

No. 8971 (Ashland UFO)
Bratt/staff reporter
For Cathcart/Bell
June 27, 1975

A brilliantly lighted, strange looking craft sat on a dirt road 400 feet away, frightening a family of six . . .

A huge domed object glowing with an ⁿiridescent green color and with a monstrous red pulsing light hovered over a lonely ~~stretch~~ stretch of highway, terrifying a motorist . . .

A dazzling white light flew past directly overhead and then pulled straight up into the sky so fast that it simply disappeared, dumbfounding two police officers . . .

A strange series of reddish-orange lights mysteriously appeared, disappeared, re-appeared and disappeared again, puzzling at least a dozen witnesses over a wide area . . .

These are among the more unusual things that have happened recently in ^{northern} Wisconsin and Minnesota, which became a "hotbed of UFO activity" this year.

Just how many people saw UFOs will probably never be known but in just one week alone an ENQUIRER reporter interviewed more than 70 people, including 16 police officers, who had seen UFOs. And nearly every time he talked with one person, he'd be given yet another name of someone who had seen something.

"The whole area became a hotbed of UFO activity," said Dr. J. Allen ~~Hynek~~ Hynek, who ^{Professor} is chairman of the astronomy department at Northwestern University and director of the Center for UFO Studies in Chicago.

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"It's all rather unusual," he continued. "The pattern in the past has been that an area can remain what we call 'UFO hot' for a week or two and then it dies down. The Wisconsin-Minnesota thing is unusual in that it has persisted for so long."

Throughout March, April and May, numerous brightly colored objects were seen flying about in the nighttime skies or hovering ^{and} or maneuvering in/inexplicable manner. The sightings continued on into the summer, but there were fewer of them.

Not all of the objects were seen at a distance. A few came close enough to be profoundly disturbing, as the Phil Baker family learned on the night of March 13.

On that night at least six UFOs were seen by dozens of people in the skies over Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland and Iron counties in Wisconsin, the northern tier of counties along Lake Superior.

Mr. and Mrs. Baker and their children, Monty, ¹⁷10, Jane, 15, John, ¹³13, and Jeff, 11, live in a modest two-story house with a blue roof 4 miles east of Mellen, Wis. The house sits about 300 yards north of Route 77 on a narrow dirt road that dead ends half a mile beyond the house. No one else lives on the road and the nearest neighbor is half a mile away.

About 9 o'clock that night, Phil Baker—a 37-year-old veneer clipper at a plywood plant—^{and his wife were} ~~was~~ sitting on the sofa examining seed packages ~~when Jane came rushing in from outside.~~ when Jane came rushing in from outside.

"Dad! Dad!" she screamed. "Come Quick! There's something out there!"

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Jane was nearly hysterical. She had been putting the family's two pet cats in the garage for the night ~~at~~ when she heard a noise a short distance down the road.

"I looked and everything was all lit up," she said later. About 400 feet away was a strange, brightly lighted object,, apparently sitting on the road. It was making a beeping sound.

Baker stepped outside and gave an involuntary start.

"I didn't want to believe what I was seeing," he told The ENQUIRER.

"There was this circular object about 12 feet across with red and bluish-green lights around the outside and in the center there was an opening like a door with a real brilliant light coming from inside. I felt I could have looked inside if I'd been closer, but I couldn't see any details. The object made a high, whiny, sing-songy noise. I never heard a sound like that before."

By now Jeff and ~~a~~ John had come outside, while Mrs. Baker watched from the doorway. Monty was upstairs throughout the incident, listening to a basketball game on the radio most of the time.

"It's changed now!" Jane cried. "It's different!" When she had first seen the object, ~~at~~ she said, there had been no opening in the object, but now there was.

They stood watching it for a few minutes, uncertain what to do, when suddenly a pounding noise came from inside the craft.

"It was like somebody was hammering on a piece of metal or repairing something," Baker said. "It was like bang, bang-bang, bang, and so on. Some were louder than others, like a heavy hit and then a light tap. There was no pattern to it."

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"I didn't know what to expect," Baker said. "I told my wife I ought to go up and see what it was--maybe a small plane had crashed or a snowmobiler was in trouble and somebody needed help--but my wife said to stay away from it.

"She said we should call somebody and I said, 'Who we gonna call? People will think we're weird.'"

Nevertheless, he went inside and phoned Ashland County Under-sheriff George Ree, who lives 3 miles away.

"No sooner was I on the phone ~~2~~ when there was a loud explosion from the object and it simply vanished," Baker said.

Baker was anything but calm when he phoned, Ree told The ENQUIRER.

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"He was very upset," Ree said. "He's a pretty reliable, dependable person and I have no reason to disbelieve him, but he was quite excited. I had to tell him, 'Take it easy, cool down and just tell me what it is.'"

Ree finally calmed Baker down enough to learn what had happened and Ree immediately drove over to the Baker home.

"When I got there those people were quite excited," Ree said. "They were a frightened family. Mrs. Baker wouldn't even come outside."

Ree examined the spot where they said the craft had landed but could find no evidence anything had been there. After questioning the family, he radioed a report to the Ashland Sheriff's Office in ~~Northland, 25 miles to the north, and went~~ Ashland, 25 miles to the north, and went back home.

Ree was soon back ~~on duty again~~ on duty again, called out by the sheriff's office dispatcher because more UFOs had been sighted. Between 10 p.m. and ^dmidnight, Ree and at least six deputies from Ashland and Iron counties saw a total of four objects flying about.

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Of them all, Ashland Deputy Peter Drolson got the closest look at one. Drolson, 24, a deputy for 2 years~~2~~, had just parked his squad car at the end of a road looking out over Lake Superior.

"Everybody was seeing UFOs that night except me," Drolson told the ENQUIRER. "When I finally did see one it way far away and then I lost sight of it.

"I didn't think much about it and I was looking out over the lake when suddenly the ground got real bright and I could hear something. I was talking on the radio to the sheriff at the time.

"Everything got so bright I could have read a newspaper. I could see my shadow on the ground. I was leaning ² up against my car with the microphone in my hand and whatever it was came from the west behind me going east across the road.

"I saw the light and turned to my left to get a better look at it--all I could see was this bright glow maybe a couple of blocks behind me at tree-top level or a little higher--and when I went to turn left the microphone cord became taut so I turned to the right real quick to look over my right shoulder.

"By then it had already gone over the trees on the other side of the road and was gone. I¹ sounded like a big gust of wind coming through the woods.

"I talked on the radio the whole time but they heard only part of my transmission. They heard me talking, then a 'whoosh,' then it ~~2~~ blanked out for a few seconds, then another 'whoosh' and then me talking again."

This was heard not only in the dispatcher's office but on the radios of several police cars as well.

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"I heard the whoosh and the radio went blank," Ree said. At the moment this occurred, Ree said, he was standing next to his car near the Ashland-Iron county line east of Mellen, talking to several deputies as they watched UFOs.

B A little over a month later, Kathy Thompson had the fright of her life. Mrs. Thompson, 25 and the mother of two children, had visited a friend in Solon Springs, Wis., on a Saturday night, April 19, and was driving home to Superior, 25 miles to the north.

About 3 a.m. on a straight, level stretch of U.S. 53 about 5 miles north of Solon Springs, she saw a falling star in the sky off to her right and marveled at it because it was the first she had ever seen.

"When I looked back at the highway, I saw this big object in the middle of the road ahead of me," Mrs. Thompson told The ENQUIRER.

"It had a red light on it and at first I thought there had been an accident but as I got closer I realized it wasn't. I realized I didn't know what it was.

"I slowed down and by the time I pulled over to the side of the road and stopped, it was about 200 feet away

"It was big and dome-shaped on the top but the bottom was sort of irregular. It covered both sides of the highway and was like above the trees, but it was off the ground, maybe 10 feet or so. I could have driven under it if I had wanted to—but I wasn't about to try that.

"The whole thing was a bright, light green, sort of ~~iridescent~~ iridescent, except for a huge red light maybe 5 feet across on the bottom over my side of the highway.

"It was that big red light that really scared me. It was slowly

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pulsing, maybe three or four times while I watched it. I was scared.

I didn't know what it was doing, if it had some pulling power or I'd be hypnotized or what.

"I thought, 'I've got to get away from it.' So I slowly turned around--I was being very careful not to slide into the ditch or anything--and started driving back to Solon.

"I kept looking at that thing in my rearview mirror until it suddenly just disappeared. But less than a minute later I saw two white lights behind me.

"They kept gaining on me and I speeded up, thinking 'Maybe they're sending a little car after me.' That's what scared me more because pretty soon the lights were right behind me."

Soon she was going nearly 90 miles an hour but no matter how hard she pushed her green 1967 Mustang, the lights stayed right behind her for about 3 miles until she reached Solon Springs--~~and where~~
~~wasn't there~~ she discovered she was being followed by a deputy sheriff who stopped her for speeding.

He explained later that since they were so close to Solon when he started following her that he preferred to stop the car under the street lights in Solon than on the ^{dark,} deserted highway.

At the moment, though, Kathy Thompson was hysterical, shaking from head to foot with fear, more frightened than she had ever been in her life.

"When I went to walk up to that car, she came running up to me and she was hysterical," Douglas County Deputy Jack Hunker told The ENQUIRER.

"She was a complete basket case. She was shaking and was so nervous she couldn't even light a cigarette. She couldn't get anywhere near the cigarette with the matches."

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On the night of March 30, two policemen in the small town of
Hurley, Wis., had an experience similar to the one Deputy Peter
Erolson had.

Jarel Gasbarri, 27, and Larry Roberts, 26, were the only two
patrolmen on duty in Hurley that night, and they saw something
neither wanted to believe.

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"About 2:30 or 3 a.m., Larry and I were in a squad car on Silver Street and we pulled up to the stop sign at Fifth Avenue," Gasbarri told The ENQUIRER.

"I looked north on Fifth to see if there were any cars and at that moment we saw a big, bright light go over Silver Street just above the buildings.

"It was just a real bright light going real fast and then it just went up and disappeared. It was like a big spotlight in the sky and it seemed ~~as~~ there was like a reflection behind it that lit up the area beneath it. It was like one of those big lights at a carnival."

Roberts described it as a "glowing light going along and all of a sudden it pulled straight up out of sight. It was as if it saw us looking at it."

Neither man had heard any sound from the object—and neither said a word to the other. After Gasbarri drove on for several blocks, he said to Roberts:

"Did ~~you~~ you see anything back there at the stop sign?"

"Yes, a big light," Roberts replied.

"I don't believe what I saw," said Gasbarri.

"I don't believe it either," said Roberts.

Neither reported the incident and they told only a few people about it. They talked to The ENQUIRER only at the urging of Iron County Deputy Sheriff James Wicklund, one of the officers who had seen UFOs the night of March 13.

* * *

Perhaps the best documented sightings were made the night of April 1, when a series of lights were seen over Lake Superior by a number of people over a 30-mile stretch of Minnesota shore. MORE

"I remember the date because at first I thought it was some kind of April Fool's joke," said Todd Lindahl, 23, of Two Harbors, Minn.

"We were on our way to work on the midnight shift in Silver Bay, 30 miles to the north," said Lindahl, who works as a conveyer man on an ore crusher machine at ^eRserve Mining. With him were Doug Compton and Ted Swanson.

"It was about 5 minutes to 10 and we were ^S4 miles or so north of Two Harbors on U.S. 61 when we saw these four lights out over the lake, sort of ahead of us and to the right. They were bright orange and disc-shaped and sort of horizontal, rising at an angle from left to right."

Almost immediately they lost sight of the lights and hurried up U.S. 61 to Silver Creek Cliff, where they would get an unobstructed view of the lake. But once at the cliff they saw nothing.

A minute later, just north of the cliff and opposite Halcyon Harbor, they saw the lights again.

"All of a sudden the lights went on again--only this time there were eight or ten of them," Lindahl said.

"This time they were straight out over the lake from us and were in more of a vertical pattern. They were the same color. Suddenly we lost sight of them again and that's the last we saw of them."

Just a few minutes later, two fellow workers in another car, Allen Michaelson and Mike Skurla, of Two Harbors, also saw the lights while driving to work.

"It was about 10:15 and Mike said, 'Look out over the lake!'" Michaelson told The ENQUIRER.

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"I could see some kind of yellowish-orange lights way off in the distance, kind of faded and not real bright. I couldn't tell exactly how many there were and then when we got up on the cliff they just sort of faded out."

About 11:11 p.m., wildlife biologist James Breyer and his wife, Ranae, who then lived in Two Harbors but now live in Eva^{ce}l^{ce}uth, Minn., were driving home after visiting some friends in Knife River Valley west of Two Harbors.

"We were headed east into Two Harbors on Route 11 when all of a sudden there was a set of reddish-orange lights in the sky ahead of us and to our left," Breyer told The ENQUIRER.

"There were half a dozen or so in a sort of oval pattern and they were moving ~~fast~~ along and all of a sudden they just went out. It was like they went behind trees, but there were no trees. I assumed they were out over the lake.

"Then, when we got to the top of a hill, they came on again. We watched for just a short while and then they went out again."

Said ~~the~~ Mrs. Breyer: "The shape we saw it looked like it could have been a blimp but we knew it couldn't have been ^N because all we saw were red lights ~~and~~ We decided maybe it was jets but it was moving much too fast to be jets and jets don't fly like that. They fly more in a pattern and we've never seen that many jets around here."

One of the clearest sightings of the lights was made by Jerry LaVigne, 18, who lives in Silver Bay and also works at ^ERserve Mining.

"I was about 5 minutes to 10 and I had just come in the house from outside and happened to look out the window," LaVigne told The ENQUIRER. "I saw four lights quite a ways out over the lake.

"When I first saw them they were all on, and then they went out--one, two, three, four--in order, like that, from left to right."

Fascinated and puzzled, LaVigne called his sister, Carol Martin, 26, to come and look.

"A few minutes later they came on again, much farther to the south and they came on in sequence, one-two-three-four, from left to right," said LaVigne.

"They didn't seem to be moving at all but were more or less stationary. After about 30 or 45 seconds, they went out again in the same order.

"We kept watching and we saw them again--only this time there were eight of them and they were even farther to the south. They were the same color, sort of lightbulb color, and they came on one at a time from left to right. After half a minute or so, they went out again, from left to right, and that's the last we saw of them."

The strangest sighting of all was made earlier in the evening by Mrs. Suzie Thomas and her two sons, Todd, 13, and Tony, 10. They live 3 to 4 miles west of Two Harbors in Knife River Valley, not far from where the Breyens later saw the lights.

"My husband had gone snow sledding and my children and I were watching TV in the dark," Mrs. Thomas told The ENQUIRER. "It was about 9 o'clock and I happened to go into the kitchen to get a drink of water and glanced out the back window.

"I saw lights coming from the back of the field. I thought it was a jet at first and in fact, when I first saw it I screamed at the kids that it was going to crash into our house. But then it swerved and just floated right over the place next door.

"What I saw were about nine lights. Five of them were red and were in a V formation in front and the rest were white, like
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fluorescent, and were sort of following along behind sort of like popcorn. That's the only way I can describe it, or maybe like a caterpillar.

"After they came over the neighbor's house and we went to the front window--and we were just frantic by this time--it was just like the white lights were all around and popping out of each other and over each other.

"This was especially bad for me because about 6:30 that morning I had seen a single, large white light go across our field, real fast and pulsing like a heartthrob.

"I was hysterical and I called a friend, who called the sheriff's office. Deputy Fred Du Fresne came out and he said that as he turned his car around he caught a ~~3~~ glimpse of the ones that were like popcorn."

Du Fresne--who had seen a series of reddish lights one night 15 months earlier while patrolling with Deputy Andrew Haugan--told The ENQUIRER:

"I saw something for just an instant but I couldn't tell you what it was. Mrs. Thomas was quite hysterical when I got there."

Perhaps the strangest aspect of this encounter is Mrs. Thomas' belief that this was not a single object but a group of objects flying together.

"It was crystal clear out that night and you could see stars in between those lights," she said. "You could see through or in between all those lights and I knew none of them were connected. It was just like there was a whole bunch of them."

* * *

Just what attraction northern Wisconsin and Minnesota hold for UFOs is a ~~very~~ mystery.

"I can't think of a single physical phenomena that would cause this kind of thing to happen," said Dr. Olson, who is professor of physics and a specialist in atmospheric electricity at the University of Minnesota at Duluth.

"When you think of lights that turn on and off like this, you have to have wires, you've got to have a spaceship or something out there that moves--and right now there is no known way of explaining it.

"My feeling is that ^{what} ~~was~~ these people are seeing could be an unusual physical phenomena that is just as real as anything could ^{be} ~~be~~ but is not understood by mankind, and it happens so rarely that one cannot get much data on it."

Despite the numerous sightings that were reported and the claims by some witnesses--including police officers--that they saw jets chasing UFOs, the Air Force says no UFOs were detected by radar and no planes were sent up.

Given specific dates and locations of UFO sightings, Air Force Col. James Sunderman, information officer for the Aerospace Defense Command at Colorado Springs and director of public relations for the North American Air Defense Command, said:

"No 'unknowns' were reported and no scrambles were ordered. NO interceptors were sent up."

The ENQUIRER did locate one jet officer who was scrambled after a UFO--in 1959--and was willing to talk about it.

He is Kenneth Leland, principal of Pattison Elementary School in Superior and now a lieutenant colonel in the Minnesota Air National Guard. He serves as a weapons systems officer on F-101 jets, flying out of Duluth Air Force Base.

In 1959 when he and his pilot were scrambled to chase a UFO, they were flying an F-94--and the UFO was right over a NORAD radar

station at Finland, Minn., 60 miles northeast of Duluth.

"At the time there were quite a few UFO spottings and it was our feeling that we did see things," Leland told The ENQUIRER.

"The one we were ~~in~~ involved with was actually over the radar site and the people there were the people we were working with very closely on this.

"We heard that some of the fellows had gone outside and when they looked up, the UFO was hovering over the radar site and from there it ascended ~~it~~ slightly. Then we got involved and the people on the ground said the UFO went from about 1,000 feet high to 200 miles and left the area completely.

"We never saw it except on the radar screen and when we approached it was on its way and it was gone. That's when I heard them on the ground saying it had gone from a very low altitude of about 1,000 feet up to about 200 miles in a very brief amount of time. By the time we got there, it had already gone."

Some people scoff at UFOs, but Douglas County Sheriff Fred ~~John~~ Johnson isn't one of them.

"I am personally interested in UFOs, although I've never seen one, and I think there is definitely something there," Sheriff Johnson told The ENQUIRER in his office in Superior.

"Too many intelligent people have seen them. I don't believe they are some mysterious type of vehicle manufactured somewhere on earth, that possibly the Russians have them or that maybe they are even a device of the United States.

"I don't believe that. The sightings go back too far in history, before aircraft were invented.

"I believe they are from outer space. They are beings from somewhere else. I can't believe we are the only beings in space (MORE

and I think they will probably reveal themselves to us.

"I think it's a sign of the times we're living in. Things are going to happen, I believe."

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Jane Baker, who will be in the tenth grade at Mellen Public High School this fall, told The ENQUIRER:

"I went outside to put out the cats, Scamp and Babe, and when I got between the house and the garage, the sky was all lit up and there were these weird, whining noises.

"I looked over there and there was this object blinking red and green, greenish-blue lights. At first I was curious but then I got scared. I didn't know if I should put the cats in the garage or go back in the house, so I just threw the cats in the garage and ran back into the house and got my dad.

"He went outside, saw the object and went back in and got his shoes on. The first time the lights were duller and the colors were still red and green. But after he got his shoes on and we went back out, there was like an open door in the middle of the object and a bright light was shining out of it.

"I didn't notice if it was cold or what. I was scared."

Asked to describe the banging noises, Jane said:

"It was something like when you go into shop class at school and the kids are working on cars and they're hammering on metal."

Jane said she and her brothers went inside the house with their father when he went to phone Undersheriff Ree.

"I was standing by the door watching my dad when I heard a boom. It wasn't too loud and I ran and looked out the back window and the thing was gone." She and Monty were the only ones to hear the boom.

Asked if the family was frightened by the experience, Jane said:

"I don't know if they were disturbed, but I know I was because my legs kept shaking all night long and I could hardly walk."

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Mrs. Baker said she never went outside during the incident.

"There ~~was~~^{is} a lot of snow and it was too icky out," she told The ENQUIRER.

"I told everybody to stay away from it. I really didn't know what it was and I was kind of ~~hesitant~~² for anybody to go up there and see. It was something different that we didn't know what it was.

"I don't think I was really shook up but I was kind of excited about it."

John Baker, 13, was in an upstairs bedroom with his brother, Monty, 17, listening to a basketball game on the radio at the time.

"All of a sudden Jane came running upstairs saying there was a flying saucer up the road," John told The ENQUIRER.

"I went to the window in my mom and dad's bedroom and looked out. I could see this ~~very~~² thing. It was ~~wasn't~~ a real big bright light, so bright it was burning your eyes.

"I put my shoes on, went downstairs and went outside with my dad in the driveway. Out there we got a better look at this thing. You could just make out the shape. It was just like a dome on top but the light was too bright to see the bottom. It was kind of shining up the snow around it and you could see the trees that were close to it.

"There were some green and blue and red lights around the outside but they were kind of dull. The big bright light was coming from like in the middle of this thing, like a doorway.

"Most of the time it made a kind of screeching noise, and later there was some clanging or tapping noise like tin hitting tin from the doorway."

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Jeff Baker, 11, was in the kitchen making himself a peanut butter sandwich when Jane rushed into the house.

"My dad went out and I put my slippers on and went out with him," Jeff told The ENQUIRER. "All I could see was a bright light with a dome shape and it was making a whining noise.

"The next morning we went up there and the snow was all fluffed up in one spot. John and I had ridden our bicycles up through there the day before and the bicycle tracks were erased in this one spot."

Montgomery Baker, 17, better known as Monty, was too busy listening to ^{a state high school basketball tournament} ~~the basketball~~ game on radio to pay much attention to what was going on outside.

"I guess I wasn't that curious," Monty told The ENQUIRER. "I did go into my mom and dad's room and look out the window. The hill was lit up and you could see something was there.

"I went downstairs later but by then my dad was on the phone and everybody was around him so I went back upstairs. Pretty soon I heard a boom and I went and looked out the window and it was gone.

"Early the next morning we went up there on the road to see if we could see anything. At first I didn't see a thing, but after looking a little while I could see one part of the road where the snow was different.

"The sheriff (Undersheriff George Ree) had driven to the end of the road, about half a mile beyond the house, and back, and his tracks were still there but the bicycle tracks were wiped out in that one area.

"Some men came out a little later and by then the snow was beginning to melt, but they did see where part of the tracks had been wiped out. It was pretty warm that day, not real hot but enough to melt the snow."

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One of the men who visited the Baker home the next morning was
Doc Ante, 55, president of several cab companies and a car rental
firm in Ashland and commander of the local ^ESearch and Rescue Unit of
the Civil Air Patrol.

"There was a sudden thaw that day but when we got there, there
was one area on the road where the snow appeared to be windswept,"
Ante told The ENQUIRER.

"We could see where the bicycle tire prints had more or less
disappeared from this one spot. You could tell the snow had
originally been the same all through the area."

Asked if the bottom of Ree's car could have scraped the snow
in that area when Ree drove to the end of the road and back, Ante
said: ~~Q~~ "No, no, not at all."

Two of the men who accompanied Ante were university students
who interviewed the Baker family for Eugene Lundholm, an investigator
for Dr. Hynek's Center for UFO Studies and a state section director
for the Mutual UFO Network in Quincy, Ill.

What the students learned convinced Lundholm that he should
also talk to the family, and he went to Hellen three days after the
incident occurred.

"I talked to them and watched them very carefully during the
interview," ~~said~~ ^lLundholm, an assistant professor of psychology at
the University of Wisconsin at Superior and the university's chief
librarian, told The ENQUIRER.

"The whole family was still quite excited about it. They didn't
look to me like they were acting. If they were, they ought to be
on stage."

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Undersheriff Ree said he saw several objects while parked on Route 77 in Iron County near the Ashland County line with two Ashland deputies.

"An Iron County squad car with two deputies was there part of the time and we saw one object come from the south going in a northerly direction," Ree said.

"This was the second one and it was a little lower than the first. We watched these two for maybe half an hour.

"Then a [~]third ~~one~~ came from the north going south and that was the lowest one of all. We could see different colored lights on it. That one stayed in the air for approximately 10 or 15 minutes just moving, sort~~a~~ of doing the jig, going up and down, making a big, big U and going up and down again.

"We had two more cars dispatched on U.S. 2 in the northern part of Ashland County and I was transmitting to the deputies in that location. Two deputies were watching at the fire tower on Birch Hill and another was northwest of them on the lake when one of these objects we were watching took off at a very high rate of speed.

~~It~~ "It's going your way," I radioed Deputy Pete Drolson and ~~he~~ all of a sudden, he said, 'I see it coming--' and then his radio blanked out.

"Later, around midnight, we decided to turn our cars around and head back into Mellen when we saw the fourth object, west of Mellen, moving across the sky."

The two Ashland deputies in the 90-foot-high fire tower at Birch Hill near U.S. 2 on the Iron-Ashland county line were John Lemieux and Maynard Whitebird.

MORE

"We had a portable radio with us and when we got to the top of the tower we asked what direction the other officers were seeing these things," Lemieux told The ENQUIRER at the Ashland Sheriff's Office in Ashland, Wis.

"Then we saw one out over Lake Superior. It looked like a group of three different colored lights, very close together. They looked like they were more or less flashing and they might have been 15 to 20 miles out over the lake. It was flopping around, sort of doing figure 8s.

"We watched that for a while and suddenly it dropped straight down and disappeared from sight. Just a few minutes later Pete Drolson said one came right over him low, a bright white light. He was on the lake shore about 4 or 5 miles northwest of us.

"~~I~~ I think the one we saw was the one that passed over Drolson. A little while later ~~Maynard~~ Maynard and I saw g another one for a minute or two when we were coming down from the tower."

Deputy Whitebird, interviewed at his home in Ashland, told The ENQUIRER:

"We saw these funny little lights moving around a little bit. I didn't see them disappear. Lemieux said it dropped straight down but I was looking the other way at the time. Whatever it was, it was gone when I looked back.

"We were monitoring Drolson on our portable radio and we heard the swooshing sound when whatever it was passed over him. He was on the radio before this happened and then we heard this sound and after a while we heard our base radio talking to him. I couldn't hear him for a little while."

Iron County Deputy Sheriff James Wicklund, 26, told The ENQUIRER in an interview at the Sheriff's Office in Hurley, Wis.:

MORE

"Victor Morella, a former deputy, and I were in my squad car on Route 77 in Iron County near the Ashland line around 10:30 or 11 when we heard on the radio that this thing was coming our way.

"We looked in that direction and we saw what looked like a bright star--real, real bright--going from side to side and up and down.

"All the time it was changing color a little bit. It would get a little green and then go back to normal white. This one was off in the direction of Birch Hill, about 13 miles north of us. Then it disappeared.

"We stopped near Tyler Park on Route 77, where we met up with two Ashland deputies and Undersheriff Ree. At this time we saw another object going toward Birch Hill.

"Later, Morella and I saw a third one on our way back to Hurley. This one was going east and it came across the sky as quick as can be. We stopped the car and shut off the lights and all of a sudden it just disappeared. It was just like a shooting star--except that it was shooting upwards."

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