

**A CATALOGUE AND RESEARCH NOTES
ON PRE 24 JUNE 1947 AUSTRALIAN
UNIDENTIFIED AERIAL PHENOMENA**

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Version 7 - as at 6 June 2017

Introduction:

Much work on collecting reports of early Australian sightings has been undertaken by Sydney research Bill Chalker. For an excellent review of his work please take a look at:

<http://theozfiles.blogspot.com.au/2015/12/the-search-for-historical-ufo-reports.html>

Other work has been undertaken for many years by a group of researchers who publish their findings at:

https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/magonia_exchange/info

My own interest in this research area, also goes back many years, but it wasn't until 2015 that I started to undertake further work in this area. I have published a number of sightings, including some case analyses, on my blog at:

<http://ufos-scientificresearch.blogspot.com>

The following report is an ongoing project to catalogue and analyze such sightings.

The catalogue

12 April 1793 New South Wales

‘An extraordinary appearance in the sky was observed by several people between five and six o'clock in the evening of Friday 12th of the month. It was noticed in the north-west, and appeared as if a ray of forked lightning had been stationary in that quarter of the sky for about fifteen minutes, which was the time it was visible. It was not to be discerned, however, after the sun had quitted the horizon.’

Source: Collins, David. 1798. ‘An account of the English Colony in New South Wales: with remarks on the Disposition, customs, manners, &c of the Native Inhabitants of that Country.’ T. Cadell, Jun. & W. Davies. London. P. 285.

Notes:

1. I viewed the original book at the Royal Geographical Society, Adelaide on 8 March 2011.
 2. I also sighted the 1804 London edition (page 211), and the 1910 London edition (pages 181-182.)
 3. David Collins was the late Judge Advocate and Secretary of the Colony which was founded in 1788.
 4. Note the use of the letter f in lieu of s in some words.
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1828 Mount Wingen, New South Wales

‘About six kilometers north of Wingen, an underground coal seam has been burning for possibly 5,000 years...Kisha, who wrote a psychic column for the Australasian Post, recorded a bizarre story of a strange flying object landing at Burning Mountain (or Mount Wingen.) She attributed the following text to a man called Ted.

‘Grandad used to say that it was cigar shaped and had a funny silver colour. When it landed it set fire to all the vegetation and killed the cattle. ‘The noise was dreadful and there was a series of loud bangs. Grandad also spoke of tall strangers appearing in town. They never said anything but always pointed to the things they wanted.’ Quite often people just disappeared and dogs and domesticated animals disappeared too.

‘We always thought that grandad’s stories were good but he knew they were true and never made light of them.’ Kisha did not indicate a date for the events in Ted’s grandad’s tale, but presumably its vintage would have to be at least contemporary with the first settlers of the Burning Mountain back in 1828.’

Source: Chalker, Bill. http://www.theozfiles.com/history_australian_ufo_history.html retrieved 27 November 2010. Citing a ‘Psychic column’ written by ‘Kisha’ in the ‘Australasian Post’ magazine dated 17 June 1989 citing a man called Ted.

November 1862 Morpeth, New South Wales

‘Sir – the subject of meteoric visitation, past, present and future, being at present invested with more than the usual amount of interest, induces me to mention, this publicly, the circumstances of my attention having been arrested early one morning in November 1862, by a very peculiar rushing noise, which increased rapidly in volume without my discovering the cause until looking immediately overhead. I saw distinctly a large meteor travelling with amazing rapidity in a southeasterly direction. Its apparent size was that of a large cask of a dark colour, the surface irregular, and from the variations discovered in the angularities I was led to conjecture it was revolving on its axis. I may add that the morning was very calm, and the atmosphere beautifully clear. The Sun was just about to rise.
O E Middleton, Inwallewah, near Morpeth, November 15, 1866.

Notes:

1. In the book 'Return to Magonia,' (by Chris Aubeck and Martin Shough, 2015, Anomalistic Books, San Antonio, Texas) the authors located an historical figure of one Osmon Edward Middleton. As to the cause of the observation, the authors considered and rejected, the possibility of a fireball meteor; any other astronomical cause; a dust whirl; a tornado funnel; a dense flock of birds; a swarm of insects; and an early powered airship.
2. Modern day Morpeth is a suburb of Maitland, New South Wales. Maitland is at latitude 32 deg 43 min south and longitude 151 deg 37 min east.
3. I checked a Gazetteer of 370,000 places names in Australia but failed to find Inwallewah. I therefore sent an email to the Hunter Historical Society and asked if they knew where it was. I never received a response.
4. A check for sunrise with a sky chart revealed it was 0445hrs (UTC plus 10 hours).

25 July 1868 Parramatta, Sydney, New South Wales

Birmingham had what he described as a '...wonderful dream, a vision...' during which he saw a number of things in the sky, including the head of the Lord Bishop of Sydney and an 'Ark.' A voice from an unknown source told him "That's a machine to go through the air."

The 'machine' approached and landed on the grass. There was a 'spirit' following the 'ark,' described as 'like the neutral tint shade and the shape of a man in his usual frock dress.' Birmingham was invited to enter the 'ark' which he did. Inside he found a room with a table. The 'spirit' showed him some papers containing figures and formulas. Looking down and then back up he found the 'spirit' had gone. 'So I fell, I suppose into my usual sleeping state, and waking next morning deeply impressed with that vision of the night.'

Source Chalker, Bill 1996. 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. Pp23-27. Citing a 15-page document titled 'Copy from the Memorandum Book of Fred Wm Birmingham, the Engineer to the Council of Parramatta. A Machine to go through the air. A.D. 1873' located by Chalker in 1975. Its history was traced back through UFO researcher, T.V. Homan; a Mrs N. de Launt (early 1940's) to the family of a Wallace Haywood. Chalker confirmed that a Frederick William Birmingham did live in Parramatta between 1868 and 1873.

1873 Sydney, New South Wales Sunset

'Three small 'clouds' appeared, and from one of them extended two screw-like appendages. Between these 'screws' appeared a shape 'like two flat necks on a turtle-shaped body.' This assembly disappeared, reappeared and, and then 'to my surprise the two big...screws folded up like the arms of a bear and lost their shape in the middle cloud.'

Source Chalker, Bill 1996. 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. p26. Citing a 15-page document titled 'Copy from the Memorandum Book of Fred Wm Birmingham, the Engineer to the Council of Parramatta. A Machine to go through the air. A.D. 1873' located by Chalker in 1975. Its history was traced back through UFO researcher, T.V. Homan; a Mrs N. de Launt (early 1940's) to the family of a Wallace Haywood. Chalker confirmed that a Frederick William Birmingham did live in Parramatta between 1868 and 1873.

October 1874 Beechworth, Victoria

'A farmer reported an object over his farm.'

Source: <http://www.rense.com/ufi5/histoz.htm> retrieved 24 January 2011. Information supplied by Diane Harrison/Robert Frola of Brisbane, Australia citing their source as the book 'Flying Saucers Over Australia.'

'From their own research, Australian ufologists believe that the first published report of the sighting of an unidentified flying object in this country occurred as far back as October, 1874, at Beechworth in Victoria.'

Source: Holledge, Stephen. 1965. 'Flying Saucers over Australia.' London/Melbourne/Sydney. Horwitz Publications Inc. p.26.

Notes:

1. A search of TROVE newspapers for the Beechworth area of Victoria, for October 1874 located one article which might be the observation referred to by Holledge.
2. The *Avoca Mail* [Vic: 1863-1900; 1911-1918] Thursday 13 October 1874 on page 2, reported that at 1815 hours on Sunday 4 October 1874, inhabitants of Beechworth reported an unusual sight. The sun had set, when at 60-degree elevation in the north-north-western sky, the sky was lit up '*...as if by a flash of lightning*' for ten seconds. There appeared a '*...brilliant and beautiful meteor.*' Its head was larger than Venus. It travelled very slowly, perpendicular to the ground. It left behind it a '*magnificent silvery band*' which stretched from 60 degrees elevation to the horizon. This took 15 minutes to disappear. Its appearance at one point changed '*until it assumed the shape of a gigantic snake.*' The sky was clear at the time. Observations of the same thing came in from Chilton, and Wagga Wagga.
3. The *Avoca Mail* cites its source as the 6 October 1874 edition of the *Owens and Murray Advocate*. A search of this edition in TROVE failed to find such an article.
4. Similar accounts are to be found in '*Argus*' [Melbourne: 1848-1957] Monday 12 October 1874 page 6; and the '*Sydney Morning Herald*' Friday 9 October 1874 page 2.
5. The wide geographic distribution of sightings indicates that the object was probably a meteor leaving a vivid trail in the sky; blown about by upper atmospheric winds.

March 1878 Goulburn, New South Wales

'Lately there has been much excitement amongst the superstitious, numbers of whom go off in parties, with guns, to the range above Stewart's Garden, where there is an unfinished stone house. Here an apparition is said to make its appearance in the form of a light, and to travel, sometimes very slowly, and frequently very quickly, from the river bank just below, up to, and around the house, then varying the performance by a run among the trees. This is said to be kept up from an early hour in the evening until about three in the morning; all endeavors to get near the light are said to prove futile. '

Source: Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p.27.
Citing the 'Goulburn Herald' 16 March 1878. Cited in Wyatt, Ransome. 'The History of Goulburn.' Sydney. Lansdowne Press. 1972. P.75.

Note:

1. A check of the book 'The History of Goulburn' by Ransome T Wyatt, published by Lansdowne Press (NSW). Sydney. 1972. (First published in 1941 by The Municipality of Goulburn.) p75 states:

'Goulburn has not many claims to ghosts. One, in 1878, is said to have appeared 'in the range above Stewart's garden, where there is an unfinished house' (? Leigh's Folly.) It used to appear early in the evening and flit about until three o'clock in the morning. Grunsell claimed to have disposed of it with a shot gun. Another mysterious appearance which was seen in the late afternoon and on one occasion was photographed was that of a ghostly apparition which manifested itself in the Bishop's Throne in St Saviour's Cathedral.' (References cited are Goulburn Herald 13/3/1876; 16/3/1878 and reminiscences of Mrs R Caspers.)

(Pre 5) June 1879 Western Australia

'In 1879 Mr S Worsley Clifton, Collector of Customs, at Fremantle Western Australia, forwarded the following account of a 'remarkable meteor' to R J Elleig of the Melbourne Observatory. Elleig in turn passed it on to the science journal Nature which published the following account of the apparition: 'A small black cloud on a clear day appeared in the east, traveling nor very swiftly towards the north-west. It burst into a ball of fire with an apparent disc the size of a full moon, blood red in colour. It left a train of black or dark-coloured vapour across the heavens which was visible for three-quarters of an hour. No sound was heard, sky perfectly clear, and the thermometer 100 degrees Fahrenheit, in the shade.'

Source: Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p 27.
Citing 'A remarkable meteor' Nature Volume 20. 121, 5 June 1879. Also cited in Fort, Charles, 'The Complete books of Charles Fort.' New York. Dover. 1974. p 235.

Note:

1. Tried National Library TROVE newspapers, but found nothing.
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11 June 1881 between Melbourne and Sydney 0400hrs

‘The two sons of the Prince of Wales, one of them the future king of England, saw a strange celestial object similar to a fully illuminated ship.’

Source: Vallee, J. 1965. ‘Anatomy of a Phenomenon.’ London. Neville Spearman. p12
Citing ‘The cruise of the Bacchante’ by the two princes.

February 1885 Off East coast of Australia

‘In February 1885, the crew of a ship sailing the Pacific, believed to be not far off the east coast of Australia, saw a large fiery red ball in the sky. She hissed overhead and fell into the sea, triggering a series of huge waves.’

Source: Killey, Kevin and Lester, Gary. 1980. ‘The Devil’s Meridian.’ Sydney. Lester-Townsend Publishing. P. 23.

1890’s North Western Australia

An elderly lady recounted an observation of her father’s. ‘He was a Bushman, his name was Jack. He worked in the North Western part of Australia and used to use a dray and four horses to cart things around. One day he was plodding along when he saw this light coming straight towards him, just before it reached him it separated into two lights which flew separately either side of his horses. The horses were scared and started going out of control. He did not see what happened to the lights...’

Source AUFORN compiled sightings lists Issue 23, August 2001.

October 1893 The Star of The East Mine, near Meekatharra, Western Australia

‘A correspondent signing himself ‘Eye witness’ writes to the Victorian Express as follows from the Murchison goldfield: - Although rather late, I beg to inform you that about the second week in October, Mr Menzie, the manager of The Star of the East mine, was fixing the tram work of the battery, and when placing one of the uprights he caught sight of a large balloon passing along the line of sight.

Naturally, such an extraordinary visitor caused an ejaculation of surprise from Mr Menzie. All hands (some ten of us) looked up and perceived the object that so surprised Mr Menzie to be a large balloon travelling at a terrific rate from north-west to south-east. Although at a

great altitude, the balloon could be distinctly seen in every outline and was travelling at such a rate of speed that the body of the balloon was considerably in advance of the car.

The ariel (sic) visitor created more than surprise at the time and every man was going to write to the paper about it but the old-old story every body's business invariably turns out to be no body's business and thus the matter was never published.

Joe Clarke and Quinn who are now shareholders in the Lady mine and myself were among the men working at The Star of the East with Mr Menzie and witnesses the sight described. It would appear probable that the balloon escaped from any port of the Indies or The Strait settlements as it came from that direction.

The general opinion at the time was that possibly it was being prepared from some experimental military work or probably for exhibition purposes when it broke adrift. It would indeed be interesting to know if it had been seen in any other part of the world and where it came from and where it has gone to.'

Notes

1. I visited the National Library of Australia's TROVE digitised newspaper collection. Unfortunately, they do not have copies of the 'Australian Advertiser.'

2. I wondered if the reference to the Victorian Express was a reference to another newspaper. Indeed, TROVE revealed that there was a paper of this name. The 'Victorian Express' was published in Geraldton, Western Australia between 1878-1894.) TROVE did have copies. A search located the account in the Friday 28 September 1894 issue p.3. Here there was one slight difference in the account. The date of the event is said to have been '...about the second week in last October.' As the item appeared in the 28 September 1894 issue it can only refer to October 1893, and not 1894 as I first assumed. The story was headed 'A supposed balloon crossing the centre of Western Australia.'

3. Another search through TROVE revealed that a shortened version of the story did appear in the following newspapers:

a. 'The Telegraph.' (Brisbane, Qld 1872-1941) on Saturday 5 January 1895 p.2.

b. 'Warwick Examiner and Times.' (Qld 1867-1918) on Saturday 12 January 1895 p.4.

c. 'Newcastle Morning herald and Miners' Advocate.' (NSW 1876-1954) on Thursday 27 December 1894 p.5.

d. 'The Daily Northern Argus' (Rockhampton, Qld 1875-1896.) on Thursday 10 January 1895 p.2.

5. An Internet search revealed that Leslie Robert Menzie was a prominent figure in the search for gold, both in Australian and overseas. He was indeed the Manager of The Star of the East Mine. This mine was located 620 kilometres north-north-east of Perth, the capital city of Western Australia. The nearest town to the mine was Meekatharra, some 40 kilometres away, at latitude 26.6 degrees south and longitude 118.5 degrees east.

Source: I received an email from Peter Bridge of Hesperian Press in Western Australia. Peter told me that on 2004 he had reprinted L R Menzie's book 'A Gold Seekers Odyssey' first printed in 1937. Peter read a number of old newspapers for biographical details of prospectors and found the following account, and added it as an appendix. It comes from the 'Australian Advertiser' newspaper (a precursor to the 'Albany Advertiser') dated 15 October 1894. It is to be found on page 156 of 'A Gold Seekers Odyssey.' However, I found the original source was the 'Victorian Express' Geraldton, WA 28 September 1894 page 3.

1893 Central New South Wales

'An anecdote handed down within a farming family told of an extraordinary UFO story that was alleged to have happened in 1893 in Central New South Wales. A farmer claimed that a saucer-shaped object landed in a paddock on his property. As he approached the object, a man in strange clothing emerged from it. The farmer walked towards the being. The stranger shone some kind of beam at him, whereby the farmer was thrown to the ground, stunned. His hand where the beam had hit him was paralysed for life.'

Source: Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p.28.
Citing that the story was told to Dr Miran Lindtner, UFO Information Centre, Sydney in the 1960's.

Note:

1. Details similar to the 1919 Central NSW case and the 1913 Nuriootpa, SA case. Are one or more of these three similar events, a distorted recollection of an original story?
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17 September 1900 Alpha, Queensland

'Extraordinary phenomenon.

To the Editor.

Sir – We witnessed this morning at about nine o'clock what to us seemed an extraordinary phenomenon. A travelling star rose from the south and travelled right across the sky to the north-west horizon in about ten minutes. When first seen it was some distance up, and looked more like a white bird than a star. It appeared to oscillate for two or three seconds, and then sailed steadily across the sky till lost sight of in the distance. I should be pleased if you could inform me if this is a usual or unusual occurrence. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours etc.

E Donaldson.

Alpha, September 17th 1900.'

Source: *The Western Champion & General Advertiser for the Central Districts.* [Barcaldine, Qld: 1892-1922] Tuesday 2 October 1900 p12.

Notes:

1. Alpha is at latitude 23 deg 36 mins south; longitude 146 deg 36 mins east,
 2. At 9am the sun was at elevation 37 degrees, azimuth 24 degrees north of east.
 3. At nearby Barcaldine the wind at 9am was blowing from the south east.
 4. What was it? As the light travelled from the south to the north-west, and the wind was from the south-east, it may have been a wind borne object of some kind.
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20 November 1902 Adelaide, South Australia

‘Sir Charles Todd stated that on Thursday morning, at 9.27 o’clock, a remarkable phenomenon was witnessed in the heavens by Messrs Griffiths (the Assistant Astronomer), Chettle and Dodwell of the Adelaide Observatory. The two last named were taking weather observations when they noticed a brilliant globular light having a planetary disc. It appeared in the south-south-east at an altitude of about 45 deg. It moved slowly northwards, passing within 15 or 20 degrees of the sun, and was brightly visible till 9.31 – four minutes in all.

‘Mr Griffiths, who observed it for a minute, says it moved over about 20 deg. of an arc in that time. The object appeared like Venus does when it is at its greatest brilliancy, soon after sunset.

‘Mr Griffiths lost sight of the meteoric object at an altitude of 45 deg. above the horizon. It therefore traveled at least 90 deg. and was lost sight of in the great glare of the sky.

‘Messrs Chettle and Dodwell state that when it was near to the prime vertical it became elongated, and took an elliptical form, the long axis lying south to north.’

Source: The Register (Adelaide, SA; 1901-1929) Friday 21 November 1902. Page 4.

July 1909 Hobart, Tasmania

‘Mysterious lights.

‘One North-West correspondent writes ‘Mention has been frequently made of mysterious lights seen in New Zealand skies, as from the headlight of an airship, and it is said that similar lights were seen not far from Hobart last month. A circumstantial report as to similar lights being visible from Ulverstone and Forth was made last week, and it is said that a light too bright, and which moreover, moved rapidly in various directions has been seen from various central districts. Whether these reports are based on imagination or not, there can be no doubts as to the earnestness of those who profess to have seen these mysterious lights, and the heavens are being scanned nightly in search of the latest novelty but it seems to be as hard to find and recognize as the Tasmanian brand of ‘Irish blight.’

Source: The Mercury (Tasmania 1860-1954) Saturday 14 August 1909 p.4.

2-9 August 1909 2130hrs Bundaberg, Queensland

‘A celestial mystery.

‘Last night we had our attention directed to a peculiar light which was visible in the heavens about half past nine and apparently was rising and falling in the ESE skyline and it appeared as if a balloon were floating in midair with a powerful lamp suspended from it: the light lacked the bluey whiteness of the stars and as it has appeared on several evenings lately it has given rise to much speculation as to its identity. The phenomenon was first noticeable on Tuesday evening and after an hour or two it disappeared. It was very bright last night at 9.30 but it had vanished about an hour later. Perhaps someone connected with astronomy will be able to enlighten our readers as to the identity of the luminous object if it has existence in the astronomical world.’

Source: Cairns Post (Qld 1909-1954) Tuesday 10 August 1909 p.5.

5-10 August 1909 Goulburn, New South Wales

‘Lights reported for a week.

‘A mysterious moving light has been seen over North Goulburn nearly every night for a week since Thursday. Altogether, so far as is known, some half dozen individuals have noticed it. One youth describes it as about as big as a carriage lamp. One adult saw it last night [10 Aug] at about half past 7 for about a quarter of an hour. On two occasions it was seen to travel towards the east, then turning to the south. Little notice was taken of the occurrence until the balloon or airship theory was advanced from Moss Vale.

The light, after being seen here last night would easily have reached the Moss Vale district by the time the express was there. Four young men saw the light on Saturday night [8 Aug]. It came from the east. After being visible some time it returned in that direction. It was pale blue in colour. The brightness of the light attracted the youth’s attention. Only the light was seen, there being nothing to show the presence of a supporting body. It was about half past 10 when the light was obscured.’

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW 1842-1954) Wednesday 11 August 1909 p.10.

6 & 7 August 1909 2200hrs Malvern North, Melbourne, Victoria

‘We read in the Argus of this morning the report by the Rev B Cozens with regards to strange lights he had seen in the sky. We wish to confirm it. Both on Friday and Saturday evening we saw a strange light in the sky which at first we thought was a star of unusual magnitude. We, looking from Malvern North at 10pm saw it rise in the direction of Mt

Dandenong. It rose about the same time on both evenings. Sometimes it burned red, then blue. It travelled towards the west. We also saw a similar light on Saturday and Sunday evening about 7pm. It rose in the west but soon disappeared.'

Source: The Argus (Melbourne 1818-1957) Tuesday 10 August 1909 p.5.

Note:

1. Lights which are red and blue, and travel towards the west are suggestive of being stars.
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7 August 1909 2200hrs Fitzroy, Melbourne, Victoria

'In your paper this morning I was very interested in the letter on 'Lights in the air.' On Saturday evening [7 Aug] I retired to rest at about 10 o'clock. My bedroom faces the east, and I saw what I thought was a star of wonderful brightness. Then it seemed to move and form into two or three. First I thought it was a balloon sent up with lights and I expected to see it die out. Once it was obscured, as if a cloud was passing it. Then again, it burst out in brilliant colours. I watched it for half an hour, and when I returned it was still shining. It was moving slowly but sparkling like diamonds. To the naked eye the lights looked like pendants hanging. M Eyre.'

Source: The Argus (Melbourne 1848-1957) Wednesday 11 August 1909 p.6.

7 August 1909 2200hrs Near Eltham, Victoria

Rev and Mrs B Cozens, saw '...two beautiful revolving lights high up in the air above the Dandenong Range. These lights whirled like the propellers of ships, slowed down, dipped then rose again...They were about six miles apart and about half a mile in the air...They changed from white to red and then to blue...I called out a neighbor. We watched the lights from 10 till 12. One of them had almost moved out of sight over the back of the Divide by that time and the other was working towards the same place. I rose at 2 o'clock and saw the second nearly over the Range and give more very dim in the distance...After 2 o'clock I saw them no more.'

Source: The Argus (Melbourne 1818-1957) Monday 9 August 1909 p.7.

Note:

1. The changes of colour from white to red to blue are indicative of the colours of a star due to atmospheric scintillation.
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9 August 1909 Moss Vale, New South Wales

'Is it an airship! Mysterious light in the sky.

Excitement at Moss Vale.

'A good deal of excitement was occasioned tonight by the appearance of a mysterious light or an illuminated body in the south-east of the town. Quite a number of people gathered in the main street and speculation was rife as to the meaning of the strange illumination. Above the large light some large body was distinctly visible, as the rays of light were reflected upon its surface. The supposition generally held is that the mysterious floating body is either a large balloon or an airship. That this object is not stationary has been proved by getting objects near at hand in line with the light, and in a few minutes it was found to move a considerable distance.'

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW 1842-1954) Tuesday 10 August 1909 p.7.

9 August 1909 Hilltop, New South Wales

'Express passengers see the phenomenon.

'Passengers on tonight's Melbourne Express were afforded a view of the mysterious nightlight which has been observed floating above the southern highlands and coast between Mittagong and Wollongong during the last two nights. When the Express reached Hilltop quite a score of passengers crowded onto the platform at each end of the corridor carriage on the lookouts for the 'airship' as it was called. Their vigilance was soon rewarded, for as soon as the Express hauled out from the deep cuttings a large bright light became visible a few miles away towards the coast. Apparently it was in motion and could be plainly distinguished from the stars, but the distance was too great to detect the nature of the floating body. Its elevation appeared to be about 2000 feet.'

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW 1842-1954) Tuesday 10 August 1909 p.7.

10 August (Pingelly) 12 August (Victoria Park) 13 August Victoria Park, Perth, Western Australia

'Mysterious lights in the sky.

Seen at Pingelly and Victoria Park.

'Residents of Victoria Park were worked up to a high pitch of excitement yesterday by a report that mysterious lights supposed to have been attached to an airship...during the previous night [12 Aug]...two mysterious lights a few feet apart had passed rapidly over that town [Pingelly] travelling in a southerly direction at 7.30pm Tuesday evening [10 Aug]...'

The Victoria Park sighting was referred to police. On 13 August Police investigated a sighting by a number of residents at Victoria Park ‘They were all gazing at a little innocent star high up in the heavens.’

Source: The West Australian (Perth WA 1879-1954) Saturday 14 August 1909 p.12.

12 August 1909 1900hrs Penguin, Tasmania

‘The mysterious lights seen in the sky in other parts of Tasmania were also seen by many residents of Penguin and district on Thursday [12 Aug] evening about 7 o’clock. From here they appeared like two stars close together – one giving a white and the other yellowish light and keeping this position they gradually disappeared in a NW direction. Considerable interest is created as to their nature; the airship theory has most supporters.’ [These lights were of course, the planets Venus and Jupiter which were almost in conjunction, and having the appearance of the headlights of a motor car seen at a distance.]

Source: The Mercury (Hobart, 1860-1954) Tuesday 17 August 1909 p.4.

Note:

1. The planets Venus and Jupiter were indeed close together in the western sky at this time on this date.
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12 August 1909 1900hrs Zeehan, Tasmania

‘Phenomenon in the skies.

Zeehan Aug 13.

‘A number of residents of Zeehan reported today having seen mysterious lights in the sky shortly after 7 o’clock last night. There were two lights in a north-west direction against the wind, and soon disappeared behind a cloud. As the lights traveled one appeared to grow smaller and the other larger. The phenomenon was doubtless, the conjunction of the stars Venus and Jupiter.’

Source: The Mercury (Hobart, 1860-1954) Saturday 14 August 1909 p.5.

Note:

1. The planets Venus and Jupiter were very close together in the western sky at this time on this date.
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12 & 18 August 1909 Melbourne (?) Victoria

‘That a mysterious light appeared in the sky is without doubt. I and three or four more of us watched the light in the sky last Thursday evening and also last evening. It lay in the

position of SSE. Last night when I first noticed it, it was about 4 degrees above the horizon SSE. About midnight it was about 10 degrees above the horizon and lay almost half way between east and south. It continually keeps changing colour, first a deep fiery red, then a most beautiful blue, then to white; this process is confirmed repeatedly...'

Source: The Argus (Melbourne 1848-1957) Thursday 19 August 1999 p.4.

13 August 1909 Glen Innes, New South Wales

'...several responsible residents described an object like a balloon moving in a northerly direction. A night glass was obtained and the object was found to be shaped like an inverted top. The lower portion was lighted, and as the body revolved a light like a small flashlight kept turning on the land beneath. The upper portion was in darkness and the object kept drifting in a northerly direction''

Source: Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p31.

14 August 1909 1915hrs Croydon, Melbourne, Victoria

'Lights in the air.

'Perhaps it would be interesting to those who saw the mysterious lights over Mount Dandenong to know they were seen this evening in the west at 7.15pm. My attention was drawn to what appeared to be a brilliant star with a small one close by it. In a few minutes the small one became almost as large as the other one. Then a bright red one appeared in front of the large. The three were in a straight line and appeared to turn round and in a little while quickly descended towards the earth. Olive Dabb.'

Source: The Argus (Melbourne 1848-1957) Saturday 14 August 1909 p.22.

Note:

1. The planets Venus and Jupiter were very close together in the western sky at this time on this date.

14 August 1909 Balingup, Western Australia

'Phantom airships.

'Persons in various parts of the state continue to observe objects in the sky which they convert into the appearance of an airship. Quite recently a lady in Claremont declared that not only was a veritable airship seen there by her husband and herself, but that its proximity to her house was such that her spouse called out to the occupants to be careful of the chimneys, to which reminder he received a reply in some language to him unknown.

The latest account is from Mr Wilfrid Gull, son of Mr H B Gull of Guildford. Mr Gull jnr is living on his property at Southampton, near Balingup and has written to his father detailing his experience. From his letter it appears that Mr Gull jnr, last Saturday [14 Aug] night visited some friends in the district and remained with them for several hours. After leaving his friends, the time then being nearly midnight, he rode in the direction of his home which is a distance away. A bright light suddenly made its appearance in the sky, and attracted his attention. As it came nearer to him, he observed that the light belonged to a long dark object. It was soon practically overhead and Mr Gull frankly confesses the trepidation with which he witnesses it apparently descending straight at him. Unwilling to accept closer quarters with the visitor he rode back to his friends...right up to 3 o'clock on Sunday morning Mr Gull and his friends remained watching the light, which continued to move in various directions in the sky and at different heights until at the hour named it disappeared.'

Source: Kalgoorlie Western Argus (WA1896-1916) Tuesday 24 August 1909 p.34.

16 August 1909 Bulli, New South Wales

'The people puzzled.

'...the people of Bulli, however go one better than the average sightseer. They saw two of these lights on the western sky, they come together into violent collision, and the impact was so great that the sound could be distinctly heard like the distant roar of falling water...Last night several inquisitive residents proceeded to investigate the lights by means of a telescope...it looked like a distant world, on which they could plainly see a group of gigantic creatures illuminated and adorned by a celestial radiance quite foreign to anything on this earth.'

Source: The Advertiser (Adelaide SA 1889-1931) Tuesday 17 August 1909 p.8.

Note:

1. The planets Venus and Jupiter were very close together in the western sky that evening.
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21 August 1909 (2000-2100) hrs Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

'Those mysterious lights.

'The much talked about airship was seen here last Saturday [21 Aug] evening between 8 and 9 o'clock by several of our fellow-townpeople. It made its appearance in the south-east, somewhat low down over the hilltops, and seemed at one time to assume the shape of a torpedo; at another like that of an umbrella and carried head or side lights, which flashed at time like the searchlights of a warship.

After gyrating about in a strange manner, it disappeared as mysteriously as it appeared. This report is given in all seriousness, and is not intended as a skit on the recent accounts given of

strange lights seen flashing in the air in different parts of the country. The whole thing, however, may be a hoax, worked by means of a kite and lantern, but those who saw it don't doubt the question of imposition in the matter. Mr J Tabart again saw the same thing on Sunday evening [29 Aug] at about 10 o'clock.'

Source: Queanbeyan Age (NSW 1907-1915) Tuesday 31 August 1909 p2.

24 August 1909 2110hrs East Fremantle, Western Australia

'The 'Airship' again.

'On Tuesday night last [24 Aug] about ten minutes past nine, I was in the centre of East Fremantle when I noticed a bright light in the sky coming from the direction of Woodman's Point, making a beeline for Perth at a terrific pace. It was brightly lit up and appeared to have a dark object in the centre and it was evidently propelled by some mechanical arrangement, as nothing else could have set it along so fast. By my calculations I would say it was travelling at the rate of 160 miles per hour. I have been watching your paper and others thinking I would see some explanation about this, but not seeing anything in the press about it I have decided to ask you to allow me to trespass on your valuable space in the hope that someone will be able to enlighten me as well as others who saw it on the mysterious lights. W A Fearn, Aug 26.'

Source: The West Australian (Perth 1879-1954) Wednesday 1 September 1909 p.8.

1 September 1909 Noon Dorrigo, New South Wales

'A mysterious airship

'A large three winged apparatus, presumably an airship passed over Dorrigo yesterday at about noon. It flew in a westerly direction and was watched by several residents. The machine hovered and appeared to be about to descend, but veered slightly and then went west until out of sight.'

Source: The Advertiser (Adelaide 1889-1931) Friday 3 September 1909 p.7.

6 September 1909 Ca 2200hrs Fremantle, Western Australia

'There's the airship!

'Who's a liar now, oh!

'As he made the remark an excitable old gentleman waved his hands towards the sky, and in a little while, some twenty persons were standing in Market-street, Fremantle on Monday [6 Sep] shortly before 10pm gazing interestedly heavenwards. The star was apparently undergoing a bewildering series of changes. From shining with great brilliance it would

suddenly grow dim and indistinct, only to shine strongly again in a few seconds. 'It's caused by clouds passing over it' was the dictum of one of the bystanders, whose opinion was met with the retort 'Then why don't the other stars show the same variation?' 'It's Mars nearing its period of occultation,' observed a gentleman who subsequently expressed his indignation at this solution of the celestial phenomenon...'

Source: Western Mail (Perth 1885-1954) Saturday 11 September 1909 p.33.

25 October 1910 Minderoo Station, near Onslow, Western Australia

'At 5.30pm on October 25, when at the Minderoo homestead, my attention was directed by a native to a big object in the air several miles away. The object was traveling from us in an easterly direction. It looked compact like a dirigible balloon, but appeared to be square, more like an airplane. The sun shone on it, and flashes came from it as though reflected from something revolving, or off metal work. The color of the object was dark brown or black. It was too far away to distinguish its exact nature and size, or whether any persons were in it. There was no mirage at the time, and not on any account could such an object be taken for a bird.' Mrs Roe stated that she is positive it was an airship of some kind...A couple of white men, station hands, and a civilized native, also saw the aerial object from the shearing shed, which is a mile from the homestead...'

Source: Barrier Miner (Broken Hill) newspaper, 7 December 1910 page 7.

Notes:

1. The West Australian newspaper dated 5 Dec 1910 p5 states that Mrs Roe was interviewed on 12 Nov. He forwarded his report on 16 Nov to the Minister for Customs, a Mr Tudor, who is said to be forwarding the report to the Minister of Defence. Mr Timperly believed the sighting to have been genuine. Mr Timperly thought that the object was 'an airship.' Possibly a WA inventor or a foreign vessel. However, the West Australian reported that 'No information has reached that department of any Australian invention being sufficiently complete to accomplish such as flight as it described.'
 2. A check with two sky charts reveal that the Sun was up, elevation 12 degrees and azimuth 261 degrees (slightly south of west). The Moon had set. There was nothing unusual in the eastern sky on the charts.
 3. Regarding weather details. I obtained these from the West Australian newspaper dated 26 and 27th October 1910. For Onslow – maximum temperature 95 deg F; minimum temperature 70 deg F. Barometer 29.7ins. Wind from the WNW, moderate. If the wind was from the WNW then any windborne object would have been travelling to the ESE.
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17 November 1909 Port Hedland, Western Australia.

‘An unusual phenomenon.

Port Hedland Nov.18.

An extraordinary astronomical phenomenon was witnessed here yesterday, the sun, moon and a brilliant star near the moon being all plainly visible from 10.30am to 4pm.’

Source: ‘*Kalgoorlie Miner*’ [WA: 1895-1950] Friday 19 November 1909 page 5.

Notes:

1. At 10.30am the moon was at elevation 27 degrees, azimuth 20 degrees south of east. What was at elevation 26 degrees and azimuth 20 degrees south of east? The planet Venus. Venus was the cause of the observation.

August 1910 Adelaide, South Australia

‘Captain Nelson of the coastal steamer Wookata, the second Engineer M Arnold and Helmsman G Rudd are at a complete loss to explain the meaning of curious lights which they witnessed when the vessel was passing Althorpe Island on her way to Port Adelaide early the other morning. ‘Bright lights as distinct as masthead lights of a steamer but high up in the air,’ were observed by the trio, and a strange thing was that they circled around the Wookata in a tantalising way. ‘It was about 8 o’clock,’ says Captain Nelson today, ‘that the man at the wheel remarked, ‘Do you see these lights flying about?’ I replied, ‘Yes there are a great many more lights about than I have ever seen here.’ Just then I saw a mysterious light off Cape Spencer, which disappeared as suddenly as it came into view.

Presently the helmsman said ‘It is strange, but I have never seen lights on the port bow, then right ahead, then on the starboard side.’

‘I stepped inside the wheelhouse, and on coming out again saw two lights just over the starboard side bow no distance away, but high up. They seemed to pass us. They were as bright as our masthead lights, and as far as I could judge they were from 200 to 300 yards distant. The lights appeared to be 10 yards apart, one a little above the other. I could not make it out. I said to the man at the wheel: ‘Did you see them?’ He answered, ‘yes they are like a German airships flying about.’ I did not know what to think. I feel sure I saw something unusual-something which in my 45 years’ experience of the sea I have never observed before.’ The second Engineer Arnold also declared that he the saw strange lights.’

Source: Clarence and Richmond Examiner (Grafton, NSW: 1889-1915) Tue 9 Aug 1910 page 7.

1911 Gumeracha South Australia

As a young lad in 1911 a man had been working on his father’s farm, milking cows. While carrying two buckets of milk, he felt a pain in his head and placing the buckets down, he

observed, in front of him some distance away, a disc shaped object. It was about 10 feet across and was silver and glowing like the Moon. He watched it for about 15 seconds, then it rose into the air and disappeared at a very fast rate into the horizon.

Source: UFOPI's 'Panorama' magazine Volume 3 Number 5 page 18, Jul-Aug 1964.

Circa 1913 Nuriootpa, South Australia

'A farmer discovered a landed object and was 'zapped' by a humanoid which appeared from within it, leaving a lasting paralysis in the witness.'

Source: Personal communication from Darryl Tiggeman of Adelaide to Keith Basterfield. 2004 citing the source as a radio talk back show featuring Adelaide UFOlogist Colin Norris in circa 1984.

Notes: Note the similarity with the 1893 Central New South Wales event and the 1919 Central New South Wales case.

1915 Wallacedale, Victoria

'Mysterious lights at night' were investigated by the Intelligence section of the General Staff in 1915. A complaint was made by a Mrs E Osborne of Wallacedale, Victoria, to authorities. The complaint advised that Mrs Osborne and her family had reported 'mysterious lights at night.' Mrs Osborne and other local residents were interviewed and told of moving night time lights 'high up in the air in the direction of Mount Napier.' As documented on the file, investigation by the authorities revealed that the cause of these lights was '...trappers visiting their rabbit traps' and that '...being very hilly lights seen from Wallacedale at night time would appear to be higher than they really were, especially at a distance.'

Source: National Archives of Australia file, series MP16/1/0 control symbol 1915/3/1288.

1919 Central, New South Wales

'While traveling down a country road, a man came across an artifact resting near the roadside. He saw that a 'man' was apparently working on it, and went over to offer assistance. The stranger turned as if surprised and pointed something at the witness, who was knocked senseless. When he came to, the object and the man had gone. He found that his memory was never the same again.'

Source: Chalker, W C. 'The CEII experience in Australia.' 'Australian Co-Ordination Section' (for the US based Center for UFO Studies) Bulletin, March 1977, number 9, p11.

Note:

1. Note the similarity with the 1893 Central New South Wales report and the Circa 1913 Nuriootpa event.

1920 Bass Strait

‘The Navy submarine depot ship, the Platypus, was involved in the search for a missing schooner, the Amelia J., in Bass Strait. Mystery lights, thought at the time to be ‘evidently rockets,’ were observed. Two aircraft left the flying training school and aircraft depot at Point Cook to join in the investigation. One was piloted by a Major Anderson and the other by Captain W. J. Stutt – an instructor for the NSW Government Aviation School at Richmond...Stutt and his mechanic, Seargent Dalzell, were last seen by Major Anderson flying into a large cloud. Their plane and the schooner were never found.’

Source: Chalker, C. 1996. ‘UFOs sub rosa down under: The Australian Military & Government role in the UFO controversy.’ Page 7. Retrieved 24 January 2011 from <http://www.project1947.com/forum/bcoz1.htm>

23 March 1920 1323hrs Adelaide, South Australia

‘Objects in the sky.

To the Editor

Sir- When the late Sir Ross Smith was covering the last phase of his epic flight from England to Australia, and was scheduled to arrive in Adelaide during the early afternoon, the late Harry Butler left Adelaide in his small monoplane, nicknamed the Red Devil to meet the big Vickers Vimy over the Adelaide Hills, being a little ahead of his schedule, Harry Butler filled in his time with aerobatics and stunting. Most of which occurred over our nurseries situated just S.E. of Mount Barker.

While watching him very intently, two large black objects travelling at terrific speed in a parallel course, passed very high above him, travelling from north to south. These were quite large and were very high but nevertheless their speed was such as to make Harry butler’s machine appear as if it were stationary.

The day was cloudless and for a moment I thought my eyes were playing tricks, but subsequently my foreman, who was half a mile away at the time, asked me what the two black things were that passed Butler’s machine. During the eveing of the same day, my father in law who lived about a mile away asked an identical question. Both these people gave the same description and direction of flight which exactly coincided with my own observations.

The speed and density of the objects definitely precluded any possibility of there being a mirage.

H N Wicks.

Balhannah Nursereies Balhannah.’

Source: *The Advertiser* Adelaide [Adelaide, SA: 1931-1954) page 2 of the Tuesday 25 February 1947 edition.

Notes:

1. A search of Internet sources determined that Sir Ross Smith and crew left England on 12 November 1919 and arrived in Darwin, Australia on 10 December 1919. The *'Barrier Miner'* dated Tuesday 23 March 1920 page 4 described the arrival of Sir Ross Smith in Adelaide on 23 March 1920 in his Vickers Vimy biplane. The article also mentioned Captain Harry Butler, a famous stunt pilot, in a monoplane, flying alongside Sir Ross Smith, at 1.23 pm that day. A third aircraft piloted by Captain J R Moore was also present.

It would therefore appear, that the observation of H N Wicks, as described in the *'The Advertiser'* Adelaide dated 25 February 1947, was made around 1.23pm on 23 March 1920.

2. Can we establish H N Wicks as a real, historical figure in Adelaide in 1920? A search through TROVE located an article on page 8 of the *'Daily Herald'* for Friday 13 February 1914 which places an H N Wicks at Balhannah, helping establish an orchard and nursery.

An H N Wicks appears in the book *'Who's Who: South Australian Centenary, 1936.'* He is also mentioned in the 21 March 1934 page 13, edition of *'The Advertiser'* Adelaide, as at the Balhannah flower show.

It is therefore a reasonable assumption that an H N Wicks may have been present, at Balhannah, on 23 March 1920, as he states in his 1947 letter to the editor.

3. H N Wick's letter of 1947 described the day as 'cloudless.' Can we confirm this? I checked the weather section of the 23 March 1920 edition of *The Advertiser' Adelaide'* for the state forecast. This read in part 'Lower South Australia Fine with warmer temperatures and light, variable winds, chiefly south-east to north-east.' There is no mention about the state of cloudiness. Fine, simply means no rain.

4. What might the two objects have been?

a. My first thoughts were that, could Wicks have possibly confused the aircraft he thought was Butler's, with Ross Smith's? If this were so, then perhaps the two fast black objects were in fact Butler's and Moore's monoplanes? However, Butler's aircraft was a monoplane and Smith's was a much larger Vickers Vimy biplane. Smith's aircraft would not have been performing aerobatics and stunts, whereas Butler's smaller monoplane was capable of aerobatics and stunting; in fact, Butler was famous for stunting.

It would seem on the available facts that H N Wicks was indeed watching Butler's aircraft when the black objects went by.

b. Could the two black objects have been birds? High speed black objects in the sky could indeed have been birds. However, if we accept that three independent people all saw large objects at around the same time, at a distance of up to a mile apart, this suggestion would seem unlikely.

c. I note there is no mention of the two black objects leaving a condensation trail. There is also no associated noise reported from the objects.

5. In summary. We have confirmed that H N Wicks was a real, historical figure, almost certainly living at Balhannah on 23 March 1920, the date he reports his observation occurred. The other details of the day, e.g. the arrival etc of Sir Ross Smith, are historically correct.

Here then, we have an observation, dated 23 March 1920 of ‘...two large black objects travelling at terrific speed in a parallel course, passed very high above him, travelling from north to south. These were quite large and were very high but nevertheless their speed was such as to make Harry Butler’s machine appear as if it were stationary.’ These were reportedly observed by three people who were a considerable distance apart, albeit belatedly reported in February 1947. As Wicks’ letter appears at the time there were several newspaper reports about the passage of five egg shaped objects over Port Augusta and Lock, both in South Australia, this appears a valid reason that Wicks chose February 1947 to report his own sighting.

On the reported facts, I have no suggestions as to a mundane stimulus for this observation.

Spring 1921 Prospect, Adelaide, South Australia

One evening, a man named Felix Jones saw a circular-like saucer. It was 12-15 feet across, and 3 feet deep. It was a lightish colour but reflecting green from within it. It had neither wings nor propeller, but did have rectangular windows. It was seen in the north-north-west, stationary for three minutes. It then moved off to the west, slowly, then quickly. When it moved it glowed at the back.

Source: Australian Saucer Record volume 2 number 4 1956 page 7. The item stated that the report was received 15 Oct 1956.

6 January 1923 Hobart (?) Tasmania

‘An Unusual Phenomenon. To the Editor of ‘The Mercury.’

Sir – I am interested to know if any beside myself and daughter witnessed an extraordinary appearance in the sky at about 12.30 on Saturday. The sky was intensely blue with an occasional formation of cloud scudding over from the north-west.

On a clear patch of sky, a spherical body, creamy white in color was seen revolving around its own axis, and speeding in a northerly direction at a good pace against the prevailing wind. The object was above the clouds as occasionally it was observed to repeatedly appear further on. It was not luminous like a star, or a meteor and was seen for nearly half an hour, until eventually obscured by rain clouds.

Yours etc. E. W.'

Source: 'The Mercury' [Hobart, Tas: 1860-1954] Thursday 11 January 1923 p 9.

Notes:

1. Assuming the location of the observer was Hobart. Hobart is at latitude 42 deg 50 mins south; longitude 147 deg 20 mins east.
2. At 12.30pm the Sun was at elevation 70 deg; azimuth north.
3. Venus was at 41 deg elevation; azimuth WNW.
4. The weather forecast issued at 9pm on 5 January 1923 for the next 48 hours, was for north-west to west winds with showers.
5. On the information given, I cannot identify the object. There was discussion on the Magonia Exchange Yahoogroups about the possibility that Venus may have been the object and the observer deceived by scud clouds periodically covering the planet from view, giving the impression that it was moving. Note that there is a contradiction between the half hour long observation, and the object speeding along.

1924 60 miles south of Coolamon NSW

'Some years ago, an elderly man, Ian Rogers, rang me about an incident when he was a boy in 1924. One morning he was checking their rabbit traps in the Lysterfield State Forest, south of Coolamon.' He heard a humming noise and saw a landed object, some 100 yards distant. It was a 'long, cylindrical shape, rounded at both ends, with four square windows along the side. It was at least 30 feet long...' At one stage 'people' got out of it. It then flew off into the sky. The witness said the ground was burnt black and trees singed. At one stage he said he had a 'small piece of metal' and that 'When I rubbed it with my hands it would move off of its own accord.'

Source: McGhee, M. (2016.) 'Contact Down Under.' Independent Network of UFO Investigators. Katoomba. Pp 97-98.

1925 Moora, Western Australia

'Two young men came across a strange object resting in a paddock, on a farm near Moora, Western Australia. It was like 2 saucers on edge, with oval shaped 'windows' and 4 'legs.' The object seemed to be shimmering, and was not of 'any colour of the spectrum.' The object appeared to be deserted. The men beat a hasty retreat and several days later, the 2 returned. The object was gone but where it had rested the earth had been scuffed about.'

Source: Chalker, W C. 'The CEII experience in Australia,' 'Australian Co-Ordination Section' (for the US based Center for UFO Studies) Bulletin, March 1977, Number 9 p12.

1927 Fernvale, New South Wales

A range of unusual events were reported including 'a dancing light in the sky,' disturbed cattle; dead cows and injured pigs. '...one night the boy and his older brother were returning ...when they witnessed a brightly lit, flying object travel through the valley, light up the whole area, turn slightly to follow the valley contours, and finally come to rest on a hill...the boys investigated in the morning confirming the presence of a complete circle of scorched grass, about nine metres in diameter, where the object had been seen to land.' '...large, unfamiliar birds..' were seen in the area; a stranger in a white suit visited.

Source: Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p.32-34. Retrospective interview in 1985/1986 with a man who was 10 years of age at the time, and his sister. See also 'Terror Down Under.' Chalker, W. Fate. Sep 1988. 'UFOs in Australia & NZ through 1959' in Clark, Jerome 'The emergence of a phenomenon' Volume 2. Detroit, MI. Omnigraphics. 1992. pp333-336. Oz files pp32-24.

1929 Mathoura, New South Wales

A number of school pupils were playing tennis after school. Two of them saw an object come out of a cloud, traverse a patch of clear blue sky, and enter another cloud. It was travelling very fast; was silver in colour and shaped like a bullet or cigar. There was no associated noise.

Source: Australian UFO Bulletin, March 2002, citing an original report by witness Ken Dyer. Drew Williamson, in the Magonia Exchange forum in March 2017, suggested the possibility of an aircraft, as he found a 1929 newspaper article which made mention of an aircraft route passing over Mathoura.

Circa 1930 Mandurah, Western Australia

A 67-year-old woman recounted how at age fifteen she had seen a sixty-centimetre tall, pink creature. It had large ears, a slit mouth, big bulbous eyes and small hands. It was bald and shiny. She said her father wrapped the creature in a net and put it outside.

Source: Basterfield, Keith. 1997. 'UFOs: A Report on Australian Encounters.' Reed Books. Kew. Victoria. p136. Citing the Perth UFO Research Group (defunct.)

1930 Warrnambool, Victoria

'In 1930, an Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) officer, Squadron Leader George Jones, was sent to Warrnambool, Victoria to investigate reports of mystery aircraft flying over the coast. No explanation was found in this first official RAAF UFO investigation. Further 'mystery aircraft' reports were made in the near pacific and Papua New Guinea in 1930, and in 1931 the RAAF was denying any of her planes were the explanation for 'mystery planes reported widely in Tasmania.'

Source: Chalker, C. 1996. 'UFOs sub rosa down under: The Australian Military & Government role in the UFO controversy.' Page 8. Retrieved 24 January 2011 from <http://www.project1947.com/forum/bcoz1.htm>

1930's

'In about 1989 John's father-in-law, an Aboriginal man, told him that when he was a young man in the 1930s, camping with his tribe before the white man took them off their land, they saw a green light spinning around in the sky. It landed behind trees. Lots of little men shining with green light came. They walked around the tribe, looking at them, and then walked back to the UFO, which took off.'

Source: Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p.22.
Note: The John mentioned is researcher John Kernott.

1931 Berrigal Creek, New South Wales

'In the year 1931, at the age of thirteen, while out rabbiting one night on a property in Berrigal Creek, part of the Nandewar Ranges, I noticed the countryside lit up, as if by a yellowish moon light, yet there was no moon. I raised my eyes and there, low in the sky in the north-west was a round disk-like object, yellowish in colour, travelling south, without a sound. It was rotating slowly, travelling at a steady pace, not fast, on a decent even course with no variations in altitude. The object, which seemed to have small flames licking over it all the while, travelled over the peak of a hill about half a mile away and across a gap in the hills towards a mountain almost 2000 feet above sea level.'

The object came to one of the peaks, went behind it and reappeared the other side and continued on to the largest peak and swooped towards the rear of it and disappeared.

At that time there wasn't any talk of flying saucers or UFOs. I heard about fireballs a little later and thought for a time it must have been one of these. However, I have read some detailed reports of fireballs since and, the description doesn't fit. For one thing, it was a fine clear night with no clouds.

Jack Howlett, Baradine.'

Source: Hervey, M 'UFOs Over the Southern Hemisphere.' Horwitz. Sydney. 1969. Pp61-62,

Notes:

1. Berrigal Creek is near Bellata, New South Wales. Bellata's latitude is 29 deg 54 mins south; longitude 149 deg 48 mins east.

2. The Nandewar Ranges consist of numerous peaks, up to the 4885 foot (1489m) peak named Mount Kaputar. I found a list of ten peaks in the ranges, all above 3323 feet (1013m) tall, but no listed peaks of around 2000 feet.

3. The book account mentions that it ‘...continued on to the largest peak.’ The tallest peak is Mount Kaputar, 4885 feet (1489m). This is at latitude 30 deg 16 mins south; longitude 150 deg 10 mins east.

4. I checked Ancestry.com and in the New South Wales 1948 electoral roll I located a Jack Howlett, in the sub-division of Baradine, division of Gwdir, living with Ivy Helen Howlett, in Wellington Street. The electoral rolls indicate that they were living there in 1969 when the letter to Hervey was written. This Jack Howlett was born in 1918, making him 13 in 1931. He died in 1986.

5. For an observer near Bellata, to see the object pass behind peaks, which are at a distance of at least 30 kms away, indicates that the object was at an extremely low angular elevation above the horizon which agrees with the observer’s statement that the object was ‘...low in the sky...’

6. The statement by Howlett that ‘I noticed the countryside lit up, as if by a yellowish moon light, yet there was no moon,’ reminds me of numerous descriptions I have read of the sudden appearance of a meteor. Indeed, one night I was out in my own back yard when the whole area was lit up in brilliant blue light, heralding the arrival of a bright meteor.

7. I wonder if the comment that it looked ‘...like a round disk-like object...’ refers to it appearing like a circle, and not a ‘dish’ or ‘saucer shaped’ object? There has been some tendency among certain UFO researchers to look for pre 1947 ‘disk’ shaped objects and shout ‘It’s a UFO!’

8. The description ‘...which seemed to have small flames licking over it all the while...’ is certainly suggestive of a meteor.

9. The observation ended when the object ‘...disappeared...’ It is uncertain from this whether the light from the object went out, or whether the object disappeared due to distance, and perhaps passed over the horizon?

10. I believe Howlett’s comment about the description of ‘fireballs’ not fitting his observation, may refer to the older term ‘fireball’ which was associated with thunderstorms, and seems to fit the newer designation ‘ball lightning.’

11. I looked for contemporary newspaper article about this object, via the TROVE electronic news collection. I found two possibilities. Firstly, a very bright meteor seen over a wide area of Queensland on 17 October 1931. However, the direction of flight was different to the Berrigal Creek object. Secondly, there was a 25 June 1931 set of observations of a bright meteor over the Riverland of South Australia. The colour, direction and other characteristics also do not fit the Berrigal Creek object.

12. Based on the above information, the best fit for this observation at Berrigal Creek in 1931, would be a bright meteor.

10 June 1931 Tasman Sea

Aviator Francis Chichester was undertaking the first solo flight between New Zealand and Australia when: ‘Suddenly, ahead and to the left, there were bright flashes in several places, like the dazzle of a heliograph. I saw a dull grey-white airship coming towards me. It seemed impossible, but I could have sworn it was an airship, nosing towards me like an oblong pearl. Except for a cloud or two there was nothing else in the sky. I looked around, sometimes catching a flash or a glint, and turning again to look at the airship. I found it had disappeared. I screwed up my eyes, unable to believe what I was seeing, and twisted the seaplane this way and that, thinking that the airship must be hidden by a blind spot. Dazzling flashes continued in four or five different places, but I could not pick out any planes. Then, out of some clouds, I saw another or the same airship advancing. I watched it intently, determined not to look away for a fraction of a second. I’d see what happened to this one, if I had to chase it. It drew steadily closer, until perhaps a mile away, when suddenly it vanished. Then it reappeared, close to where it had vanished. I watched with angry intentness. It drew closer, and I could see the dull gleam of light on its nose and back. It came on, but instead of increasing in size, it diminished as it approached. When quite near, it suddenly became its own ghost – one second I could see through it, and the next it had vanished. I decided it could only be a diminutive cloud perfectly shaped like an airship and then dissolving, but it was uncanny that it should exactly resume the same shape after it once vanished. I turned towards the flashes, but those too had vanished. All of this was many years before anyone spoke of flying saucers. Whatever it was I saw, it seems to have been very much like what people have since claimed to be flying saucers.’

Source: Chichester, Francis. 1967. ‘The Lonely Sea and the Sky.’ London. Pan. p185.

17 October 1931 Rockhampton, Queensland.

‘A strange light.

Seen in the West

Independent observers.

Hlamy writes: Please allow me a small space in your valuable paper to write of a strange trail of light, seen in the western sky between 6.30 and 7pm Saturday evening, October 17th. When first seen, this trail of light was shaped like a capital ‘I’ or figure ‘7’, then it changed into a long wavy line like a great serpent. Much brighter and bigger at the lower end. It stayed in the sky about twenty minutes and then suddenly disappeared. The two snapshots enclosed are time exposures of one minute, taken at fifteen minutes to 7 o’clock. Note the small star at the lower end of the trail.

Another observer

Stockman: Who else besides myself saw the wonderful sight in the western sky on Saturday evening, 17th saw this dazzling affair. The sun was down a good time and the moon's light not very bright. The time must have been a little past 7 o'clock. The affair resembled a thick snake, head downwards, all brilliantly white, while several clouds nearby were quite black. In fact, there was not another white cloud in the sky. It held its shape for quite a while. Then the tail changed and it started to pale, turning quite pink as it did so. The head stayed strong and pink to the last. I had no watch but before it paled I had ridden a mile watching it all the time. I had an idea that it came on suddenly, as I shut a gate several minutes before and saw nothing.

Superstitious people will be wondering what it fortells. I'm trying to believe our long delayed rain is close at hand.

Almost vertical

A mysterious phenomenon was witnessed by many residents as dusk was approaching on Saturday evening last, says our Winton correspondent. It took the form, when first observed, of a pencil of white steam-like substance.

Photo

It was located in the sky, south of Winton, at an altitude of about half way between the horizon and the zenith, close to the two pointers of the Southern Cross. The mysterious white streak stood almost vertical and unraveled slowly downwards, at the same time growing thicker, until it was about the length (to the eye) of the distance between the Southern Cross pointers.

After about ten minutes it began to bend as if blown by an air current, and assumed the shape of a reversed mark of interrogation. The lower end was now in the shape of an arrow head and drifted lower and in a westerly direction, until as darkness came on, it faded from view.

Enormous meteor

An enormous meteor or shooting star, which fell in a north-westerly direction was observed in the Winton district. It reached the dimensions of a huge electric light and had a brilliant red sword-like tail. Meteors have been seen in the Alpha district recently.'

Source: 'Morning Bulletin.' [Rockhampton, Qld: 1878-1954] Wednesday 21 October 1931 p6.

Notes:

1. Rockhampton, Queensland is at latitude 27 deg 24 mins south; longitude 150 deg 30 mins east.

2. The sun set that night at 6.03pm [UTC plus 10 hours.]
 3. At 6.45pm the sun was 9 degrees below the horizon at azimuth 15 deg south of west.
 4. The moon was at 69 deg elevation; azimuth 29 deg south of west.
 5. What was it? From Rockhampton it was seen to the west; and from Winton to the south. Looking at a map and the geometry, it would seem to have been the same object seen from these two localities.
 6. All the details suggest that the observers were watching the trail of a meteor; distorted by high altitude winds, and lit by the sun which was below the horizon in the west.
-

Nov/Dec 1932 Mount Gambier, South Australia

Close to the horizon a 'strange orange coloured light...from which floated vivid lightning...I was able to make out the shape of that which it emanated. It was like a blunt-nosed torpedo and the orange light was in the 'propeller' end, and thirdly, the speed at which the shape was traveling.'

Source: Letter from the observer, dated 29 Jul 1959 to the AFSRS-Victoria branch.

Circa Mar/Apr 1932 or 1933 Nambour, Queensland.

'A boy reported seeing a small UFO within a metre's range, and afterwards that a whitish mist had appeared between him and the object. He felt a 'tight feeling in the head' and felt stunned. That night the boy developed large, white blisters on both hands and felt 'out of sorts.' The blisters burst during the night and the following day, secreting a clear watery fluid. The boy then felt better.

Source: Basterfield, Keith. 1977. 'UFOs: A Report on Australian Encounters.' Reed Books. Kew. Victoria. p136. Citing letter to 'Contact' magazine no 53, Sep/Oct 1974.

1933 Discovery Well, northern edge of the Great Sandy Desert, Western Australia

'In Gilroy's account, the Aboriginal woman claimed her tribe had been frightened off from Discovery Well when a 'large shiny egg' suddenly came down out of the sky. In broad daylight the strange object flew low over them. Several beings, described as strange, grey-skinned and man-like came out of the 'egg.' The woman said she was stunned by one of the beings and then carried aboard. Inside the 'egg' the interior was glowing. She was strapped to a shining table and apparently 'experimented with.'

Source: Gilroy, Rex. 1995. 'Mysterious Australia.' Mapelton. Nexus Publishing. p20. Cited in Chalker, Bill 'The Oz files' Duffy & Snellgrove. Potts point, NSW. 1996. p.20.

18 June 1933 Taree, New South Wales

'Taree aerial phenomenon.

'Several Taree residents witnessed a strange aerial phenomenon about 6.40 on Sunday evening last. A light appeared in the western sky and travelled in an easterly direction from Wingham towards Taree. The light is described as being about the size of one of the Taree street lamps. When near the Taree Bowling Green it seemed so low that it was hidden behind a tree and it passed over the hill to the west of the oil depot and appeared to fall behind the trees. The flight occupied about seven minutes. Had the object been a meteor it would have fallen straight down but it travelled parallel to the earth.'

Sources:

1. *The Gloucester Advocate* (NSW 1905-1954) Friday 23 June 1933 page 2.
2. *Daily Examiner* (Grafton NSW 1915-1954) Monday 19 June 1933 page 4.

Notes:

1. Taree is at latitude 31 deg 54 min south and longitude 152 deg 27 mins east.
2. According to the Geophysics Australia website sunset that night was at 1653 hrs (UTC plus 10 hrs). Astronomical twilight was at 1820hrs.
3. Meteor do not always travel 'straight down.' They can certainly travel parallel to the ground.
4. However, a duration of seven minutes is unheard of for a meteor.
5. There is no mention of a meteor-like trail or tail; there was no single body exploding into a number of parts; or bits breaking off the main body.
6. There is also no mention of any associated sound.
7. All in all, if this was a modern report I would be looking at the possibility of a hot air garbage bag hoax balloon. Did they have anyone launching hoax 'fire' balloons in those times?
8. I located an article in the 'Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate dated Monday 17 July 1933 page 6 which stated:

'Taree residents have on two occasions during the month been perplexed by a strange red light which traversed the sky. Some people thought it was a bright star which went very slowly and evenly on its way until it disappeared below the horizon. One resident of the lower part of the Manning river said he saw the object at a distance of about 300 yards and accelerated his motor car to overtake it but it was too swift for him. The mystery however has now been solved. A boy employed by a Taree chemist was responsible. He released hot air balloons measuring 5 feet by 3 feet which ascended to an immense height.'

10 October 1935 Newcastle, New South Wales

‘Only now, a report and a negative of a UFO photographed in 1935 has been received and investigated by UFOIC. As the case was, the person concerned wondered at the time what the object might have been but he has only recently become aware of the extraordinary nature of his experience and the significance of the photograph which he took that year.

Mr Patrick A M Terry of Mosman, Sydney was stationed with the military at Newcastle and on the night of 10th October, while sitting in the rocks he noticed a flash of light in the sky out over the sea.

Then a steady light appeared. It was brighter than a full moon and was hovering about a mile away and possibly 10,000 feet high. It was yellow-bright in the lower part gradually diminishing through three dark bands, into grey. The whole complex appeared actually as a tremendously large mushroom-shaped object, consisting of three floors, smaller supporting the larger one, and the light from the bottom floor illuminating all three upper sections. The object then slowly descended to a height of about 5,000 feet and remained stationary for a few seconds.

It then moved quickly back to its original position. At that time Mr Terry’s curiosity and surprises were fully aroused and while he had a Kodak Brownie box camera with him, he snapped at 1/25th second exposure. After about ten minutes of hovering, the object began revolving with increasing speed and moved away, disappearing towards the north and out of sight within three seconds. The photographs later showed a definite circular object with details seen well at enlargement. (The photograph will be published in the next Review.’

Source: UFOIC Newsletter, December 1968, number 21, p.4.

Note:

1. The next UFOIC Review was dated December 1969 but did not contain anything about the sighting.

1936 Queensland

‘While living at a place called Willow Bark during 1936, I saw what I thought was a meteor with a very long tail. This one suddenly exploded and my face began to burn. As the light grew closer I was able to make out this object which looked like a giant spinning top which seemed to be made out of gold plated metal.

I screamed and my mother and sister came running outside, whereby it shot up into the sky and vanished.

I spoke to some pilot at the Sir Force Base at Amberley soon afterwards and they admitted to seeing something strange in the sky on the night in question.

Mrs L D Cooper, Brisbane.’

Source: Hervey, M. ‘UFOs Over the Southern Hemisphere.’ Horwitz. Sydney. 1969. P123.

Notes: I searched TROVE but found nothing relevant.

1938 Darwin, Northern Territory

(A) ‘Ghost planes’ over Darwin in 1938:

A number of flaps of ‘ghost planes,’ ‘strange planes,’ ‘Unidentified aircraft’ or ‘dirigibles’ have been documented in the UFO literature. These have occurred in such diverse places as Denmark in 1908; the United Kingdom in 1909; South Africa in 1914 and Scandinavia in the early 1930’s.

A Department of Defence Air Board file, recently uncovered by us, describes ‘ghosts planes’ and ‘unidentified aircraft’ over the Northern Territory in 1938. File A705 control symbol 56/3/2, reveals at least seven instances between 3 Feb and 25 Mar that year. In one instance, on 8 Feb 1938, an aircraft engine noise was heard and the witness saw an orange coloured light in the sky for two minutes.

The official reaction was that no aircraft had made refueling arrangements in the Territory, which made it ‘very improbable’ that strange aircraft were about.’

Source: Disclosure Australia Project Newsletter number 10 dated.....

Retrieved from <http://disclosureaustralia.freewebspages.org> 25 January 2011.

(B)

<i>Summary of Department of Defence Air Board file series number A 705 control symbol 56/3/2 titled ‘Department of Defence-Air Board-Unidentified aircraft at Darwin’ located in the Canberra office of the NAA. 19 pages.</i>	
Page	Contents
1	File cover. Originally ‘Secret’ now ‘Restricted.’
2	DOD minute Apr 1938. From Dept of Navy Intelligence to the Air Board. On 12 Mar 1938 at 1600hrs NT police at Boorooloola reported a heavy noise like an aircraft going NW towards Burketown. Also on 19 Mar 1938 another aircraft. This latter could have been FO Clouston. On 25 Mar 1938 another at 1400hrs aircraft seen Groote Island.
3	RAAF minute 9 Apr 1938. Unidentified aircraft at Darwin. See below.
4	Memo 22 Mar 1938. Dept of Interior to DOD. Copy of interview re 11 Mar 1938 from NT Administrator.
5	Memo 11 Mar 1938. To Dept of Interior from Administrator. A Mr Alwright heard an aircraft on 3 Mar 1938 at 0530hrs passed over Darwin; and at 6pm on 3 Feb 1938 two men at Darwin claimed to have seen an aircraft which had

	wheels not floats.
6.	DMOI from Dept of ops & Intel. Report from Administrator Darwin.
7.	Copy of 6.
8.	Memo 12 Feb 1938. NT Administrator to Air Board. Copy of reports of witnesses who claim to have seen aircraft. Says no evidence of aircraft fuelling in NT, therefore despite credibility of witnesses, no aircraft were there.
9.	Statement-M Holtze at 0430hrs 8 Feb 1938 heard engine of aircraft. Went outside-saw an orange coloured light in the sky in the SW for 2 minutes before it disappeared. Statement P J Love at 6pm on 3 Feb 1938 saw a grey coloured biplane high in the sky going E or SE. Statement W T Williams at 6pm on 3 Feb 1938 heard the sound of engine and saw a grey aircraft in a southerly direction.
10.	DOD Minute. 16 Feb 1938. D of O & I for GS(MI). Report received from informant that the exhaust of Japanese seaplanes at night gives off orange flame.
11	Telegram to Air Board 11 Feb 1938. Close investigation 8 Feb 1938 about aircraft can be discounted. On 3 Feb report, all aircraft in the NT had been accounted. Absence of fuelling arrangements make it 'very improbable' that strange aircraft were about.
12	Copy of 11
13	Telegram 10 Feb 1938. Darwin to Air Board- obtaining reports.
14	RAAF Minute 10 Feb 1938. Secretary has received info from Powell's Creek. Natives report two aircraft on 9 Feb 1939 flying south at 11am
15	Copy of 13
16	Telephoned Telegram 9 Feb 1938 to Administrator Darwin from Air Board. Press reports about aircraft over Darwin-details sought.
17	Press clippings. Melbourne Argus & Age 11 Feb 1938-aircraft over Darwin.
18	Press clippings. Herald 10 Feb 1938. 'Ghost planes.'
19	Press clippings. Argus & Herald 9 Feb 1938. 'Strange planes.'

Source: Disclosure Australia Newsletter Number 11 dated.....retrieved from <http://disclosureaustralia.freewebsites.org> on 25 January 2011.

19 October 1938 Fernbank, near Manjimup, Western Australia

'Strange object in the sky.
Observations at Manjimup.
Manjimup Oct 20

A strange object was seen in the sky about 4.45am yesterday by Mr Andrew Muir, of Fernbank, near Manjimup. The object was shaped like a banjo case, the head appearing larger than the Moon and the tail short and rounded at the end. In spite of the daylight it was luminous.

The object was first seen a little west of south and about ten degrees above the horizon, and unlike a meteor. It moved slowly eastwards and downwards, until lost to sight.

It was witnessed also by Mrs Charles Reeve from a point several miles from where Mr Muir stood to observe it.'

Sources:

1. *'The West Australian'* [Perth, WA 1878-1954] Friday 21 October 1938 p.26.
2. *'Daily Mercury.'* [Mackay, Qld 1906-1954] Monday 24 October 1938 p.8.
3. *'Maryborough Chronicle, Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser.'* [Qld 1800-1947] Monday 24 October 1938 p.9.
4. *'Sunday Mail.'* [Brisbane, Qld 1926-1954.] Sunday 23 October 1938 p.5.
5. *'Western Mail.'* [Perth, WA.1885-1954.] Thursday 27 October 1938. p.55.

Notes:

1. What astronomical objects were in the sky at 0445hrs on Wednesday 19 October 1938? A check using two electronic sky charts revealed that:
 - a. The Sun was 10 degrees below the eastern horizon. Sunrise was at 0530hrs.
 - b. The planet Venus was below the horizon.
 - c. The planet Jupiter was below the horizon.
 - d. The planet Mars was just above the eastern horizon.
 - e. The Moon was at 18-degree elevation at azimuth 16 degrees north of east. It was a crescent.
 - f. The constellation Pavo was in the position indicated by Mr Muir. No particularly bright stars there.
2. Did the object behave as an astronomical object would? An astronomical object at 10-degree elevation and a 'little west of south' would, over time, move eastwards and upwards, not eastwards and downwards as the object is said to have moved. Therefore, it would appear that the object was not moving due to the rotation of the sky.

Correction:

Scottish researcher, Martin Shough pointed out that an astronomical object at 10-degree elevation 'a little west of south' would indeed move downwards and eastwards. My thought above, that it would move eastward and upward would only apply if the object crossed azimuth 180 degrees, ie south and travelled further eastward. The account does not state how far eastward the object travelled. Thus to move eastward and downward could have been due to the rotation of the sky.

3. The 'head' of the object is said to have been 'larger than the Moon' which implies it was at least half a degree across, which is a relatively large angular size.
4. No associated noise was reported.

5. I checked for, but could not locate, any place named Fernbank in a 370,000 location Australian gazetteer.

Addition:

Scottish researcher Martin Shough found details of a photograph in TROVE, dated 21 March 1907, which referred to 'Homestead and orchard on the farm of Mr Andrew Muir, Fernbank, near Balbarrup, 21 March 1907.' Balbarrup is a short distance north-east of Manjimup. Martin suggests therefore, that 'Fernbank' was most likely the name of a farm. This then is evidence of a Mr Andrew Muir living in the immediate area of the 1938 observation. Martin also found that an Andrew Muir was born in 1893 in Albany, WA, and died in 1957, buried at Balbarrup.

6. The latitude of Manjimup is 34 deg 14 min south; the longitude is 116 deg 8 min east.

7. Can we say anything as to how close the object was to Mr. Muir? Recall that it was reportedly seen from several miles away from Muir. Unfortunately, we do not have an angular size estimate from Mrs Reeve. However, two people several miles apart seeing the same object of some angular size suggests a distant object.

8. I note that we do not know the duration of Mr Muir's observation, and thus cannot estimate an angular speed for the object.

9. I conducted a search through TROVE and failed to locate any further information about this observation.

10. There were no naked eye comets visible from Australia in 1938.

11. Weather details.

The 'Daily News' Perth for Tuesday 18 October 1938 page 12 gives the state forecast (issued 12 noon) as 'Fine generally except for a few light showers in the far south-west and south...cool westerly winds in the far south-west...' The weather map showed 'showery' over Manjimup. In the '*Rain gauging*' section for the 24 hours ending 8am 18 Oct Manjimup had 8 points of rain.

The 'Daily News' Perth for Wednesday 19 October 1938 gives the state forecast as 'Fine generally except for a few showers in the far south-west and south. Cool westerly winds on the south coast...' The map indicates 'showery' for the Manjimup area. In Perth yesterday the maximum temperature was 66.4 deg F; and the minimum was 47.3 deg F. There was no rain gauging for Manjimup.

12. In summary, I do not know what was seen in the sky that morning.

Addition:

Scottish researcher Martin Shough comments: 'Perhaps the direction of motion was insignificant, could it have been a drifting meteor trail?'

1939-1945 (early in the war years) Victoria?

'You may be interested in my mother's story. Mum saw this object at 9am early in the war years. It was shiny and darted here and there, hovered in the air and tilted sideways, then took off at terrific speed.

This is a farming area and the cows all ran terrified. Mum didn't tell anyone outside the family, but two days later the Sun published a report that a school teacher and children at Korumburra also saw it exactly as my mother saw it, and about the same time.'

Mrs G Butcher. Sale.'

Source: Hervey, M. 'UFOs Over the Southern hemisphere.' Howitz. Sydney. 1969. P88.

Notes:

1. I checked TROVe but failed to find anything about this report or the Sun article.
 2. Kurumburra is at latitude 38 deg 25mins south and longitude 145 deg 48 mins east.
-

1940

'The next file from the year 1940 turned out to have a tantalising title '*Report of sighting of strange object by master of Auxiliary Ketch Jane Moorhead.*' However, the cause of the sighting may well have been an unidentified submarine periscope.

Summary of file series number MP150/1/0MP742/1 Control symbol 589/201/792 titled: 'Report of sighting of strange object by master of Auxiliary Ketch Jane Moorhead.'. Located at the Melbourne office of the National Archives of Australia. The file, which is a Navy file, consists of 4 pages which have been photocopied and numbered by us for reference purposes and comment in the right hand column		
Page number	Description	Comment
1	Undated note from Secretary to sub-collector of Customs, Launceston, Tasmania. Thank you for your memo of 29 Jul 1940.	
2	Memo. 28 Jul 1940. From sub-collector of customs to Sec Naval Board Melbourne. Letter from H J Lund.	
3-4	Letter. 28 July 1940. H J Lund. Master of Auxiliary ketch 'Jane Moorhead' 5.35pm 26 Jul 40. Off Kangaroo Island.	

	100 feet away saw an object stationary-extending vertically some 18 inches out of the sea for 2-3 inches in diameter. Drew sketch. 'I presume this could possibly be a periscope of a submarine.'	
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Source: Disclosure Australia Newsletter Number 11 dated.... Retrieved from <http://disclosureaustralia.freewebsites.org> on 25 January 2011.

Feb 1941 Wearyan River, Northern Territory

A nurse attended an injured man in a remote area. 'Two men appeared' and performed an operation on the man.

Source: Basterfield's entity catalogue citing the Australian Saucer Record 1(2):3.

Note:

1. Heathcock, Sister Ruth (MBE)

Sister Ruth was an Outback nurse and was married to Mounted Constable Ted Heathcock who was stationed at Roper Bar and Borroloola during the 1920s. She was one of the first white visitors to the 'Hidden City' in Arnhem Land and was widely respected by the local Aboriginal people who called her 'Pitjiri' ('the snake that will not sink') (1). In 1936 at a remote outpost in the Northern Territory, nine Aboriginal Elders appeared before Sister Ruth, believing that she was a member of their tribe before the Dreaming (2) they allowed her the unique privilege of seeing secret rituals performed and become party to secret Aboriginal knowledge.

Sister Ruth was a pioneer in black-white relations and was also involved with legislation regarding the non-isolation of leprosy sufferers, but she is perhaps better known for her 1941 attempted rescue of Horace Foster at Manangoorah during which she said she was assisted by two silent 'white doctor angels' and saw 'golden hands' operating on the doomed Foster – it was for this effort that she was awarded an MBE although she always claimed that it was 'the others' who had done the real work. Sister Ruth later moved to Adelaide with her sister Marie, and she was involved with the establishment of an Aboriginal Heritage Centre; she was also a friend of Colin McCarthy's. Sister Ruth was a 'mystic' who strongly followed Rosicrucian teachings and she knew Doris Player from Clare; it was Ruth who first saw a rock feature called 'the Chair' in a dream which led her to the formation where she inadvertently captured an apparent Jesus-like spiritual entity on film. Sister Ruth was also one of Peter Horne's closest friends during the last 20 years of her remarkable life, and her name is still respected widely in the Northern Territory to this day. (3)

Heathcock

(1) see <http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/315324?view=synopsis>

(2) (see <http://www.roninfilms.com.au/video/0/255/1832273.html>)

- (3) Email from Peter Horne, May 2007.
 - (4) Interview with John Burford 2007.
-

26 February 1942 Timor Sea north of Australia 1200hrs Witness Methorst

This case has appeared in numerous global UFO publications. However, I have located a copy (typed) version of the witness' letter to the Australian Flying Saucer Research Society (AFSRS) in 1957, in the files of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF.)

Notes:

1. I requested the National Archives of Australia to digitize file series A703 control symbol 580/1/1 part 1, titled 'Reports on Flying Saucers and other aerial objects' in order that I could read the full documentation.
2. Pages 87-88 of the digitized version are a letter dated 6 April 1957 from UFO researcher Peter Norris to the Secretary of Air, advising that Norris' society was running a radio segment on UFOs, and asking the Secretary if an officer of his agency could appear on the radio program. The letter stated that some good reports had come about because of the radio program, and as an example attached a typed copy of a letter.

This letter was dated 20 March 1957 from one William Methorst, of 7 Eisenhower Street, East Reservoir, Victoria addressed to the Victorian branch of the AFSRS.

The text of the letter read as follows:

'Dear Sir

After listening to your program on Flying Saucers on Wednesday evening, I thought I would write you and tell you of an experience I had while in the Timor Sea on Thursday, 26 th February, 1942.

This happened while on watch for enemy aircraft just after noon.

I was scanning the skies with binoculars when suddenly I saw a large aluminum disc approaching at terrific speed at 4,000 or 5,000 feet above us. This proceeded to circle high above our ship, the cruiser 'Tromp' of the Royal Netherlands Navy.

After reporting it to the officer on duty, he was unable to identify it as any known aircraft. After keeping track of this object for about three to four hours still flying in big circles and at the same height, it suddenly veered off in a tremendous speed (about 3,000 to 3,500mph) and disappeared from sight.

I have an account of this in notes made the same day in a diary which I still have in my possession.

Hope you will find this of aid to your investigations.’
William Methorst.

3. On the question of ‘was the ship Tromp in that area at the time?’

I checked on the net for information on the ‘Tromp.’
http://www.netherlandsnavy.nl/Tromp_his.htm was invaluable. The Tromp was a cruiser of the Royal Netherlands Navy, and on 20 February 1942 was in action in WW2 when it was damaged by Japanese destroyers. The Tromp went to Soerabaja. On 23 February 1942 the Tromp left Soerabaja, into the Indian Ocean via Madoera Strait and Bali Strait. It arrived in Fremantle, Western Australian on 27 February 1942.

The net showed Surabaya (formerly Soerabaja) is now Indonesia’s second largest city and is at latitude 7deg16minS, longitude 112deg45min E.

It is therefore probable that on the 26 February 1942 the Tromp would have been in the vicinity of the Western Australian coast, steaming south to Fremantle.

4. On the question ‘was there a crew member by the name of William Methorst on board the Tromp on 26 February 1942?’

I have been unable to locate a crew list for the Tromp, on the net. I therefore sent an email to the contact person for the website <http://www.netherlandsnavy.nl> asking if they knew of any way to check a crew list for the Tromp for 1942? I received a response from Jan Visser. Jan checked his files, but could find no-one of the surname Methorst who had been a commissioned officer in the Royal Netherlands Navy in WW2. However, that still left non-commissioned officers and enlisted men to check.

Jan suggested a number of net forums I could post a request for information on, which I did. I received one response from a Paul Joosten on 31 Jan 2011 who advised he had located an account of the event at <http://wenewsit.com/tag/theory>. This stated the witness was a William J Methorst.

5. Further research:

I located Peter Norris, the UFO researcher whom Methorst wrote to about the event. Peter recalled the event, but has no papers on the case in his possession.

On the National Archives of Australia name search I failed to find any records of any William Methorst or William J Methorst. However, a search of the NAA ‘Passenger Arrivals List’ located a William J Methorst who had arrived in Australia on 1 May 1949 onboard the ship Maetsuycker at Fremantle, WA. NAA file series K269 control symbol Methorst, William J.

I located 12 persons named Methorst in the Australian Telstra electronic white pages, and sent each a letter seeking information on a William Methorst. I received one phone call from a Jan Methorst of Campbelltown, Tasmania, who advised that he was not aware of any William Methorst in his family line. Jan mentioned that he knew most of the Methorsts listed in the white pages.

I later received an email from an Andy J Methorst of Waverley, Tasmania who advised that he was not aware of any William Methorst in his family background. He checked with his relatives in Holland and they were not aware of any William J Methorst. I also received letters from Valma Methorst of Davenport, Tasmania who told me she had telephoned several of her family members here and overseas but no-one knew of a William Methorst. I received another letter from a Gloria Methorst, of Tasmania, who could not assist me with my enquiries.

In 2017 I corresponded by email with Methorst's daughter Eve. She stated that her brother thought he had the diary mentioned in Methorst's letter to Peter Norris in 1957. However, although he had searched for it, it has not been found.

6. Conclusions:

1. It would appear that the 'Tromp' would not have been in the Timor Sea to the north of Australia on the date indicated by Methorst, but off the coast of Western Australia.
2. I have not been able to confirm that there was a William Methorst on board the Tromp.
3. I did confirm that there was a William Jan Methorst (carpenter) and a Ruth Methorst (home duties) listed as living at 7 Eisenhower Street, Reservoir East, Melbourne in the 1959 Commonwealth of Australia, Division of Darebin, state of Victoria, electoral roll. The 1962 electoral roll shows the same details. Neither the 1963 nor 1964 rolls for Reservoir East list any Methorsts.
4. The diary entry, mentioned by Methorst, has so far, not been found.

Summer 1942 Bass Strait Australia

In the summer of 1942 a fantastic incident occurred in the waters off Tasmania, a large island off the south Australian coast. My informant is a major in the Australian R.A.F. whom I will call Brennan. He is now stationed at the secret weapons and long-range missiles experimental desert station of Woomera:

'The whole yarn is so odd that I must ask you not to give my name if you write of it. We had orders not long after the Japanese attack on Darwin to patrol the Bass Strait where fishermen had reported seeing mysterious lights on the sea at night.

‘At 5:50 P.M., of a lovely, sunny evening, we were flying some miles east of the Tasman Peninsula when, on a sudden, there came out of a cloud bank, a singular airfoil of glistening bronze color. I'd say it was around 150 feet long and about fifty feet in diameter. It had a sort of beak at its prow, and the surface seemed burred, or rippled, or fluted. On its upper surface was a dome, or cupola, from which I seemed to see reflected flashes as the sun struck something, which might or might not have been a helmet worn by something inside. The other end of the airfoil fined out into a sort of fin. Every now and again there came from its keel greenish-blue flashes. It turned at a small angle towards us and I was amazed to see, framed in a white circle on the front of the dome, an image of a large, grinning Cheshire cat!

‘The damn thing flew parallel to us for some minutes, and then it abruptly turned away and, as it did so, it showed four things like fins on its belly-side. It went off at a hell of a pace, turned and dived straight down into the Pacific, and went under, throwing up a regular whirlpool of waves! Just as if it had been a submarine. No, the Japs had nothing in the amphibian line like that mysterious bird!

‘I've read your 'Flying Saucers on the Attack,' and saw what you said of the 'Foo Fighters.' We were in the same predicament as those American airmen. If we reported to intelligence what we'd seen, we should likely have been grounded as suffering from nerve-strain. So we did not report it! What do you think the damned thing was?

Source: Wilkins, H T. 1955. Flying Saucers Uncensored pp215-216.

Note:

1. I have been unable to locate any other documents about this case.

October 1942 Devils Marbles, Northern Territory

‘A photograph on the wall of the roadhouse -given to Farkas by Alice Springs plumber Phil Martin - shows Australian soldiers posing at nearby Devils Marbles in October 1942, with a small silver craft hovering nearby, clearly in shot.’ Farkas is Lew Farkas, owner of the Big4Holiday Park, Wycliffe Well, Northern Territory.

Source: Miller, Julie and Osborn, Grant. 2010. ‘Something is Out There: Unlocking Australia's Paranormal Secrets.’ Arena. Crows Nest, NSW. ISBN 978-1-74237-132-0. P.146.

February 1943 Darwin, Northern Territory

RAAF aircraft were conducting ‘circuits and bumps’ using flare lit airstrips. After the last aircraft had landed, a soundless, bright light flew over and went off into the trees. It travelled on a steady trajectory, slower than an aircraft.

Source: McGhee, M. 2016. 'Contact Down Under.' Independent Network of UFO Investigators. P.176.)

February 1944, Bass Strait (an area of ocean between mainland Australia and the Australian state of Tasmania)

(1) 'The crew of a Beaufort bomber flying at 4,500 feet over Bass Strait, during February 1944, bore witness to what may have been Australia's earliest 'electromagnetic' (EM) case.

'At about 2.30 am the plane gained a most unusual companion. A 'dark shadow' appeared alongside the plane and kept pace with it, at a distance of only some 100 to 150 feet. The Beaufort was traveling at about 235 miles an hour. The Object appeared to have a flickering light and flame belching from its rear end. Only about 15 feet of the rear end of the UFO was visible to the bomber crew, apparently due to 'reflection of the light from the exhaust.' The strange object stayed with the bomber for some 18 to 20 minutes, during which time all radio and direction finding instruments refused to function. It finally accelerated away from the plane at approximately three times the speed of the bomber. Upon landing the pilot reported the incident to his base superiors, but he claimed he was only laughed at.'

Source: Chalker, C. 1996. 'UFOs sub rosa down under: 'The Australian Military & Government role in the UFO controversy.' Page 8. Retrieved 24 January 2011 from <http://www.project1947.com/forum/bcoz1.htm>

(2) 'In a previous Newsletter, we noted a case recorded in the 1957 UFO magazine, 'Australian Saucer Review' 3(1):16 from an original report form. The event was said to have happened in February 1944.

'Mr T R H Royal was piloting a Beaufort bomber over Bass Strait when a dark 'Shadow' appeared alongside and kept pace for eighteen to twenty minutes. The object seemed to have a flickering light, and belched flames from its rear end. It maintained a distance of thirty to fifty metres from the aircraft before accelerating away. During the event all radio and direction-finding equipment is said to have malfunctioned.'

'The Project's researcher in Canberra went to the National Archives and obtained permission to inspect Mr Royal's personal service records. These records indicated that he was with No 1 O.T.U. (Operational Training Unit) in early February 1944. However, there was no record of his name in the Squadron Dairies or any indication that he had flown over Bass Strait. He was a Non Commissioned Officer Pilot.

'The only mention of his name was when he was with No. 8 SQN in September 1945 where he flew his first sortie on the 30 September 1945 on an unarmed reconnaissance mission over the Sepic River area in Papua New Guinea. This information came from the RAAF Historical Records, Russell Offices in Canberra.'

Source: Newsletter No 12 of the Disclosure Australia Project dated April 2004, available at <http://disclosureaustralia.freewebsites.org>

Notes:

1. The earliest reference in the UFO literature was from 1957, 13 years after the event.
2. I went to the website of the National Archives of Australia to see if they held a record on a T R H Royal, to see if we can place him over Bass Strait in February 1944.
3. I located a Royal Australian Air Force record for one Thomas Richard Horace Royal. File series A9300 control symbol Royal, T R H. It shows Royal's date of birth was 28 October 1915. He was born in Townsville, Queensland.
4. A digitised version of the file (37 pages) is available. This allowed me to ascertain that:
 - * He enlisted in the RAAF on 12/9/40
 - * He was in aircrew from 24/4/43
 - * On 27/9/43 he was posted to no 85 FTS, Bundaberg, Queensland
 - * He undertook a flying course between 22/11/43 and 12/4/44
 - * He became a pilot on 9/4/44
 - * On 18/4/44 he was posted to 2ED
 - * Discharged from the RAAF on 2/3/45
 - * Died on 4/12/69.
5. The research does indicate that there was an individual of that name in the RAAF in February 1944. However, neither the 2004 nor the 2011 research definitely places Royal as the pilot of an aircraft over Bass Strait in February 1944.
6. Additional information:

(1) 'At the turn of the year 1942 ... Rick Royal ... was flying a submarine reconnaissance and weather flight over Bass Strait ... There was a most savage weather front that night and every other aircraft previously airborne had either landed or crashed so that his aircraft was the only one in the area. As a matter of fact, they were only just flying, pretty well lost and with one motor packing it in.

'Suddenly, he saw a brilliant light below, showing through the hazy cloud in which he and his crew were flying. Abruptly the bright glow climbed to travel along with them, just off the starboard (right) wing tip. Little could he see except the rear portion of what was evidently a solid object, lit up by a brilliant, flaming tail, perhaps ten or more metres long. Every manoeuvre to get away from or closer to the thing was exactly matched, so that their distance did not vary. Ricky noticed very definite signs of a strong static field: the radio hissed continually while the hair on the back of the necks of the crew stood up ... only the gyro compass remaining unaffected. Suddenly the spurt of flame lengthened, and the object shot ahead leaving them rocking in its wake. In strict confidence Ricky expressed the opinion that the almost miraculous return to base by his aircraft was somehow due to the presence of the strange object. He gave no indication of how they had been aided to stay airborne, but was sure that they would normally first have crashed.

'To reduce the load on the remaining motor the crew had thrown out anything loose including the parachutes so they had no choice other than hope for a safe landing from a

very nerve-wracking flight.’

Source: Flitcroft, Keith. ‘The Martian Factor.’ (Poseidon Books, 2005)

(2)

‘The crew of a Beaufort bomber flying at 4,500 feet over Bass Strait, during February, 1944, bore witness to what may have been Australia's earliest ‘electromagnetic’ (EM) case. At about 2.30 am the plane gained a most unusual companion. A ‘dark shadow’ appeared alongside the plane and kept pace with it, at a distance of only some 100 to 150 feet. The Beaufort was travelling at about 235 miles per hour. The object appeared to have a flickering light and flame belching from its rear end. Only about 15 feet of the rear end of the UFO was visible to the bomber crew, apparently due to ‘reflection of light from the exhaust.’ The strange object stayed with the bomber for some 18 to 20 minutes, during which time all radio and direction finding instruments refused to function. It finally accelerated away from the plane at approximately three times the speed of the bomber. Upon landing, the pilot reported the incident to his base superiors, but he claimed he was only laughed at. Such a reaction seems extraordinary in retrospect since it turns out that Beauforts figured heavily in official RAAF list of planes that ‘went missing without trace’ during World War Two in the Bass Strait area - an area that was not linked to any significant enemy activity. I have been told that the Beauforts had a mechanical problem that may have accounted for some of these losses...

The Queensland Flying Saucer Research Bureau came to the attention of ASIO (our domestic security and intelligence organisation) because the group had sought communication with Russian scientists about the idea that the 1908 Tunguska event was caused an alien spacecraft. An ASIO officer reviewed the activities of the group and the backgrounds of the committee members. The dubious inspiration for ASIO’s interest was largely deemed of little merit, but an ASIO report was written in August 1959. It described Ricky Royal, then the QFSRB’s Vice President and technical officer, as ‘an ex-Air Force Officer and radio technician. His interests in these matters stemmed from a sighting of an U.F.O. over Bass Strait during the last war. He is a fanatic in matters relating to U.F.Os. and all attempts to prove their validity and would resort to any means to obtain information concerning them.’ As a technical officer for the group Royal had set up a ‘technical laboratory’, which led to a ‘light beam transmitter’ being built. This was to be used to signal UFOs.

At a public lecture in Brisbane on September 1961 Royal apparently got ‘carried away’ with the moment. A group history of QFSRB (now UFO Research (Qld) written by Annette Bramelt (or Brameld) reveals that Royal ‘had said, from the platform, that he had been in contact with UFO’s during his stint as a pilot with the RAAF during the war. He had witnesses and the incident was written into his log-book, but was ‘hushed up’ by the particular Department. No exception was taken to his statement at the time ...’ The ASIO officer mentioned above had become a member. He told the QFSRB president that ‘it had been unwise for (Royal) to have made the statement, that the incident was unlikely to have been hushed up, and that the speaker would have trouble verifying the statement.’ The President Stan Seers suggested the ASIO man should attend the next meeting and speak

with Royal himself. This occurred but Royal resigned from the committee 'with a strongly worded letter.' A letter was drafted 'to convey to him (the group's) regrets at his action and also (their) sincere thanks for all his valuable work; to assure him of (the group's) undoubted belief in his sighting story; to offer assistance in tracing crew members or in any other way ... and to express the hope that he would soon be working with (them) again.'

Source: Chalker, Bill. 'UFO History Keys' column: Australian newsstand publication 'Ufologist' September - October 2007 issue.

7. The ASIO reference to Ricki Royal above, may be read at page 40, on the digitized file in the National Archives of Australia file, series A6122 control symbol 2155 file title 'Flying Saucer Research Bureau (Qld)' internal ASIO file number 3/2/979 Volume 1.

It is part of an ASIO report dated 4 August 1959 addressed to the Regional Director, Queensland, marked 'Secret' subject 'Queensland Flying Saucer Research Bureau.' Paragraph 8 of the report reads:

'The vice-President and Technical Officer, Ricki Royal is an ex-Air Force Officer and radio technician. His interests in these matters stemmed from a sighting of an U.F.O. over Bass Strait during the last war. He is a fanatic in matters relating to U.F.Os. and all attempts to prove their validity and would resort to any means to obtain information concerning them.'

On the 7 August 1959, the report was forwarded to ASIO Headquarters for their information.

About 1945 Wilcannia NSW

'A senior police officer told me of an elderly country woman, now deceased, who saw a traditional flying saucer, during daylight hours, near Wilcannia, in Western New South Wales, in the 1940's, just after World War 2. She claimed that after reporting the sighting to the authorities, she received a letter from the Australian Air Force confirming the report, and warning her not to tell anyone about the craft. The police officer attested to having seen the letter, which appeared to be genuine.

Source: McGhee, M. (2016.) 'Contact Down Under.' Independent Network of UFO Investigators. P. 112.)

6 July 1945 Cairns, Queensland

'Moon's strange companion.

At 8am yesterday R.A.A.F. meteorologists at the aerodrome noticed a minute, star-like object in the sky only a short distance from the moon and apparently on the same plane. At noon the tiny shape was still beside the moon which it had followed on its course, maintaining an almost constant position in relation to the heavenly body. Intrigued by the phenomenon, the air force observed it through a theodolite, which made it appear

completely balloon shaped. That would have solved the problem of its identity: it might easily have been a weather balloon had it not so persistently followed the moon. Weather experts argued that it was too bright a day for a star to be perceptible and also the object was not luminous and that since the sun was shining on it it must be within the same atmospheric plane. One suggestion was that it was a planet which, owing to peculiar atmospheric conditions had suddenly become visible. A telescopic inspection, too, proved ineffective.'

Source: 'Cairns Post' [Qld: 1909-1954] Saturday 7 July 1945 page 5.

Notes:

1. I checked two electronic astronomical charts. At 8am the moon was at elevation 54 degrees and azimuth 25 degrees east of north. What was at elevation 52 degrees and azimuth 28 degrees east of north? The planet Venus. The light was the planet Venus.

5 Feb 1947 Port Augusta, South Australia 0900hrs

(1) 'Strange objects reported in sky.'

'While working in the yard at the Commonwealth Railways workshop yesterday morning Mr Ron Ellis and two workmates claim to have seen five strange objects in formation pass across the sky from north to south.

'The objects were white or light pink and shaped like an egg. Mr Ellis said that he could not give an accurate estimate of the size of the objects, but they were casting shadows and judging by his experience with aircraft in the RAAF during the war he considered they were about the size of a locomotive.

'Although the objects kept on a direct course at a height of about 6000 feet they appeared to be quivering he said. Owing to their great speed they were out of sight within a few seconds.

'Any question of the phenomenon being an optical illusion was dispelled by the fact that a few minutes later both Mr Ellis and his companion gave an identical description of what they had seen. Their description was verified by another member of the workshop who said he had also seen the objects.'

Source: 'Adelaide Advertiser' newspaper. Friday 7 February 1947. Front page. Copy originally provided by Darryl Tiggeman of Adelaide. Original viewed in the State Library, Adelaide on 27 January 2011.

(2) 'Objects in sky not meteorites'

'Commenting yesterday on a report from Port Augusta that several men working in the yard at the Commonwealth Railways Workshops at about 9am on Wednesday had seen five strange egg shaped objects in formation pass across the sky at a height of about 6000 feet the Government Astronomer Mr G F Dodwell said that the phenomenon did not fit in with anything astronomical and was a complete mystery to him.

Mr Dodwell discounted the probability of the objects being meteorites. He said that meteorites being so small and travelling at such high speeds did not cast shadows whereas the report stated that the objects had cast shadows about the size of a locomotive. The presence of falling meteorites would have been accompanied by a deafening roar.

Source: 'Adelaide Advertiser' newspaper. Saturday 8 February 1947. Front page. Copy originally provided by Darryl Tiggeman of Adelaide. Original viewed in the State Library, Adelaide on 27 January 2011.

Notes:

1. I had known about these newspaper articles for several years, thanks to Darryl Tiggeman. I visited the State Library in Adelaide on 27 January 2011 to check a copy of the 'Adelaide Advertiser.' I found that the 'Adelaide Advertiser' did indeed carry these articles on the dates quoted.

2. I searched for additional information on the event in other South Australian newspapers. In total I checked the 'Adelaide Advertiser' between 1 and 19 February 1947; the 'West Coast Sentinel' (based at Streaky Bay, 320kms W of Port Augusta) between 5 and 19 February 1947; 'The Recorder' (based at Port Pirie, 80kms S of Port Augusta) between 7 and 14 February 1947; Adelaide's other daily newspaper 'The News' between 5 and 11 February 1947; the Adelaide weekly 'The Mail' for 8 February; 'The Quorn Mercury' (based at Quorn 22 kms NE of Port Augusta) between 6 and 20 February 1947.

3. I found that 'The Quorn Mercury' of 13 February, page 3, carried the exact same account as that of the 'Adelaide Advertiser' dated 8 February 1947. However, more importantly 'The Quorn Mercury' of 20 February 1947, page 3, also carried an additional report of a sighting.

'Writing in the Advertiser, Mr F W Flavel of Lock, Eyre Peninsula states: 'I saw objects in the sky between 7 and 8 o'clock the same day as you record a report from Port Augusta. I was walking in a north-westerly direction to the house after feeding the pigs.

'There were five of the strange objects and they seemed to be coming up out of the sea like a shadow with smoky grayish color around them. They were oblong with narrow points. I saw them quite plainly. They seemed to be floating in the air from north-west to south-east and caused a shadow.'

4. I then found a letter to the editor in the 'Adelaide Advertiser' of 17 February 1947, page 2 from Mr Flavel. It read:

'Strange objects in the sky.'

'I saw objects in the sky between 7 and 8 o'clock the same day as you record a report from Port Augusta. I was walking in a north-westerly direction to the house after feeding the pigs.

'There were five of the strange objects and they seemed to be coming up out of the sea like a shadow with smoky grayish color around them. They were oblong with narrow points. I saw them quite plainly. They seemed to be floating in the air from north-west to south-east

and caused a shadow.’

‘I called the wife to have a look at them and she did so. It was a sight. I wish I had watched them longer as others had seen them and Port Augusta men did so an hour later. I have never seen anything like this before, and after reading what others saw I thought I would let you know that my wife and I both saw these objects.’

5. I checked the weather forecast for Wednesday 5 February 1947. The state forecast was: ‘Unsettled, with scattered rain and thunderstorms. Cool on part of the coast, elsewhere Warm to hot and sultry. SE to NE winds.’ The weather map was shaded over Port Augusta indicating rain was expected.

Sunrise was 0539hrs. Moonrise 1925hrs. Full moon 6 February 1947.

Adelaide’s actual temperature (300kms S of Port Augusta) for 5 February 1947 was minimum 73.8F at 0545hrs; maximum 98.3F at 1245hrs.

5. Lock (latitude 33 deg 34 min S; longitude 135 deg 45 min E) is a small country town 225kms SW of Port Augusta, and is inland.

6. As the 7 February issue of the ‘Adelaide Advertiser’ stated that Mr Ron Ellis has been in the RAAF during the war; I checked the National Archives of Australia service records for World War 2 looking for a Ron Ellis whose details might match the witness’s. I found there was a service file for a Ronald Ernest Ellis, born 5 November 1920; at Port Augusta, South Australia.

7. After I posted the above information on the Magonia Exchange forum on the net, Chris Aubeck sent me the following items:

(1) From the Adelaide Advertiser Thursday 10 July 1947 p2. It is an OCR translation.

‘Seeing things’

Early in February, some queer egg-shaped objects, pink and slightly luminous, were seen to pass across the sky near Port Augusta, but this phenomenon was hardly so much as a nine day’s wonder, for a South Australian amateur astronomer was ready with a plausible theory about meteors, which most people promptly accepted. We now know that, in the slang of the moment, Port Augusta ‘started something.’ The egg-shaped apparitions about which South Australia was mildly excited five months since, were plainly the harbingers of those ‘flying saucers’ that have been creating such a sensation in America.

Our trans-Pacific cousins have seldom given their imaginations so much play. Multitudes of people have seen the new hosts of heaven flying across the sky in the likeness of saucers; and those who have seen nothing, have been ready to make amends by offering explanations of ever increasing fantasy. It was left to a Sydney physiologist to point out that ‘flying saucers’ are likely to be nothing worse than red corpuscles in the eye of the observer, and several American and British scientists having hastened to agree that this is a valid theory,

the greatest known epidemic of 'seeing things' may fairly be supposed to be on the wane.'

(2) From the Adelaide Advertiser Tuesday 25 February 1947 p2. Letters to the Editor.

'Slow meteors'

Sir – Perhaps an amateur astronomer may be allowed to voice an opinion about the strange objects recently seen passing across the sky at Port Augusta. Usually, any meteor entering the atmosphere is traveling at the terrific velocity of forty miles per second. This compresses the atmosphere ahead of it and raises its temperature, as the piston of a diesel engine compresses

and heats the gases in the cylinder, but whereas the diesel piston merely raises the temperature to ignition point, the tremendous pressure caused by the meteor raises the temperature thousands of degrees, and in this cap of incandescent gas the meteor is burned up in a matter of seconds.

At rare intervals, however, meteors enter the atmosphere at comparatively slow speeds. Some years ago a whole 'procession' of such slow meteors was seen to pass across part of the USA, finally ending their flight in the waters of the South Atlantic. These slow meteors have a very different appearance from the swift blaze and trail of fire of the fast ones. Friction with the air does no more than heat them until they glow, as the giant V2 rocket is heated on its flight. As high-speed camera photographs of bullets in flight reveal, anything passing swiftly through the air creates both shock waves and turbulence which, by reflecting light rays passing through them, register distinctly on the photographic plate and, if the object is large enough, on the eye also.

It is this turbulence in the air which is seen when a slow meteor passes across the sky in daylight. The actual meteor may be quite small, weighing not more than fifty pounds in some cases, but the area of compressed and disturbed air is much larger, giving the impression that the object is of huge size and casting a visible shadow as it passes.

It also explains why many observers have described what they saw as 'resembling a swimming fish' on account of the way in which the 'tail' of the object seemed to wave to and fro. I suggest, therefore that the objects seen were meteors traveling at what is a slow speed for such visitors from the depths of space. If they were heading inland and we could obtain cross-bearings from observers to plot their course, it might be possible to find what is left of them, just as Sir Kerr Grant found the Karoonda meteorite a few years ago.'

H A Lindsay Cross Road, Highgate.

May 1947 Gogeldrie NSW

'In May last during the rice harvest, Mr. H Nettlebeck was out in the fields when he heard a swishing noise as if a mob of ducks were flying overhead. On looking up he saw five metal bodies flying in v formation with the sun glistening on them. They appeared to be about 2000 feet up and each looked to be about the size of a large duck. He estimated the speed at about 1000 miles per hour. Mr. Nettlebeck states the whole thing appeared too fantastic at

the time for him to report the sight, but on reading in the City Press yesterday of the 'flying saucers' or radar controlled missiles he sees a similarity. Mr Nettlebeck would like to know if any other settlers saw the five metal parts whizz through the sky in May last.'

Source: The Murrumbidgee Irrigator (Leeton NSW 1915-1954) Tuesday 8 July 1947 p.2.
