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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Maccabee on Becker - 2

From: Jean van Gemert <jeanvg@dds.nl>  
Date: Sat, 4 Oct 1997 13:51:22 +0200 (MET DST)  
Fwd Date: Sat, 04 Oct 1997 08:30:13 -0400  
Subject: Maccabee on Becker - 2

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COMMENT:

All these references to rain are a result of misinformation contained in the MUFON Journal report and in my MUFON Symposium report. The assumption that it had been raining was not based on Ed's testimony, but on the observations that (a) there were clouds in the sky and, (b) there are the several bright "dots" in the photo which were erroneously interpreted as bright reflections from water drops on the windshield. However, a careful inspection of the original photos which I was given to study in late May, 1988 (too late to be included in the Symposium paper as published; but this is mentioned in the revised version), showed that the white spots were actually tiny holes in the film emulsion. Such holes are common in Type 108 Polaroid film and occurred in many of Ed's photos, both UFO and non-UFO. For further information on the state of the weather at the time I got a copy of the weather records and found that there had been no recorded precipitation on January 12 or the previous day. (There was 0.16" rain on January 13). The same weather report showed 80% sky cover on that day, consistent with the sky cover in Ed's photo. Obviously even with 80% cloud cover it is possible for the sun to shine through, or for there to be a very bright area in the clouds "near" the sun, which could create shadows. Hence all arguments based on the assumed presence of wet roads etc., are moot.

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COMMENT: I did not say it would be impossible to fake. More generally, I have repeatedly said that it would be possible to fake, perhaps, any single photo, given sufficient time, money, desire, technical ability and equipment. Ed had enough money and time to fake this one photo, but neither (so far as I could determine) the desire, the technical ability (knowledge of double exposure techniques) or equipment (models). Nevertheless, she is correct that this photo could be a cleverly composed SDE. Placement of the image of the model would be more than a little tricky, however, since it has to appear roughly over the road. It might take several shots to get it right. (Note: Jeff Sainio

discovered some evidence in the photo that the road itself was illuminated by the UFO at a distance from the very bright area below the UFO image. If this is true, then the photo was not a double exposure.)

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COMMENT:

ERROR: she is here referring to the ten photos obtained with the "Nimslo" 4 lens/stereo camera. This camera was given to Ed preloaded and sealed with wax. He subsequently obtained 10 pictures of an object 40 or more feet away that, according to him, passed by on the far side of some pine trees in Shoreline Park. (The rather unique arrangement or structure of the UFO lights, which is all one sees in these photos, does, in fact, give indications of partial blockage by some opaque object.) Using a parallax calculation I estimated the object to be 40-70 away and 2.5-4 ft in size. The range estimate was not precise because the outer lens spacing was only 2.5 inches and so there was only a small parallax.

By way of comparison, the "SRS" camera she referred to had lenses (cameras) separated by 2 feet, which provided a much greater parallax and hence much greater accuracy for measuring distances.

Becker does not mention it, but the SRS photos of May 1, 1988 were of great importance to me in determining that Ed was not faking. This is described fully in TGBS (hardcover edition, pg. 300), but evidently she did not understand what I wrote. In those photos (from left and right side Model 600 Polaroid cameras) Ed got images of two UFOS: one UFO was the type (shape) he had obtained in photos 1 - 5 and similar photos, and the other UFO image was of the type obtained with the Nimslo camera. The UFO of the first type was calculated by parallax to be about 475 ft away and about 150 high OVER THE WATER OF THE SANTA ROSA SOUND. (Specifically it was about 455 ft from the shoreline!) There was no question of this since the photos from the left and right cameras showed distant lights on a bridge about 7,000 ft away. These distant light images were used to calibrate the parallax of the camera. I calculated that the Nimslo type UFO that appears in these SRS photos was about 130 ft away and about 120 ft ABOVE THE WATER of the Santa Rosa Sound (about 110 ft from the shoreline) Ed took these pictures at the same time from the beach at a location about 20 ft from the water's edge.

While analyzing these photos I was struck by the coincidence in calculated length of the Nimslo type UFO. This coincidence was very interesting because the cameras were entirely different. Using the Nimslo camera (2.5 inch lens spacing) I had found a parallax distance of at least 40 ft, consistent with Ed's description of his distance to the trees. (Note: Ed had said immediately after the sighting that he thought the UFO was far away and large, but it was at least farther than the treetops. Frances, who saw it too, had said she thought the UFO was relatively close.) Using this distance plus the image length and the focal length (30 mm) I calculated a size of 2.5 ft at 40 ft. Using the SRS camera (24 inch lens spacing) I calculated the distance from parallax (130 ft) and then used the focal length (110 mm) and image length to calculate the size and again I got 2.5 ft. I tried to imagine how Ed could have used a 2.5 ft model to fake the Nimslo pictures and then some smaller, more convenient model to fake the SRS photos. I concluded that to fake the SRS photos would have required that Ed calculate beforehand the distance he would have to move the model between shots (first the left camera and then the right, moving the model sideways between shots). He would have to move the model a precise amount so that the faked parallax would yield the calculated distance (130 ft) even though the model was less than 20 ft from the camera (to be on the shore and not over water). He would also have to precalculate the size of the model to be used so that the model size, at whatever distance (less than 20 ft, though) would produce the same size image as a 2.5 ft model at 130 ft. In other words, he would have to understand everything about stereo photography and FAKING stereo photography which I discovered weeks after Ed took the photos by asking myself what I would have to do to fake this coincidence in size. Could it be done? Yes, by someone sufficiently knowledgeable and CREATIVE enough to even think of such a thing. (Note that Ed is the first UFO witness EVER to use a stereo

camera to take UFO photos, and he took not just one but four stereo photos during 1988. In Feb. 1991 he took yet another stereo photo with the SRS camera, but this is "another story." See UARHTP.) You can't buy a book that tells you how to fake the parallax of a stereo photo. (See also discussion below where some of this is repeated in another context.)

So, you ask, given that fakery is possible, what is the likelihood that Ed Walters figured it out on his own?

My opinion: NOT A CHANCE!

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COMMENT: there was also the Nimslo type which appeared in two sets of stereo photos and during one non-photo sighting in late April, 1988

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COMMENT: The model story is an interesting study in fakery, all right. It turns out that the model is a fake!

What follows is the story of the model. The story can be broken into three parts, the first two of which are "the setup" and the third is "the sting."

1) THE SETUP: THE BLUEPRINT PAPER IN THE MODEL

The model is made of styrofoam plates glued to the top and bottom of a central cylindrical section made of blueprint paper.

When the model was first shown to Ed in early June, 1990, he immediately recognized his printing on the blueprint paper. The paper was a 2" wide diagonal cut through a blueprint (diagonal so the piece would be long enough to go around the circumference of the 9" plates). The blueprint showed parts of a house design and also numbers which represent the "living area" (LA) and "slab area" (SA) of the house. These two numbers vary from house to house, so the pair of them form a design "fingerprint."

The discovery of the LA and SA and Ed's admission that he had made the blueprint (there was no name on it so he could have denied ever seeing it!) initiated a search by Ed and others, including the Mayor of Gulf Breeze, of city records to discover which of the houses Ed had built corresponded to that blueprint. If they could discover which house they could determine when the blueprint had been made (obviously before the house was built) and then they would know if the blueprint paper was available to be used in the model. After a review of all house plans on file everyone agreed that there was NO blueprint for a house with the same LA and SA. The question then became, why did Ed make this blueprint. (Note: the debunker/skeptics claimed that Ed sneaked into the City Hall where the housing records are kept and changed the LA and SA on one of the house plans so that it wouldn't have the numbers found on the model. This makes little sense. You can't change a blueprint. Ed would have to substitute a new one for an old one. But the old one had a date stamp when it was received by City Hall. Hence he couldn't affect a substitution without somehow faking the stamp. There is, however, NO evidence of this, nor was Ed ever accused of having changed a house plan.)

Ed racked his brain for several days before recalling that in September 1989 he had been visited by the Thomas family. They were thinking of moving to Gulf Breeze and buying a house that Ed would build for them on one of the several lots that Ed owned in the city. While they were at the office in Ed's house, Ed drew a simple, dimensioned sketch of a house as it might appear on the parcel of land. They were very interested and asked directions to the land so they could see for themselves where the house would be. Ed made a copy of the house plan for them and gave it to them to take. After they left his office he decided to make a blueprint from the sketch he had drawn. Usually he wouldn't make a blueprint immediately after making the basic sketch, but he thought there was a good chance that they would buy the house and so he made the

blueprint and threw away the original sketch.

The next day the Thomases stopped at Ed's house briefly to say thanks but no thanks, they couldn't afford it, and then they traveled to their home far from Gulf Breeze. Ed was left with the blueprint. They had the copy of the sketch. Ed kept the blueprint for a couple of weeks and then threw it away in late September or early October since he hadn't heard from them again.

It was at about this time, in the early fall of 1989, that Ed noticed that a panel truck was often parked near his house before trash collection and he actually saw someone getting his trash can (not the trash man). He thought that was strange, but he really didn't care if someone wanted to steal his trash.

After Ed was confronted with the model and blueprint it took him several days to recall the name of the family for whom he had made the blueprint. However, he did recall the name and managed to contact them by phone. They still had the sketch! Ed asked them to make him a copy of their copy and send him their original copy. The original copy had Mrs. Thomas' handwriting on the back. Their house plan on their sketch had the same LA and SA, confirming that this was, indeed, the house plan which appeared on the blueprint paper in the UFO model. (Note: I don't now recall the details, but I know that Phil Klass contacted the Thomas' and tried to get them to change their story somewhat to make it agree more with his opinion that Ed had changed the numbers in a blueprint. The Thomases stuck to their story.)

Thus the blueprint paper was identified: it was from a plan made in September, 1989, NEARLY TWO YEARS AFTER THE 1987 and 1988 photos in Ed's book.

## 2) THE SETUP: DISCOVERY

Bob Menzer and family moved into Ed's old house in November, 1989. He brought with him an ice making refrigerator. Ed had had such a refrigerator as well. These refrigerators require a small copper water pipe to provide the water for the ice maker. Ed had such a pipe sticking out of the wall behind his refrigerator with a SHUTOFF VALVE on it. When Ed moved out of his house in late 1988 he turned the valve and disconnected the refrigerator. Presumably the next owner would simply reconnect a refrigerator and turn the valve on.

Mr. Menzer did not rush to connect his refrigerator. It wasn't until March, 1990, that he decided it was time. He looked at the pipe coming out of the wall and saw that it was CRIMPED, that is bent and crushed. He knew he would have to saw off the end of the pipe in order to attach his refrigerator. Before sawing off the crimp he would have to shut off the water to the little pipe. He knew that there was no cellar and that the water pipes were not imbedded in the cement slab upon which the house rested. The only other place for the shutoff valves was in the attic.

Inside the two car garage, near the main house wall, was a pull down ladder up into the attic. Mr. Menzer climbed the ladder and then crawled over the rafters to a point where he thought he was above the refrigerator. Feeling down through the blown-in insulation (loose fiber) he found the small water pipe. His intent was to follow this pipe moving away from the refrigerator until he found the valve that he thought must be there. At this time he was several feet from the top of the ladder in a portion of the attic where a person would not be likely to go.

As he moved his hands along the pipe he suddenly noticed a paper plate model of a UFO buried in the insulation. It was RIGHT NEXT to the pipe. He pulled it out and looked at it. He was aware of Ed's stories of sightings and photos, so he immediately recognized it as resembling some of Ed's UFO images. Bob continued the search for a valve but never found one because there wasn't one. Later he called Ed to find out how to turn off the water. He did not say why he wanted to turn the water off and Ed didn't ask. Ed told him there was a main valve in a little underground box in the front yard. Mr. Menzer turned off the water, attached his refrigerator and went on with the rest of his life.

As for the model, Mr. Menzer thought that perhaps Ed had made it to illustrate what he had seen. He did not throw it away. He put it on a shelf in the garage and forgot about it....until....

## 3) "THE STING"!!!!!!!

....until early June, 1990. One fine day in June there was a knock on Mr. Menzer's door. A reporter for the Pensacola News Journal (the only large newspaper in the area), Craig Myers, wanted to ask him some questions.

Myers had already done two stories on the Gulf Breeze UFOs and Ed's book. The first article, in early March, was timed to coincide with the publication of THE GULF BREEZE SIGHTINGS. It mentioned some of Ed's sightings, of course, but gave about equal weight to sightings of others including Fenner and Shirley

McConnell (who saw the same object; McConnell, a doctor/pathologist was the county coronor). It was moderately supportive of the UFO sightings. The second article, published in late April, concentrated on the controversy over Ed's photos, ignoring the sightings by others. It discussed the "ghost photo" and other "evidence" for a hoax. It provoked a heated response by several of the other witnesses who criticized Myers for biased reporting. One letter, referring to Myer's apparent attitude, began, "My mind's made up...don't confuse me with the facts." Apparently this criticism made an impression on the editors of the New-Journal because one of the editors wrote an editorial in which she admitted that something strange was flying around. Although she hadn't seen anything herself, she was impressed by the sightings by people whom she knew and respected: Arthur Hufford, Brenda Pollak and Fenner McConnell. "Oddly" enough, these were three of the respected people in the area who had gone on record as seeing THE SAME OBJECT THAT ED PHOTOGRAPHED!!! (Skeptics have tried, unsuccessfully, to explain these sightings way.) Because of the newspaper's reaction to the criticism of Myer's article one may imagine that he was "under the gun" to prove he was right in publishing the criticism of Ed's sightings.

It is now early June and Mr. Menzer opens his door to the reporter. According to Mr. Menzer the questions went like this:

"Hello, I'm Craig Myers from the New Journal. I would like to ask some questions.

1) HAVE YOU SEEN ANY UFOS?

answer: no

2) HAVE YOU SEEN ANY UFO PHOTOS LYING AROUND?

answer: no

3) have you seen any models lying around?

ANSWER: YESSSSSSSSS!!!!

At this point Craig Myers asked to see and then to borrow the model. He took it to the newspaper office. Then, a day later the editor asked Ed to come to his the office at the newspaper building. He had something to talk to him about. The editor, the reporter and others were present when they surprised Ed with the model. They ask if he had made it or ever seen it, to which he answered no, but he did recognize the printing on the blueprint paper. Then the newspaper published a front page story "MODEL FOUND" which described the discovery of the model and how it could be used, along with Ed's old camera, which he loaned to the newspaper, to create hoax photos. (Ed is such a nice, accomodating guy, loaning an "enemy" the "knife" with which to stab him...in the back! This was not the first time that he had allowed skeptics to use his camera to try to duplicate his photos. They produced some moderately convincing similar photos but they never did produce a replica of photo 1!!)

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Science, Logic, and the UFO Debate:

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