.

He woke up in his lounge to hear news reports on his portable radio about "some sort of UFO incident on the Eyre Highway across the Nullarbor Plains in Western Australia".

Since observing a strange object approach and hover over a Tempere power station in 1953, Mr Norman had developed an interest in UFOs, stimulated when he watched United States Air Force Major Donald Keyhoe being cut off, mid sentence, on a coast-to-coast broadcast when Keyhoe was attempting to tell the public about official UFO investigations in the US.

Mr Norman emigrated to Australia in 1963 but he didn't leave behind his quest to explain the inexplicable and continued to investigate UFOs, retiring in 1978 so he could devote his time to UFO research.

It's his story in "UFO Encounters along the Nullarbor Plains" which dominates the UFO Report 1990.

It was world-wide — maybe inter-planetary — news. A mother and her three sons, the Knowles family from Perth, had been picked up and dumped by some sort of flying machine with bright lights.

This is the tale that Norman reports. We learned it happened before daylight after the family had left the Madras Roadhouse and were heading east towards Mundrabilla, when they sighted a group of lights.

They thought at first these were street lights but then realised there were no street lights in that part of the Outback.

During the three-hour interviews with the mother (Faye) and her three sons (Sean, Patrick and Wayne Knowles) we were told several details of the encounter.

Beginning about a quarter of an hour before the lights were first spotted, the car radio started malfunctioning, with a lot of static and other noise which continued for the entire period of the encounter.

At another stage Sean

thought at first it was a truck with one headlight, but as he got closer he saw it was not a truck but a strangely glowing light either on the road or hovering slightly above ground.

It was on his side of the highway so he had to swerve to the wrong side of the road, and looked up just in time to see an approaching car pulling a caravan. They almost collided.

When after the near collision, the Knowles car swerved back onto the highway at the same speed as before.

By this time, Sean's curiosity got the best of him and he made a dash

□ DO you believe there's someone out there? Little green men, six-foot tall blipping through radar screens? Has an alien life force been visiting planet Earth for thousands of years?

□ Whether you believe or not, the phenomenon of the Unidentified Flying Object won't go away.

□ Author Timothy Good has taken on governments and the military on the subject of UFOs, particularly with his novel, Above Top Secret. Now Good has compiled The UFO Report, 1990.

□ And one of the most telling pieces in the UFO Report, 1990, happened here in South Australia. CAHOLYN BEAUMONT reports.

and sped back towards the west in one what the light was doing chasing it for a few moments the light changed course and headed towards the Knowles' car.

Sean then made another dash for it, and as he was swerving towards the east again, the object overtook

the car and landed on the roof with a thud.

Patrick said the object seemed to grab the car and began to pull it up. At the same time he yelled out: "Why us?"

"We did not know what to do," said Patrick. "The

dogs (two) started to go crazy."

All four of the humans felt as if they were about to die, Patrick said he felt as though his brains were being pulled from his head.

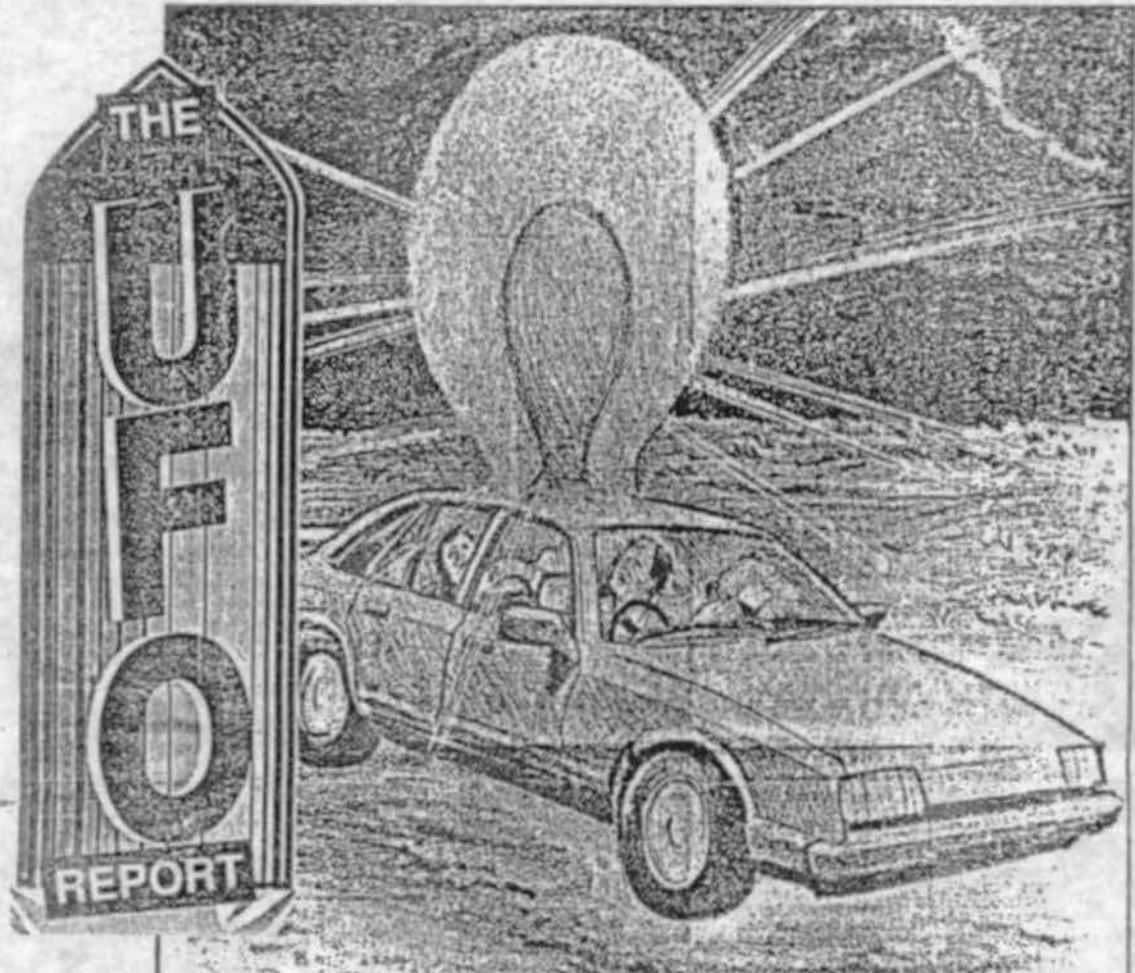
Sean later admitted he did not realise the car was in the air

until it dropped back to the ground, bursting the right rear tyre. He thought he was doing 300km/h (180mph) to escape from under the UFO.

(The car was a Ford Telstar which, according to the manufacturer, could never reach such a speed on the ground. Tests in Adelaide with the Telstar's wheels on the ground on jacks took the speed to 200km/h.)

While the object was on the roof, Faye rolled down the window so she could reach up and touch the object. It felt like a warm sponge and she thought it might be a suction pad.

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The object began to pull the car up.



The Knowles family (from left) Patrick, Wayne, Faye and Sean, and the burst rear tyre of their sedan.