

## Spacecraft Lands On Thursday Island!

Police were called out to Back Beach on Thursday Island last Wednesday night, December 11, when a large Unidentified Flying Object (UFO), about the size of two tennis courts landed on the beach at about 4.45pm.

It partially crushed a dinghy and its outboard when it made its landing on the sand.

The circular, red-coloured craft was surrounded by a bright glow, and was dotted with numerous green and pink lights which kept going on and off. It had two small antennae at its apex which whizzed around furiously, making a funny 'wheee' sound.

Startled residents affronting Back Beach rushed to their verandahs and gaped at the spacecraft. as did hospital

spacecraft, as did hospital workers who heard a strange humming sound.

At the hospital, Dr Peter Holt, playing with a scalpel and a fluffy toy at the time, immediately grabbed the phone and contacted the police.

On being told of the landing, Police Sergeant Bill Larkman, who was relaxing at the time, flung aside his Phantom comic and leapt to his feet in disbelief.

Police secured the area with all their on-duty staff, and Sergeant Larkman immediately called Army Headquarters on Thursday Island to ask for assistance, in case of an invasion.

He also informed Flight Control in Weipa of the landing, and they went on full-alert in case the UFO decided to take off again.

Major Brett Caldwell at the 51st Far North Queensland Regiment's HQ switched off his Norman Schwarzkopf video game and moved quickly to

game and moved quickly to recruit all six soldiers resident on TI. He then called for back-ups from Bamaga and the nearby outer islands. By 6.15pm, the back-ups had arrived in dinghies and the Army had about 20 men placed around the spacecraft at a safe distance.

Meanwhile, an Australian Department of Primary Industries (Quarantine) employee, who had just tucked a pet screw-worm fly into bed, saw the bright glow in the sky at sunset and, thinking it was a large firefly, immediately

grabbed a net and started running excitedly towards Back Beach.

At the scene, the Army held off an ever-increasing number of on-lookers with a barrier across the road at the hospital-end of Back Beach (at the Telecom phone booth); whilst the police van strategically parked itself

van strategically parked itself across the road at the Tamwoy-end of Back Beach.

The staff at OTC, some of whom thought the UFO was a new radar being brought in, realised they had a perfect viewpoint, and brought out their folding chairs, and an esky with some cold things in it.

With the whole area gradually becoming a hive of activity, the Customs launch emerged around Hospital Point and parked itself about 100 metres off-shore, with Customs boss, John O'Neill standing on deck looking urgently towards the UFO, scanning for any breach of regulations. He turned to his second-in-charge and whispered, "Could be from PNG".

Time ticked by. At about 8.30pm, the police and military realised the number of onlookers was getting out of hand: the crowd at the hospital-end barricade, constructed by the Army was now about ten-

the Army, was now about ten-deep; and the Tamwoy-end barricade, under police control, was about 15-deep - but both ends were becoming unmanagable, with onlookers now sitting on shoulders and flashing cameras.

Police and Army desperately appealed to the crowds to stop using flashes in case they might inflame the UFO crew, but a pharmacy employee, dressed in her nightie, kept frantically encouraging the masses, promising huge discounts for bulk-developing.

All this time the UFO sat on the beach motionless, with its lights flashing intermittently.

At about 9.00pm, the ice-cream van and the fruit-and-veg truck appeared in the area in front of the TI Magistrates Court and started ringing their bells. This again upset the controlling authorities, who asked them both to stop the racket. To make matters worse,

ticket. To make matters worse,  
youth at the Tamwoy-end  
barricade wanted to buy ice-  
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cream too, and started to dash  
across the no-go zone.

It was at this time that  
enterprising OTC staff, who had  
a plum location between the two  
crowds, bought ice-cream and  
fruit in bulk and sold them at a  
neat profit to the crowd at the  
other end.

At 9.30pm, the Bishop of  
Carpentaria, the Right  
Reverend Tony Hall-Matthews  
was spotted running down  
Douglas Street past the football  
field, with a copy of 'Everyman's  
Guide To Extraterrestrial  
Conversion' tucked under his  
arm.

He was trying to intercept the  
Reverend Ian Taylor who had  
already made his way through  
the crowd at the hospital-end  
with arms raised towards the

with arms raised towards the UFO, saying, "Come forth, do not be afraid".

Local social personality, Mrs Gwen Moloney, sitting comfortably with OTC staff, pointed to the UFO and whispered to the person next to her: "I have to know who's coming on the island."

At the Tamwoy-end barricade, police were

appeasing the restless onlookers, who wanted something to happen. Constable Gary Hunter, megaphone in hand, said with a straight face: "Please everybody settle down. Police have dealt with these situations before, and everything is under control."

At 10.30pm, almost all the island's residents had vantage points surrounding the spacecraft on Back Beach.

It was then that the very last person to arrive on the scene

person to arrive on the scene, the Torres News reporter, came running along Douglas St. He went straight to the ice-cream van and said, "Where's the scoop?"

Time pressed on. Food stalls opened behind the crowd at the Tamwoy-end, and the Mills Sisters started to entertain partying onlookers at the hospital-end.

In the middle, police and army authorities paced up and down, walkie-talkies in hand, wondering what to do next.

They didn't have to wait long.

With the whole scene resembling a Mardi Gras rather

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than a UFO landing site, the inevitable happened...

At the very top of the UFO, at the part that was painted with blue stripes, a small hatch opened, releasing a sharp yellow light which cut the air like a laser.



With a big "Oooh", the crowd, as one, fell silent. Everyone froze.

The only movements were the blink of eyelids and the slow dripping of ice-cream onto the ground.

A small ET-like figure emerged from the hatch. From its vantage point two stories high, it could see everything.

There was some concerned murmuring around the phone booth area when someone in the crowd there said it might want to phone home.

The alien looked over the scene, slowly turning its wiry neck from left to right, its big, football-sized eyes blinking slowly.

A little boy in the Tamwoy-end crowd shouted, "Mummy, is

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that Santa Claus?"

After what seemed like an eternity, the small outer-space

eternity, the small outer-space figure lifted a long, skinny arm and pointed a thin finger at the ground.

To the utter astonishment of the crowd, it said, "is this Thursday Island?"

There was some broken laughter from sections of the crowd, which were now starting to enjoy this engaging little creature.

A wit in the hospital-end crowd, obviously the worse for wear, shouted a reply: "No, this is Jamaica maan".

The Chairperson of the local Regional Council, a bleary-eyed Mr Getano Lui Jnr, who had worked his way through the throng, felt it was up to him to respond: "Yes my friend, this is Thursday Island - how can we be of assistance to you?"

The alien smiled.

"Bring me some wongai fruit," it said, "I love em".

it said, 'I love em'.

The crowd erupted in cheers  
and applause.

