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in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1998](#) -> [Nov](#) -> **The Flying Flapjacks, V-173 and XF5U-1**

UFO UpDates Mailing List

The Flying Flapjacks, V-173 and XF5U-1

From: Jan Aldrich <jan@cyberzone.net>
Date: Wed, 11 Nov 1998 14:06:20 -0800
Fwd Date: Wed, 11 Nov 1998 20:40:19 -0500
Subject: The Flying Flapjacks, V-173 and XF5U-1

We are informed by Tim Mathews that the Top Secret "Analysis of Flying Object Incidents over the US" stated that the XF5U-1 was flying around.

<http://www.iufog.org/project1947/fig/1948air.htm>

Here is the quote that Tim must be referring to:

"Among those which have been operational in recent years are the XF5U-1 ("Flying Flapjack") developed by Chance-Vaught, the Northrup B-35, and the turbo-jet powered Northrup YB-49. The present existence of any privately developed flying-wing type aircraft has not been determined but one such aircraft, the Arup tailless monoplane, was operational at South Bend, Indiana, prior to 1935."

I would be more confident that the "Analysis" authors were correct if they were able to properly identify the XF5U-1. On the last page of the "Analysis" we find the following:

"c. CHANCE-VOUGHT XF5U-1. Developed by Chance-Vought Aircraft, this radical design promises the reality of high and low speed performance. Powered by two R-2000-2 engines, the airplane will have a speed range from 40 to 425 miles per hour. (See Fig. 8)"

Figure 8 is not a picture of the XF5U-1 but the predecessor, the V-173 which did indeed fly. Many people use information on the two different, but similar aircraft, interchangeably. Tim Mathews caught me on this. Obviously the authors of the "Analysis" did the same.

Recently Joel Carpenter brought an early 1947 news reel to the Project 1947 Research List attention:

Hello Folks-

One more significant newsreel to bring to your attention. Dated June 21, 1947. Wonder if Ken Arnold went to the movies?
- Joel Carpenter

(please note that there are many typos in this which I have fixed in brackets)

Collection
PMN

Negative
C-9112

Release_Date
06-21-47

Issue
87

Footage
111

Cameraman
BLUM

Source

Description

STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT

NAVY UNVEILS WORLD'S WEIRDEST AIRPLANE

INTRODUCING THE XF5U-1, THE NAVY'S FANTASTIC, FLYING-WING FIGHTER. AT STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT, TEST FLIGHTS DEMONSTRATE THE INCREDIBLE POSSIBILITIES OF THE PLANE. POTENTIALLY IT HAS THE SLOWEST LANDING SPEED AND THE FASTEST FLYING SPEED OF ANY PROPELLER-DRIVEN AIRCRAFT. IT'S OUR NOMINATION FOR THE WORLD'S WEIRDEST AIRPLANE!

SV FLAPJACK, VHANCE [CHANCE] VOUGHT N-F-F U-1 [XF5U-1], NAVY EXPERIMENTAL FIGHTER PLANE, FLYING DIRECTLY ABOVE CAMERA. GV CROWD LOOKING. CU ARMY OFFICERS LOOKING. GV PLANE LANDING. CROWD. EL V MEN TURNING THE PLANE AROUND. CU PILOT, BOONE GUFTON [GUYTON], CLOSING THE PLEXI-GLASS HOOD. SV PLANE TAKING OFF. ANGLE V PLANE FLYING DIRECTLY OVER CAMERA (THIS SC. IS REPEAT OF SCENE 2).

ORIGINAL NEGATIVE.

"A" VERSION DUPE NEGATIVE IN STORAGE.

CROSS REFERENCE

F-5 U-1, VOUGHT (XF-5U-1): NAVY FIGHTER (IN AIR; LANDS; TAKES OFF; ETC.)

When I asked Joel if his research could be reposted here, he offered the further information below.

Hi Jan-
Certainly!

Important to note! I think that even though it claims to show the XF5U-1 flying, what it really is the V-173. I have pretty extensive clippings about the Vought airshow on 18-20 June 47, and several times it is mentioned in various papers that the show was the very first public showing of the V-173, which was finishing its flight test program and was about to be declassified and grounded. in fact, I believe that the V-173 made its last flight on July 30, '47. I have seen footage of the real XF5U-1 in high-speed taxi tests, and I interviewed Charles Zimmerman a few years ago (the designer), and he did admit that it made hops, but no real flights. After all , the plane was designed to take off at 30 mph or so, so it would almost be a shock if it _hadn't_ taken off. But I would swear that it never left Stratford.
- Joel

[See Joel's article on the Midland, MI 1947 trace case in the current International UFO Report.]

The V-173 and XF5U-1 were mentioned extensively during the 1947 wave. Several people, including Walter Winchell pointed to the Flying Flapjack as the answer to UFO wave.

The V-173 made a short flight in Connecticut at a 1947 airshow.

On the 2d of July 1947, the Bridgeport, Connecticut POST

ran the following article: 'SAUCERS' ARE SIMILAR TO VOUGHT
FLYING WING

Whatever those strange flying objects repeatedly report in western skies these days may be there're definitely not carbon copies of Chance Vought Aircraft's "flying flapjack," full-scale flying model of the XF5U-1, an experimental Navy fighter of radical "flying wing" design.

Matter of fact, except for one aerial jaunt to Floyd Bennett Field, the V-173, hit of an air show ----- at Bridgeport's municipal airport last month to climax Chance Vought's 30th anniversary celebration, has never been away from its home base at the Stratford plant.

Latest report on strange objects in the western skies was provided yesterday by Richard Rankin, veteran Pacific Coast pilot, who said he saw the "flying saucers" over California, the Associated Press reported.

Completely shameless, I would introduce these 1947 sightings from my Preliminary Report and question if the XF5U-1 or any experimental aircraft at the time could account for them.

Page 19-20, Bryon Savage, a pilot and businessman's sighting in Oklahoma City, OK of a shiny silvery object flying a terrific rate of speed. (Project SIGN/Grudge Incident 82)

Page 66-67, Richard Rankin, the famous pilot's sighting of 14 June 1947, over Bakersfield, California saw not only one but 10 objects which he at first took to be the Flying Flapjack. How there could be a formation of XF5U-1's that could not continue in the testing program for lack of money would be a good story. (Project SIGN/Grudge Incident 29)

Page 84, Two Phillips Petroleum pilots flying enroute to Bartlesville, OK, on 6 July 1947, at the Kansas-Colorado border encountered one after another during 15 minute period revolving metal 9 disc-shaped objects as big as a hanger door rushing toward their plane at speeds they were not able to clock.

Pages 104, 183-185 Two pilots on the staff of "Southern Wings" magazine on 11 July 1947 over High Point, North Carolina encountered a huge red object that with flames coming out from the bottom. As they turned in the object's direction it sped off.

Pages 203, 207, Dave Johnson's sighting of a dark object following a steep ascension course near Meridian, Idaho on 9 July 1947 (Project SIGN/Grudge Incident 83)

Pages 114-5, August 1947 sighting reported by Lt Commander Tex Witherspoon at Coffeyville, Kansas during an airshow (erroneous located at Pittsburg, Kansas in the UFO Evidence.)

Page 144-145, August 26 1947 sighting from a postplane of a greenish rhomboid and investigated by the Swedish Defense Staff. ("1947 Reports from Sweden and Scandinavia" by Anders Liljergren)

Page 199, August 19, 1947, the fourth sighting from a United Airlines planes in a six week period was reported by two pilots over Mountain Home, Idaho. Two objects like skit targets flew under the plane flying at 8,000 feet. The co-pilot clocked the objects at over 900 mph.

These sightings by pilots and aviation people at widely scattered points do not point to some secret aircraft. Do we have test aircraft in 1947 flying the airways below airliners flying at more than the speed of sound?

--

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Project 1947

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