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editorial

It is quite some time since you last received a copy of UFORAN. I apologise for this delay.

An explanation is in order.

Firstly, and most importantly, financial and time factors re my commitment to UFORAN became too heavy a burden for me. Secondly, a mixture of local and personal events blunted my enthusiasm.

Thirdly, eye surgery and other health problems exacerbated the above.

I won't trouble you with the details but, rest assured, if I'd been in position to publish UFORAN, I would certainly have done so.

How do matters now stand ?

I have purchased a computer and printer which will radically reduce my work/time commitment. However, for the present, I have decided not to pledge myself to a publishing schedule. So, for the time being, UFORAN will be produced periodically. Keith Basterfield will be a Contributing Editor and we are committed to maintaining the quality and integrity of the magazine. But, as always, we not only need your support, but the support of anyone you may know who would like to subscribe to UFORAN. The magazine's health depends on growth and we can only do so much, we need your help !

Thank you for bearing with me.

Vladimir Godic
(EDITOR - PUBLISHER)

THE MUNDRABILLA INCIDENT

By KEITH BASTERFIELD

UFO Research Australia & UFO Research South Australia

and

RAY BROOKE

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In the early hours of Wednesday morning January 20, 1988, the occupants of a number of vehicles travelling along the main highway between Perth, Western Australia, and Adelaide, South Australia, were reportedly involved in an incident.

This report has been compiled from a personal interview with the main percipients, the Knowles family; a statement given to police by the Knowles; an inspection of their vehicle; an interview with one of the truck drivers, and from the extensive media coverage given to the incident, especially from taped video interviews which appeared on television. Details of independent laboratory testing results have been made available to us.

It will be some time, perhaps months, before we are able to present an indepth report for distribution. However, due to the constant demand from many quarters for a preliminary report on our inquiries, we make this material available with the following qualification.

The report is a raw information, with no attempt at analysis or interpretation at this stage. It will clearly be seen that there are discrepancies within the accounts given by the Knowles to De Jong and the story we obtained the following day e.g. which of Mrs Knowles' hands was affected. As we have been denied access to the Knowles for clarification we can only present the details as we have been given them.

Our investigations have been conducted amidst what can only be described as a "media circus". To indicate the intense media interest in the incident, the authors have now fielded well over one hundred individual inquiries from all over Australia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, and the U.S.A.

In this report, compiled on March 17, 1988, we hope to cover as much detail as possible about what has become known as the Mundrabilla incident.

Members of investigation team in this case have been Keith Basterfield, Ray Brooke, Steve Bolton, Vladimir and Pony Godic in Adelaide; Garry Little in Melbourne, and Joan Johnston in Perth.

LOCATION

The incident occurred on a stretch of the main bitumised highway between Perth and Adelaide. Between the localities of Madura and Eucla, Western Australia, the area is more locally known as The Basin and it is here that the episode reportedly occurred (see maps 1 and 2). It is an isolated stretch of road with the Great Australian Bight (Ocean) to the South and a range of hills to the North.

Due to the distance of the site from Adelaide (1100 km by air) and the ephemeral nature of the physical evidence

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AUSTRALIA - Map 1

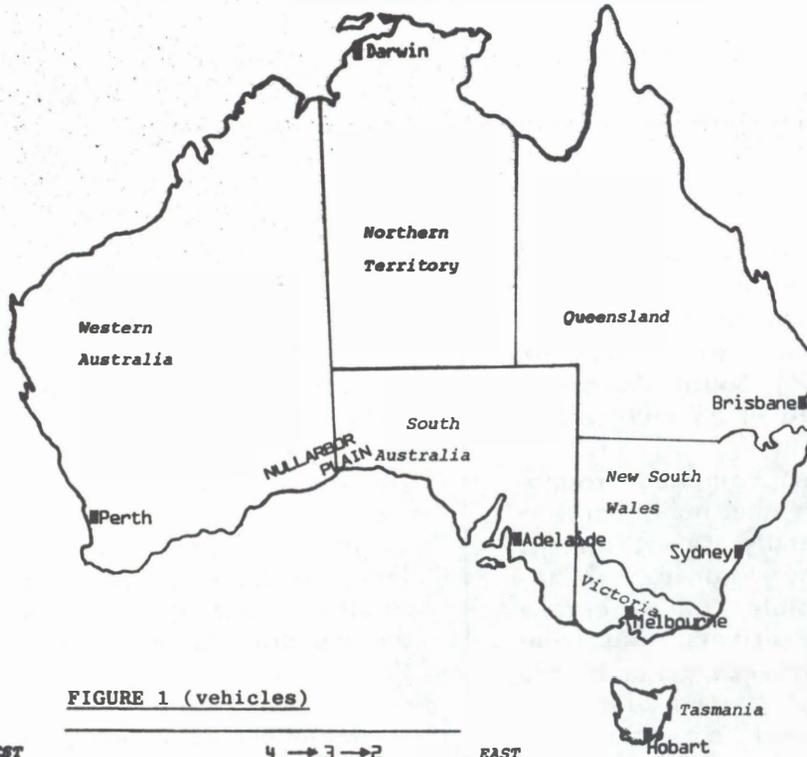
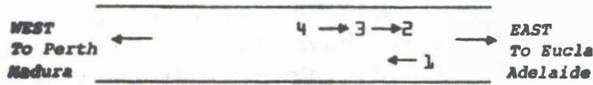
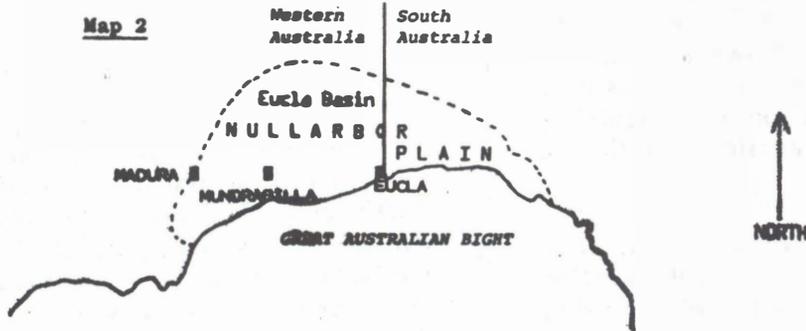


FIGURE 1 (vehicles)



Map 2



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at the spot, we have not visited Mundrabilla ourselves. However, driver De Jong has provided us with an excellent description of the location, and showed us pictures of the general area. Together with TV shots of the area this has given us an understanding of the isolated nature of this stretch of road, the terrain, road surface and vegetation present.

On initial media advice it was thought that there was a fifth vehicle travelling westwards. This now appears spurious.

Vehicle one was a car and caravan, which is reported by the Knowles to have almost collided with their car when driver, Sean Knowles, stated he took evasive action swerving to avoid a close en-



The Knowles' car

THE VEHICLES

As pieced together to date the sequence of events was as follows. Four vehicles were involved. Three were travelling eastwards (see figure 1) towards Eucla, and the other is understood to have been on its way westwards in the direction of Perth. These vehicles were spread over at least a 10 - 15 kilometre distance and not travelling in a close convoy.

counter with the object. The identity of the occupant of this vehicle has not been discovered by anyone to date and, in fact, this person seem to have been entirely overlooked by the media. On Sean's testimony this driver should have seen the object at close range. We placed an article in a Perth Sunday paper in an attempt to locate this person, but there has been no response to date.

Vehicle two was a truck being driven by a Mr Graham Henley, 57, transport

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operator of Forest Hill, Victoria. Media reports place Mr Henley driving his truck though The Basin some 10 - 15 kilometres ahead of the Knowles' car. We have contacted Henley's wife and asked him to talk to us. However, to date he has not responded, although most of the time he is apparently on the road.

Vehicle three was a Ford Telstar sedan (car) containing the Knowles family from Perth, to whom we shall return later in this report.

Vehicle four was a truck owned by a transport operator whom we now know to be named De Jong (nickname "Porky"). This vehicle was at an unknown distance behind Knowles' car, and at the time was being driven by a woman friend of De Jong's, named Anne.

As at March 17, we have now identified and spoken to the occupants of two of the four vehicles involved. It may be some time before we are able to personally interview the others, particularly the currently unknown driver.

INVESTIGATION BY US

The story broke to us about 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday January 20. The Ceduna police telephoned Ray Brooke whilst the Knowles were present at the station. Arrangements were made for the family to proceed to Adelaide where they would be interviewed and the vehicle inspected, documenting the physical evidence. Ceduna police advised us they had secured written statements and a sample of a deposit for analysis. Nothing else could be done by UFO Research (SA) until family and vehicle arrived in Adelaide.

The story leaked to the media, however, and the family were intercepted en-route and concluded a deal with the Channel 7 television network. It appeared at this stage that "cheque book" journalism has scored over scientific evaluation.

On Thursday January 21, after negotiations with the 7 network, the authors were able to spend three hours at the Adelaide Channel 7 studios whilst the Knowles underwent extensive interviews. Between interviews we managed to talk informally to all members of the family. No formal indepth interview was possible in the circumstances. We confirmed their basic story as related below.

The family was distressed and tired at this stage and told us they wanted a finish to all television interviews. They appeared to us to be down to earth people trying to cope with some traumatic episode. Indications of a hoax were minimal.

Following the end of the interviews at the station we sought our own formal indepth interview. However, the family declined and then left for an undisclosed location. The next day they travelled on to Melbourne, Victoria, some 800 km from us, where we understand they still remain.

However, the story as pieced together from our first hand interview, and from notes taken whilst watching several TV interviews being taped, is as follows.

THE MAIN PERCIPIENTS

Mrs Faye Knowles, 43, and sons, Sean 21, Patrick 24, and Wayne 18, were travelling from Perth, Western Australia (WA) to Melbourne, Victoria, for a surprise visit to Mrs Knowles' family in Melbourne.

At a still undetermined point West of Mundrabilla WA, Sean, the driver, saw what he at first took to be a truck's light, apparently along the road, approaching them from the East. As it approached, it then disappeared after "jumping about a bit". It became visible again and continued to approach their vehicle. Sean commented that it looked like a "spaceship". It become brighter and bigger. They kept driving towards it. It then disappeared.

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The next thing they knew it was behind them. Sean accelerated the car in an attempt to get away from it. Suddenly it was in front again.

At some stage Sean did a U-turn and travelled westwards for a while, then did another U-turn to resume the original eastwards travel. It is not clear whether this was an attempt to elude or follow the light.

At another time Sean commented that the light was seen close to their vehicle and they swerved to miss it and nearly hit a car and caravan coming the other way.

The exact sequence of events from here is very confused. It included:

- The rear right tyre blowing out while they were travelling at speed. Sean braked the car to a halt.

- Mrs Knowles placing her hand on the car's roof and feeling a "spongy substance". Mrs Knowles told us she was sitting in the rear passenger seat, behind the driver, nearest the centre of the road. (In Australia vehicles are driven on the left hand side of the road). She stated she wound down her window and placed her right hand on the roof. She had retracted it after feeling some material on the roof. Immediately the back of her hand felt warm for a few seconds, then the sensation of heat faded.

- The family winding down the windows and a "greyish-black mist" coming into the car.

- The sound of their voices changing in pitch and appearing to slow down.

- Them believing that the object had landed on the roof. When questioned they said they did not see anything approach and land on the roof, nor did they see anything protruding front, rear or over the sides of the roof.

- A humming sound was heard.

- Sean blacking out over a period.

- Them all becoming hysterical, shouting and crying. Mrs Knowles said she believed they were going to die.

- A black deposit being found inside and outside the car.

- Indentations being found on the roof.

- Them believing the car was lifted off the road. However, when asked if they looked out of the windows and saw the car off the ground, they had not done so.

- Them saying that the vehicle was dropped to the ground and the tyre burst.

- Their two dogs going "crazy".

- A smell like "dead bodies" in the air.

- Them reporting that the car started shaking.

It should be emphasised that the exact sequence of the above events has not been able to be obtained from the family as they have not been available to us since January 21.

After a period of time Sean stopped the car and they all got out to adjacent scrub. They reported that the light/object remained in the vicinity of the car and then departed. Some fifteen minutes, after stopping, they returned to the car and rapidly changed the tyre. From that point (believed to be some 40 kilometres West of Mundrabilla) they drove to Mundrabilla Motor Hotel (WA).

POLICE STATEMENT

On March 17 we received a copy of a statement of a Senior Constable First Grade of the Port Lincoln crime scene section, Port Lincoln.

It records details, related a few hours after the incident and so is presented (unedited) in full.

THE MUNDRABILLA INCIDENT

At about 1.00 p.m. (SA time) on Wednesday January 20, 1988, I was approached at the Ceduna Police Station by two male persons (Sean Knowles and his brother Patrick Knowles).

They reported to me that while driving on the Eyre Highway, at a point between Madura and Mundrabilla in Western Australia, at about 5.30 a.m. (WA time) this date, they were confronted by an extremely white light about 15 - 18 metres in front of their vehicle. They described the light as being extremely bright white with a yellow core. They further stated that their vehicle, a Ford Telstar, had been damaged by the object when it landed on the roof of their vehicle while they were travelling at a speed of about 110 kilometres an hour. They further stated that the object, while on the roof of their car, had showered the vehicle with a black ash type dust.

They displayed great anxiety and were visibly shaken by the ordeal. I asked why they had not reported the incident to the Police Station at Eucla in Western Australia prior to leaving that state, and they informed me that they had not sighted a Police Station at Eucla.

Neither did I receive from them a completely satisfactory explanation as to why they had not reported the matter at Penong Police Station being the first Police Station in South Australia which they had passed.

This may have been a double sided question therefore receiving one answer. The vehicle was parked in Poynton Street, Ceduna.

I attended at the vehicle in company with two persons and made an inspection of the damage to the hood of the vehicle which they indicated to me as having been caused by the object when on their vehicle.

I found that there were superficial dents to the four corners of the hood al-

though the remainder of the hood appeared undamaged.

The exterior of the vehicle was covered by a fine black/grey dust similar to a road film left on a vehicle in need of washing. That same dust was obvious on the upholstery within the vehicle.

An inspection of the complete vehicle indicated that it appeared quite well looked after and did not display any noticeable damage consistent with having been involved in an accident or collision of any kind. All tyres on the vehicle were in good condition and showed at least 3/4 tread.

They told me that whilst attempting to escape from the object, the rear right hand tyre had blown out. I asked to see the tyre which was produced from the boot of the vehicle. The tyre was of the same make as the other tyres on the vehicle and had the same amount tread wear. It was in good condition. However, complete outer side of the tyre was fractured at the base of the tread. I asked for the vehicle to be conveyed to the police station at Ceduna where I could speak further with the occupants of the vehicle and make further examination of it.

On return to the station I spoke to Mrs Knowles in a location where we were out of earshot of the other occupants. Mrs Knowles was visibly shaken by the ordeal and insisted (upon) her honesty in the belief that the Police were sceptical at the report they were making.

It was stated that they had been on the Eyre Highway, at about 5.30 a.m., when they were confronted by the brilliant white light in front of the vehicle. The light remained a short distance ahead of the vehicle and began to 'zig-zag' from side to side across the road. They stated that the object was about one metre in width but were unable to estimate the height except to say that it blocked their view of the road ahead of the vehicle.

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At this time, a second vehicle approached their position travelling in a westerly direction on the Eyre Highway. They stated that the object gave chase to this vehicle and, in fact, they lost sight of it to the rear of their vehicle as it circled around their right hand side in apparent pursuit of the other vehicle. At this point I asked Sean to draw a sketch of the object which he did. The sketch resembled an egg in an egg cup. The ground was indicated at the base of the egg cup.

They stated that the object then came from behind their vehicle and their vehicle began to shake violently on the road from side to side. Both stated having been extremely scared at this time and Sean stated that he increased speed of the vehicle in an attempt to escape from the object.

Mrs Knowles then stated that she wound down the rear right side window and reached toward the hood of the vehicle. She stated that she felt something on the hood of the vehicle and made her distress known to the other persons in the vehicle. Both, Sean and Mrs Knowles, could not recall any indication of light, at this time, from the object on the roof, but Mrs Knowles stated that it felt soft, spongy and rubbery, and was hot although she did not burn her hand. On retrieving her hand, however, she found that it was covered in black/grey dust.

Both stated that at this time they were aware of high pitched whirring or hissing noise but which was of normal intensity. Both stated they felt disorientated and that they noticed that their voices had become slow and deep when they spoke.

They were unable to say how long the object was on the roof of the car but, during the time it was there, it appeared to lift the vehicle off the road and forced it back down heavily on the road. The rear right side tyre on the vehicle then blew out. Sean considered that this

occurred as a result of the weight of the object forcing down on the vehicle.

They stated that the object then vanished and they were able to stop the vehicle. They both stated that the wheel was changed hurriedly and they were about to move off again when they noticed the object again, glowing bright white, ahead of the vehicle. The object appeared to be in the centre of the road.

They were extremely concerned and scared and, in fact, drove the vehicle behind roadside bushes, vacated the vehicle, and themselves hid separately from the vehicle. They remained hidden for a short period until they could no longer see the object and then drove from the location to the Mundrabilla Roadhouse where they spoke with persons at that establishment shortly prior to 6.00 a.m. (W.A.time).

I then spoke to the passenger who had been indicated as sitting in the front left side of the vehicle, Patrick Knowles. I spoke with him separately from Sean and Mrs Knowles and before he had an opportunity of conversing with them.

His indication of the situation, which had occurred, was similar to that as told to me by the others, although his description of incidents differed. He stated that his impression of the object was about similar in size, to that indicated, but it appeared to him to have a brighter light at the top and at the bottom. He described it as being bigger than the car and that the light which it gave off was brilliant white. He also stated that, after the object was apparently on the hood of the vehicle, and his mother had felt it and remarked, he had opened his left side front window and had been showered with a black powdery dust. He was also aware of a foul smell. He stated that he began speaking with a deep voice which was obviously sluggish and he gained the impression that the object was 'taking over his body'.

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His impression of the object on the roof of the vehicle was that it was heavy, and was pushing down on the vehicle, and concurred that at that point, while driving faster to escape the object, the rear right tyre blew out.

His impression of the noise, which apparently emanated from the object, was that it was a deep whirring sound. He made no mention of any light being emitted from the object whilst on the vehicle.

He stated that they had driven from the location to the Mundrabilla Roadhouse where they had spoken to persons including a semitrailer driver who, they believe, had made observations of the white light as it was travelling on the Eyre Highway in the same location and the time indicated.

I have checked with the Eucla Police and ascertained that they received a similar report to that given by the four persons at the Ceduna Police Station. Their report had been received early on the morning of 20/1/88, apparently from a driver of a semitrailer.

Eucla Police were aware of the report made by the four persons to the Mundrabilla Roadhouse and were looking for the Ford Telstar vehicle to obtain particulars of incident.

They have conducted enquiries in the Mundrabilla area particulars of which I am not conversant.

THE KNOWLES' VEHICLE

The Knowles' vehicle, a blue 1984 Ford AR Telstar GL, front drive automatic sedan, registration number 7GD-560 was made available to us by Channel 7 on February 2, after it was transported from Wudinna, South Australia. It was inspected by UFO Research (South Australia) and UFO Research Australia. Comments follow:

The vehicle was generally in good condition. There were no immediate signs of damage to it, when first seen, apart from a shattered driver's mirror. The mirror itself was not present. (Sean advised us that they hit a kangaroo at one stage of their trip, and it is not known what damage to the car is a result of this collision with the animal). The bodywork, for its age, was in extremely good condition. The engine was relatively clean, and there were no signs of panel beating.

Speedometer reading was 002414.2 km but as the car is four years old this would suggest a total of 102,414.2 km has been travelled.

Tyres:

All five tyres were tubeless Dunlop Grand Prix steel belted radials type P185/75 SR 14. The front left, front right and rear left (as viewed from the driver's seat looking forwards) were first time tyres. The rear right (this replaced the one which blew) was a retread. The damaged tyre was found in the boot.

The damaged tyre:

This tyre had blown out along a line where the steel belt finishes and starts to go up the wall of the tyre, in a circular fashion.

Its tread was good, perhaps half of its original life left, slightly worn on the outside. The whole valve for pumping air into the tyre, was missing.

Roof:

From a distance of a few metres it was difficult to see the four reported indentation in the roof. In position they were roughly at the corners of the roof. At close range it was possible to locate four small in area, shallow in depth, indentations. The areas were depressions, not cuts, and the paint in these spots was still intact. There was no evidence of an

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indentation in the centre of the roof, nor any other prominent mark or scratch. No luggage rack was present.

Electrical:

The family reported no effects to the engine, lights or clock at the time of the event. We checked the sidelights, headlights, indicators, washers, interior roof light, booth light, radio and digital clock and all were found to be operable. When testing the rear red brake lights we found the right hand light to be inoperable.

The battery was a six cell unit in good condition. Internal fluid levels were fine. Terminals were clean, firmly fitted with no corrosion evident.

Engine is a four cylinder, petrol driven, 2.0 litre capacity motor. Speedometer, odometer, fuel and temperature gauges were operable. No tachometer was fitted. The car was driven by us a short distance within the Channel 7 car park.

Radio/cassette:

It had a small, loosely fitted unit in poor physical condition with broken knobs, dual speakers, AM/FM bands, "Realistic" brand. Its aerial was side roof mounted over the driver's door. When tested in Adelaide by us with aerial down the unit generated lots of static. With aerial fully extended the unit played fairly well.

Internal/external deposits:

There was no evidence of any black deposit, internally or externally, on our inspection except as stated below. However, the vehicle had travelled from Mundrabilla WA to Wudinna SA (several hundred kilometres) under its own power, and then from Wudinna to Adelaide by truck (another few hundred kilometres) before we viewed it.

In addition to this, on the day prior to our viewing we are led to understand

that Paul Norman, of the Victorian UFO Research Society, vacuumed the vehicle in order to take sample. It is hoped that the results of his testing will be speedily available to us all.

The inside floor areas of the car were covered with sand particles, pieces of food, empty drink containers and other debris.

The one exception, as far as black deposits go, is as follows. On the metal trims of the two front tyres, there was a black deposit present. This was not present on the two rear tyres nor the damaged tyre in the boot. It was distributed around the trim, but did not extend to hub cap, wheel nuts nor anywhere else on the metal surface of the tyre. Its distribution was consistent with coming from disk brake pads, fitted to the two front wheels, under heavy braking, i.e. worn brake linings.

INTERVIEW WITH MR DE JONG

Mr De Jong (nickname "Porky") and a woman, named Anne, were travelling by truck from Perth, WA, to Adelaide, SA, at a speed of about 95-100 km/h. They had stopped at the Madura Pass, WA, in order to change drivers. Mr De Jong went to sleep in the rear cabin whilst Anne took over the driving.

A colleague of theirs, Graham Henley, was driving a truck along the same road, in the same direction, but he was ahead of them. They were far enough behind him that they were not able to see his lights at all during the trip between Madura and Mundrabilla.

At a point forty kilometres West of Mundrabilla (close to the 40 km sign post) they'd passed an S bend in the road when Anne saw two people waving on the right hand (opposite) side of the road. (In Australia vehicle drive on the left hand

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side of the road). Within 150 metres further on there was a car, also on the right hand side of the road. The front of the car was facing in a south-westerly direction, i.e. back towards Perth. Anne asked Porky whether or not she should stop. After raising up from the bunk, he said "No". They continued on.

Later a car overtook them at speed. After passing their truck, Anne noticed that the vehicle's lights were switched off. In her opinion the night was still too dark for a vehicle not to have lights on. Then the lights of the vehicle came back on. Arriving at Mundrabilla they noted that another truck driver, Graham Henley, was present and talking to a group of people around a car. After looking at the truck Porky and Anne went over to Henley. They then established it was these people who had been waving at the side of the road and also the same people who had passed their truck at speed.

The group in the car consisted of a woman and three young men. Porky says the woman appeared hysterical and the boys also looked disturbed. One was a white colour in his face. They told a story of a UFO. The behaviour of the woman convinced the three of them that something unusual had occurred there.

The woman, established later to be Mrs Knowles, had a red blotch on the back of her left hand which she was worrying about. She told them she had touched something on the roof. She kept repeating: "Someone's got to do something", and "Someone's going to get hurt."

THE KNOWLES' STORY AS RELATED TO DE JONG

The family were heading eastwards towards Melbourne for holidays with relatives. Sean was driving at the time, Patrick was believed to be in the front bucket seat, Mrs Knowles in the rear left

seat behind Patrick, and Wayne in the seat behind the driver. Initially they saw a bright light ahead of them which they took to be a truck. Something was then over the car. They heard a high pitched whirring noise. Their minds and bodies were taken over. Voices appeared slow and funny. Mrs Knowles put her left hand on top of the roof and felt something. This frightened her. The car was lifted off the ground to an unknown height. They did not know how long it was airborne. The car dropped to the ground. They left the scene heading westwards. Then they stopped to change the tyre, made a U turn and headed eastwards again. Porky formed an opinion that all this happened in 15-20 minutes.

QUESTIONS

Graham and Porky questioned the family about the incident.

1. The noise: Graham asked them if the noise they had heard could have been a helicopter. The family said the noise was definitely different from that of a helicopter. One of the boys said it was a "whirry" noise not a helicopter "chuffy" sound.
2. Asked how high they were of the road, they said they didn't know.

The two drivers volunteered to take the family back to the spot to have look at the area. The family declined.

The vehicle was inspected by the two drivers with Graham pointing out features and Porky following behind.

INSPECTION OF THE VEHICLE

Porky looked at the vehicle. His observations were:

1. Of the burst tyre: There was nothing inside the casing of the burst tyre.

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2. There was a smell about the car which he said was closest to "bakelite".

3. There was nothing underneath the vehicle, i.e. no saltbush. He concluded the vehicle had not been driven into the scrub.

4. Porky did not see any black ash/dust on the vehicle. Neither inside nor outside. The car was dusty and dirty as per normal car travel.

5. The boot was in a shambles, everything scattered. There were no suitcases in the boot nor in or on the car.

6. There were four marks on the roof, one at each corner. These were indentations not cuts. They looked the same as a mark one would make by hitting the roof with a fist.

The Knowles family left Mundrabilla heading towards Eucla, WA, and then South Australia, after spending no more than 30 minutes at Mundrabilla.

Graham and Porky went into the road house and discussed the episode with the manageress there, Mrs Shirley London. Following this discussion Mrs London telephoned the Seargent at the Eucla Police Station. Porky spoke to him and told him what he knew.

After this the two truck drivers borrowed an automatic utility, from the road house, and went out to the spot together with Anne. They went back along the road to see what they could find, but especially to look for three things:-

a. Clumps of rubber on the bitumen which would indicate a blowout.

b. Pieces of glass from the driver's side mirror. The mirror was reportedly smashed after a kangaroo hit the Knowles' vehicle. This was said to be during the time they had their vehicle lights out in front of the truck.

c. The car jack and car jack handle

reportedly left at the scene.

The group could not find evidence of any of these, despite knowing the area/road well and knowing exactly where the car was parked, and kangaroo hit.

Both sides of the road were inspected at low speed.

THE SITE

They located the spot where they had seen the car stationary on the side of the road. The road at this spot is slightly undulating. By this time it had been an estimated 1-1 1/2 hours since they passed the spot the first time, and the time now was between 0545 to 0615.

The evidence at the location, which they saw for themselves, consisted of the following:

1.- Footprints. There were footprints where persons had been walking around. There were four sets of prints heading from the car away into the bush in a south-westerly direction. These prints were not full marks but more front foot and toe marks as if running. From a point in the bush there were prints heading back to the road in a northerly direction in a straight line. There were then four sets of prints plus dog paw marks going back along the side of the road in the sand - full pattern as if people were walking. One set of prints was that of someone with bare feet, one with thongs and two with shoes or runners.

2.- There was the impression in the ground of a car jack where they had changed the tyre. When questioned, Porky believed it was a squarish mark and not one of the old round jacks.

3.- Tyre prints. On the bitumen there was a skid mark some 15-20 metres long apparently made by the rear left hand

THE MUNDRABILLA INCIDENT

tyre when they pulled up. In the dirt there was evidence of a flat tyre on the vehicle coming off the road, and no flat tyre when they got back onto the road. There were signs that the vehicle was driven backwards on to the bitumen before doing a U-turn and proceeding eastwards.

There was, however, no sign of the car jack handle reportedly used to change the tyre. They did a grid pattern search for these and were perturbed when they couldn't find them.

They failed to find any trace of clothes, which they believed to have been loose in the boot, which the Knowles said they took out to get to the spare tyre, and which they left at the scene.

AFTERWARDS

The truck party then returned to Mundrabilla where Porky had another talk to the Eucla police. He learnt that the vehicle had passed through Eucla by then. He suggested the police call Penong police in South Australia and have the car stopped, as there was definitely something wrong.

After a whole morning had passed by, the two truck drivers finally left Mundrabilla and headed on. Porky went on to Penong where they stopped for a while and then on to Wudinna for coffee. A helicopter turned up there and they investigated, finally learning that the Knowles family were in a motel and various media organisations were also present. After some time they were allowed to talk to the Knowles family.

After talking to the Knowles they proceeded to Adelaide where Porky appeared on Channel 9 for a short interview.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Porky knows the road well as he has been a truck contractor travelling between Perth and Adelaide for several years.

2. They did not know the Knowles vehicle was ahead of them during the section Madura/Mundrabilla, i.e. they didn't see the car lights ahead of them until the Knowles passed them.

3. Porky says the Knowles car couldn't have been on the side of the road when Graham passed the spot.

4. Anne saw no unusual lights at any stage, especially not when they passed the Knowles' car. No unusual effects were noted on the engine, lights, UHF nor CB radio, steering etc. No unusual sounds were heard.

5. Timing: It was between 0400 and 0430 local time when they passed the stationary car on the side of the road. Porky confirmed the time as about 0445 when he got to Mundrabilla. They said it was still definitely dark when they passed the stationary car.

6. Mrs Knowles was sitting on the left hand side passenger's seat, not behind the driver, according to Porky.

7. Sean was the driver at this time. He appeared hysterical to Porky and was unable to talk at all at Mundrabilla.

8. The weather: At Madura Pass Porky had checked the vehicle. He noted that the night was clear, stars were visible, there was no Moon. He said it was a clear sky, no clouds and no sign of any lightning in the area. Sunrise was definitely after they saw the figures waving at the side of the road.

9. Graham told Porky that he had seen an unusual light in his rear vision mirror and tried to call Porky on his CB radio. Porky

THE MUNDRABILLA INCIDENT

did not receive such a call but believes he was out of range at the time anyway. Graham did not know Porky pulled up at the Madura Pass and stayed there a while, thus increasing the distance behind the two vehicles. At the time of passing the car they had on low volume a CB radio and a UHF radio. Anne was listening to a cassette.



The burst tyre seen from the front

10. Asked if the Knowles had mentioned any other vehicle being involved in the encounter, Porky said no, they hadn't. Anne was asked if she saw vehicles going the other way, i.e. West, during the time Madura to Mundrabilla. She said yes. Without being led she was asked if she had recollections of a car and van passing the other way. She stated she did not remember such going by, and added that it would be rare for someone to pull a van during the night anyway.

11. Upon the return trip in the utility they did find a man asleep in a car, 20 km west of Mundrabilla. They woke him up by looking in his car.

THE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE - REPORT BY INDEPENDENT LABORATORY

Channel 7 asked the Australian Mineral Development Laboratory (AMDEL) in Adelaide to examine the car whilst it was held at Wudinna.

A copy of AMDEL report, dated January 29, 1988, has been made available to us by Channel 7.

Relevant extracts from the report read as follows:-

"A visual examination of the failed tyre, front and rear wheel arches, roof and vehicle interior was carried out. Samples of dust were removed from the left front wheel. The vehicle was inspected using a portable radiation meter.

"The dust samples were analysed using X-ray diffraction and emission spectroscopy techniques. The analysis was com-

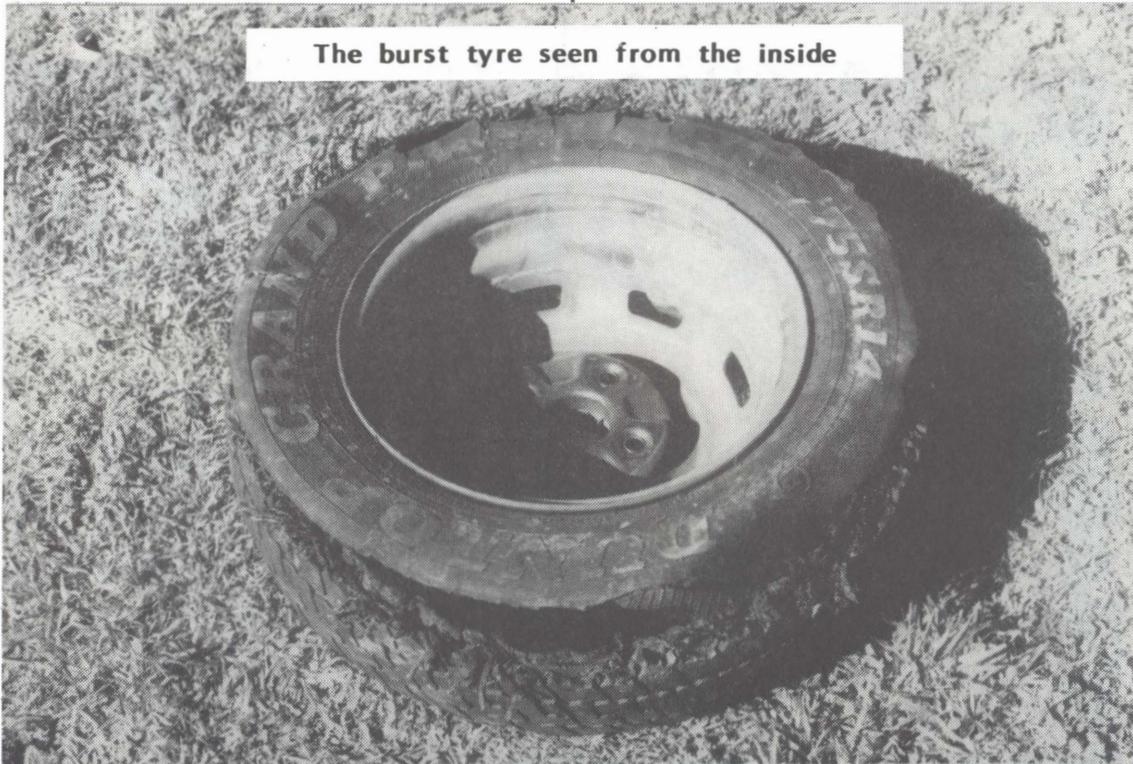
THE MUNDRABILLA INCIDENT

pared to analyses of material taken from front wheels in the Adelaide area.

Re the dents on the roof:-

"The dents were consistent with an object being pressed into the roof rather than an attempt to lift the roof.

"The material taken from around the front wheels was typical of residual dust from wearing brake pads and discs. No significant dust was observed on the vehicle as presented for inspection."



"Inspection of the vehicle using a radiation meter revealed no areas showing count rates above the background levels. Areas inspected included the roof, front and back seat, and the front wheels.

Re the dust:-

"The analyses are considered to be characteristic of dust from wearing brake pads and discs. No significant foreign compounds were present in the dust samples.

"Summary - The investigation revealed that the damage to the tyre was consistent with running on a deflated tyre for an extended period. It is considered that this would account for the odour, smoke and vibration sensed during the incident.

ANOTHER SAMPLE TAKEN

Another sample of a deposit was taken by an officer of the South Australian Police Department (SAPD) at Ceduna on January 20, 1988.

In discussion with the SAPD, on February 1, they advised no testing of their sample had been undertaken, that the sample collected was extremely small, and they were probably to turn their sample over to WAPD in whose jurisdictions the event occurred. We are currently negotiating with both the SAPD and WAPD for custody of this sample.

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

We are following various leads including:-

- Seeking to interview the other truck driver.
- Seeking to document independent observation of lights in the same area.
- Negotiating with the SAPD and WAPD for their samples.
- Seeking advice from those experts who were reported as advancing hypotheses of

various kinds to explain the event, e.g. meteorite fall.

- Seeking the identity of the alleged driver of a car and caravan said to be a close witness.

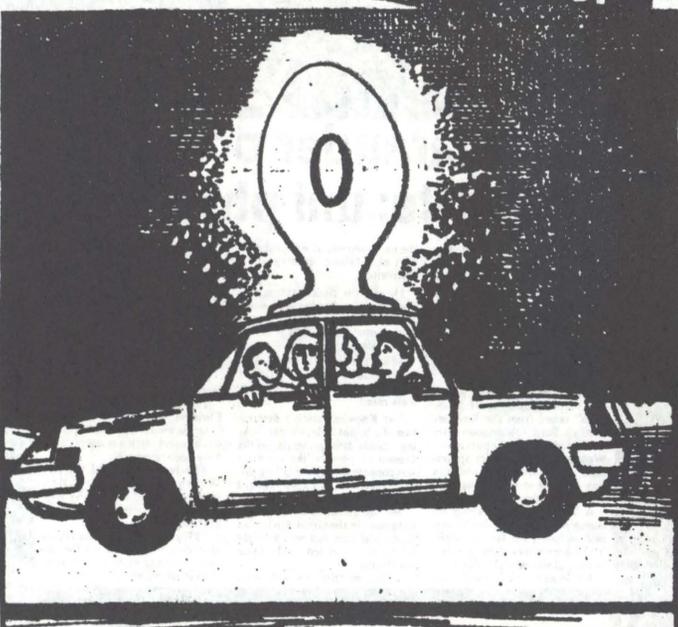
IN CONCLUSION

As at March 17, 1988, it is our opinion that the entire incident, particularly the central experience of the Knowles, is still open to a number of interpretations. ■

UFO ATTACKS FAMILY

Close encounter on Nullarbor

Alien craft sucks car off road



A FAMILY member blames physical changes when their car was lifted from an outback highway by a UFO, police said today.

While in the clutches of the bright glowing, egg-shaped object, the terrified mother and her three sons said their voices became slurred and abnormally slow.

"It was like we were in a time warp," the family said after their strange encounter on the Nullarbor Plains yesterday.

Police at nearby Ceduna, who are today continuing to inspect the car, found it covered in a thick coating of black ash.

There was also ash inside the car.

They also found four superficial dents in each corner of the roof, caused, the family say, when the UFO gripped the

HOW IT HAPPENED: Mirror artist's sketch of what the family described to police — the egg-shaped craft attaching itself to the car

'It was like we were in a time warp'

— FAMILY TELL POLICE

UFO SUCKS FAMILY CAR FROM ROAD

car and lifted it from the highway. The rear tyre blew out when the UFO dropped the vehicle back on the road.

Faye Knowles, 48, and her sons Sean, 21, Patrick, 24, and Wayne, 18, were driving along the Eye Highway at Mundrabilla, near the West Australian-South Australian border, when they had their amazing encounter.

They told police they were travelling from their home in Perth to Melbourne across the Nullarbor Plains about 5.30am yesterday when a "huge bright glowing object" stopped on the road in front of them.

Mrs Knowles, who was driving the new Ford Telstar, served to make it.

Son Sean later told police: "It was a weird looking thing and we stopped to go back and have a look.

He told Senior Constable Gary O'Hagan, of Ceduna: "We became scared and ran back to the car to get away, even though we did not get a close look.

"It chased us and mum was flooring it along the highway.

"We were doing about 110km/h when it came over us and suddenly lifted the car off the road.

"We felt the thump on the roof and then it started lifting us.

"We were frightened and began to yell but our voices had changed."

Mrs Knowles told Constable O'Hagan that when she reached her hand out the window, placing it on the hood of the car, she felt a

©From page 1

strange sensation.

"The hood was soft, warm and spongy and I pulled my hand back in the car," she said.

When the UFO released the car the family stopped, changed the blown out tyre and drove to a roadhouse at Mundrabilla where they met a truck driver who said a bright glowing object had followed him west along the highway less than one hour earlier.

The family then drove non-stop 60km to Ceduna where, still shaken from their encounter, they informed police.

Constable Hagan said today: "Reports of UFO sightings usually don't hold much water with us but after checking their car and seeing them we think there could be something to this."

They will meet scientists at the Adelaide-based Australian UFO Research Centre today

The First Fleet lands from Mars

By PETER TERRY

AUSTRALIA was first settled by little black men; then the little white men came along, and now it looks like the little green men are here.

If what is happening in the centre of the Nullarbor Plain is not just another crazy UFO story, 1988 is about to go down as the year the First Fleet arrived from Mars.

It all began yesterday morning at 5.30, when the Knowles family were driving eastward along the Eyre Highway for a holiday in Victoria.

Suddenly out of the pre-dawn darkness roared a strange unearthly noise that shattered their serenity.

A large square object descended from the sky, clamped itself on to the roof of their car, and hoisted them all into the air.

As Mrs Kay Knowles told police later, she and her three teenage sons were terrified.

The roof was squeezed. The noise got louder and all four began to think their time was up.

Suddenly, The Thing let go. The car crashed to the ground, bursting a tyre as it hit.

All four jumped out and scrambled into the roadside bushes to hide until The Thing had left.

"They certainly had an encounter with something," said Sergeant Fred Longley, who interviewed the family at Ceduna Police Station.

"It's got us completely baffled. All they saw was an object about three foot square which came down on top of their car.

"We've examined the vehicle and there are definitely dent marks in the roof. The wheels have been damaged too."

The story has been backed up by a truck driver who was driving in front of the Knowles's car.

He did not see the incident, but he did see The Thing.

At first he thought it was the headlights of an on-coming vehicle. But then the lights moved upwards and swooped over his cabin.

In fact weird lights have been reported from all over this section of the Nullarbor.

At Eukia, at Christmas, the local roadhouse is said to have been buzzed by the strange Thing.

It was night time and the staff thought it might have been a lost aircraft.

In fact, they went so far as to switch on the landing lights at the nearby airstrip just in case the pilot wanted to come down.

Apparently something did. It swooped low over the airfield, and then banked sharply and sped off to the west.

Perhaps it was men from Mars.

Or perhaps it was someone who just wanted to attract the tourists.

Eggcup UFO 'picked up our car'

A HORRIFIED family told today how they were chased by an eggcup shaped UFO which picked up their car and dropped it as they were driving across the Nullarbor Plain.

Mrs Faye Knowles, of Midland, a Perth suburb, and her sons Patrick, 24, Sean, 21, and Wayne, 18, were driving the family Ford Telstar across the Eyre Highway to Melbourne.

The shocked family said that about 40 km west of Mundrabilla near the WA/SA border

By GRAHAM DAVIS

at 5.30am yesterday they saw a bright light, stopped the car and went back to investigate.

They saw what they described as an "eggcup" shaped object in the sky which began to chase them.

They ran through the scrub, got back into the car and drove off at 200 km/h.

However, according to the Knowles, the UFO attached itself to the

roof of the Telstar and lifted it off the road.

Mrs Knowles said she put her arm up and felt the object.

"It was like a rubber suction pad", she said.

When the object dropped the car it hit the road with such a bump it blew out a tyre.

Police and scientists are investigating the claim today.

"Something did happen out there... we don't know what," investigating officer, Sgt Jim Funnell of Ceduna police said.

It was the third UFO incident in the Nullarbor in the past month.

Two of the reports described "egg shaped" objects.

Sydney Sun, January 21, 1988.

The Australian, January 21, 1988.

UFO marauder probably meteorite: uni physicist

ADELAIDE.— Forensic tests on the car allegedly attacked by a UFO on a remote stretch of the Nullarbor Plain on Wednesday will not be available until late next week.

But a university physicist has backed the "extra-terrestrial" theory. He says the culprit probably was a meteorite.

South Australian police yesterday received samples of black "ash" taken from the Knowles family's Ford Telstar soon after the incident was reported on Wednesday. But a police spokesman said forensic examination was unlikely to take place until after the holiday weekend.

A Wollongong University research physicist, Mr Glen Moore, said yesterday the family's claim it had been attacked by an extra-terrestrial was probably correct. Mr Moore said, however, that

the extra-terrestrial was probably part of a falling, disintegrating meteorite.

He said the circumstances surrounding what has become known as the "Mundrabilla Incident" were consistent with the phenomena of falling meteorites.

Meteorite falls were not uncommon, but eye-witness accounts of falling meteorites were rare.

The Knowles family's description of a bright light, violent shaking, vehicledamage, smelland the deposit of powder-like material was consistent with the falling disintegration of a carbonaceous meteorite.

Mr Moore said claims by tuna fishermen in the Great Australian Bight that they had seen a bright object overhead led to the same conclusion.

"I see no difficulty with what

they saw, only with the interpretation of what it was," he said.

"I haven't investigated a meteorite fall yet which didn't at one stage have a UFO tag placed on it."

The fall of a carbonaceous meteorite near Murchison, Victoria, in 1969 was remarkably similar to the Mundrabilla incident.

Other expert sky watchers differed in their diagnosis.

The head of meteorology at Flinders University, Professor Peter Schwerdtfeger, said yesterday a severe electrical storm could have been responsible.

The former head of the SA Weather Bureau, Mr Allan Brunt, believed the family had seen an extremely distorted view of the sun.

"I'll go and jump in the lake if that dust they found on the car turns out to be some sort of extra-terrestrial material," he said.

The Courier Mail, January 23, 1988.

UFO DUST 'NOT ASH': POLICE

THE mystery surrounding the Nullarbor UFO sighting deepened today when police said they were unable to positively identify a dust covering the car.

By ROBERT CARMODY

Forensic experts examined the Knowles' family car after it was "attacked" by an egg-shaped UFO near the South Australian and West Australian borders early on Wednesday.

Today Adelaide Forensic Squad police said the substance on

and inside, the Ford Telstar was not ash.

"At this stage we don't know what it is," said a police spokesman. "Further tests will be carried out over the next couple of days."

A theory that lightning from a "dry" thunderstorm was behind the

UFO report was scotched by the Adelaide Weather Bureau today.

"There were just no weather conditions over the Nullarbor at 5.30am on Wednesday which could have caused lightning," the senior duty forecaster said.

Meanwhile, Sergeant Jim Furnell of Ceduna in western SA said police

had received calls from two other people claiming to have seen a light in the past week.

A Christchurch couple believe they saw a UFO while driving from Mt Gambier to Melbourne on Saturday evening.

Alan and Tina Parkes, of Kaiapoi, saw "a very very bright, greenish-blue object" hovering

on the horizon.

Today, Mrs Faye Knowles and her three sons insisted that their experience on the Eyre Highway was real.

"All of a sudden this thing was on our roof and lifted our car up."

"It kept tormenting us," Mrs Knowles said.

"Something's got to be done or else someone will get really hurt."

WA family

'may take

a year to

get over

UFO fears'

MELBOURNE — The Knowles family could take up to a year to get over the fear of their UFO experience, according to a psychologist.

The family, who claimed the UFO encounter occurred near the WA-SA border while driving to Melbourne, were treated for a "nervous condition" at the weekend.

Consultant psychologist Ms Judith Paphazy said the family could need hypnotherapy to be able to deal with their fear and trauma.

"The sighting could induce all sorts of fears," she said.

"It could affect their sleep; it could create a fear of being followed, or a fear of the car."

The Knowles have told friends they would prefer not to see their car again.

"It is as though the car needs to be exorcised," Ms Paphazy said.

"The different types of fear they experience are a human response to a perceived threat."

"There could be a need for a de-sensitisation program to remove the fear created by their experience."

"Hypnosis is a good way of teaching people not to be afraid of their experiences."

"People learn to manage the fear. On average, it takes about three to 12 months."

Ms Paphazy said the Knowles' emotional state could be exacerbated by the community's scepticism about their experience.

"Normally when people are in a situation of fear or trauma, they have support and help from people around them," she said.

"Instead of support, they (the Knowles) could experience rejection. They may move more toward each other."

Ms Paphazy said the Knowles should not try to convince sceptics of what happened to them.

"If they genuinely believe that they saw a UFO, they should tell themselves that it's outside other people's reality, so they won't understand," she said.

Sydney Sun, January 22, 1988.

Aussie police treat 'seriously' report UFO picked up car

SYDNEY (AP) — Reports of unidentified flying objects, one of which looked like a huge egg cup and picked a car off the road, are being taken "very seriously" by Australian police.

Four members of a family said the object pursued their car along a remote stretch of highway Wednesday morning, plucked it from the ground and covered it in ash, police reported yesterday.

Faye Knowles told police her speech and that of her sons, aged 18 to 24, changed during the encounter on the highway.

"We were a little bit skeptical at first, but after investigating we're treating the reports very seriously," said Jim Furnell, a police sergeant in South Australia state.

He said forensic scientists would examine the black powdery ash found inside and outside Knowles' car.

She told police she was driving on the Nullarbor Plain from Perth in Western Australia when she first saw a glowing object in her rear window at 2.45 a.m. Wednesday.

In another incident, crewmen of a tuna boat 80 kilometres (50

miles) away said a UFO buzzed their vessel a few minutes later and their voices became unintelligible.

Furnell said the crewmen could not have known about Knowles' experience when they reported their sighting in the Great Australia Bight.

The UFO encountered by the Knowles family "apparently picked the car up off the road, shook it quite violently and forced the car back with such pressure that one of the tires was blown," Furnell said.

"While this was happening, the family said their voices were distorted and it was as if they were talking in slow motion."

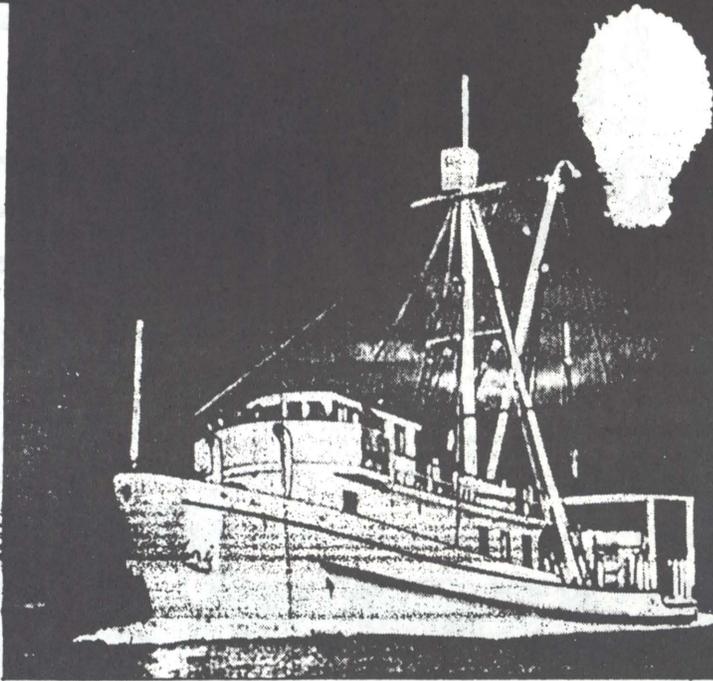
Keith Basterfield of UFO Research Inc., an international organization that records such sightings, said the encounter would "certainly be the most physical" ever recorded in Australia if the reports are confirmed.

A spokesman at the Royal Australian Air Force base in Edinburgh, South Australia, said he was not aware of any military aircraft in the area at the time.

Toronto Star, January 22, 1988.

The Advertiser,

January 26, 1988.



Australian police taking reports of UFO seriously

Houston Chronicle News Services

SYDNEY, Australia — Four members of a family said an unidentified flying object shaped like an egg cup pursued their car along a lonely stretch of outback highway Wednesday, plucked it from the ground, and covered it with ash before dropping it with such force it blew a tire.

Police said they were treating the UFO report — one of four received the same day — seriously.

Faye Knowles told police her speech and that of her sons changed during the encounter on the highway.

Crewmen of a tuna boat 50 miles away said a UFO buzzed and hovered over their vessel a few minutes later and their voices become unintelligible.

In addition, a truck driver reported being followed by a UFO and crewmen aboard another tuna boat reported a bright light near a high-

way.

"We were a little bit skeptical at first, but after investigating, we are treating the reports very seriously," said Jim Furnell, a police sergeant in South Australia state.

He said forensic scientists would examine the black powdery ash found inside and outside the Knowles car.

"It (the UFO) apparently picked the car up off the road, shook it quite violently and forced the car back with such pressure that one of the tires was blown," Furnell said.

"While this was happening, the family said their voices were distorted and it was as if they were talking in slow motion.

"I inspected the car when it arrived at Ceduna," Furnell said. "The car was covered in a thick coating of black ash and there was ash inside the car. There was slight damage to the roof of the car.

"The family were extremely dis-

See AUSTRALIANS on Page 12.

Associated Press

An artist's impression depicts the "egg cup" unidentified flying object as it reportedly appeared above a tuna boat off Australia. It was one of four sightings reported the same day.

Australians report UFO

Continued from Page 1.

traught," he added. "Something happened out there."

He said the crewmen of the tuna boat could not have known about the Knowles' experience when they reported a UFO sighting in the Great Australian Bight.

"The sightings took place hundreds of kilometers apart and they had no reason to conspire," Furnell said.

Faye Knowles' three sons — Sean, 21, Patrick, 24, and Wayne, 18 — were in the car at the time of the alleged incident.

Mrs. Knowles told police she was

driving on the Nullabor Plain about 750 miles east of Perth in Western Australia when she swerved to miss "a huge bright glowing object" stopped on the road in front of them.

Sean Knowles told police, "It was a weird-looking thing and we stopped to go back and have a look. We became scared and ran back to the car to get away, even though we did not get a close look. It chased us and mum was flooring it along the highway.

"We were doing about 110 kilometers an hour (68 mph) when it came over us and suddenly lifted the car off the road. We felt the thump on the roof, and then it started lifting us. We

were frightened and began to yell, but our voices had changed.

Mrs. Knowles added: "It was like we were in a time warp. I reached out of the window and touched the hood. It was soft, warm and spongy and I pulled my hand back into the car."

Keith Basterfield of UFO Research Inc., an international organization that records such sightings, said "it will certainly be the most physical of encounters ever recorded in Australia" if the reports are confirmed.

A spokesman at the Royal Australian Air Force base in Edinburgh, South Australia, said he was not aware of any military aircraft in the area at the time.

Houston Chronicle, January 22, 1988.

UFO down under?

Police in Sydney, Australia, said Thursday they received two reports of unidentified flying objects, one of which looked like a huge egg cup. Four members of a family said the object pursued their car Wednesday morning, plucked it from the ground and covered it in ash. Faye Knowles told police her speech and that of her sons changed during the encounter.

The Houston Post, January 22, 1988.

reference library



UFORA DOCUMENT SERVICE

- A-1** A Report on Observation from Aircraft Crew Members in Australia - 18 pages, \$ 3.50.
- A-2** An In Depth Review of Australasian UFO Related Entity Reports - summaries and analyses of 67 cases. 110 pages, \$ 18.00.
- A-3** A Catalogue of the More Interesting Australian Close Encounters - summaries of the "best" 110 cases. 29 pages, \$ 4.50.
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