

# THE ANDERSON EVENT

By Donald Roberts  
(Acting MUFON State Director)

(Note: Assisting in the investigation were Wanda Jones and Margaret Pine; Allan Hendry investigated for the Center for UFO Studies. All quotes are taken verbatim from the interview taped on Sept. 14, 1980, with Jerry and Faye McAlister. Tape available for statement verification).

On a warm, clear night in early September of last year, Jerry McAlister, 40, was listening to the report of a wreck on I-85 on his police scanner at his home in Anderson, South Carolina. His wife, Faye, 34, was sleeping beside him in the couple's back bedroom, their five daughters asleep across the hall. McAlister, an electrician by trade, had been laid up with a broken ankle and listened often to sideband and C.B. transmissions as a hobby.

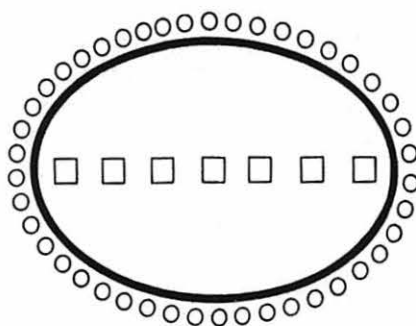
At 4:20 a.m., September 11, McAlister was suddenly startled by an extremely loud noise coming from his backyard, described as "like a helicopter crashing," and, accompanied by a "high pitched whine." That same moment, lights "bright enough to light up the entire back yard, the house, and everything" flooded through the windows.

McAlister got his crutches, moved to the bedroom window and, looking up, saw what he described as a brightly lit object as "high as a two story building," and roughly 70 feet in diameter, hovering approximately 50 feet in the air, and over a group of pines in his back yard.

At this point, McAlister awakened his wife with one of his crutches and called her to the window, whereupon she remarked, "Oh, my God, how beautiful," and went to wake their daughters. Only the oldest, Shirley, 17, arose and returned to the window with her, in time to view the object still hovering.

The object was described as having a row of very bright, white,

stationary windows across the center of the structure, with a row of even brighter white lights rotating horizontally in a clockwise motion around the perimeter. (See sketch.) There was additionally, an oscillating, or "wobbling," motion of the entire object, revealing "grayish-black steel under the windows" when it tilted upwards, this angle diminishing the extreme brightness. McAlister said it appeared to be made of "slick metal," and, was seamless. His wife stated that she saw black between each window, and, all three complained of the lights hurting their eyes during the observation.



At this moment, the horizontally rotating lights around the object's perimeter tilted to a vertical position, like a ferris wheel, the windows remaining horizontal as before. The "flying saucer," as McAlister described it, then "went like a streak of lightning — the sound left, and everything." He estimated that the entire aforementioned sequence of events, described exactly as was told during the interview, lasted approximately 3 minutes.

As the object rapidly moved off, to the NNE, McAlister, his wife, and five daughters, all of whom were now up, left the house through the carport door, turning on the outside light, the first turned on during the occurrence. They all watched from the yard as the receding lights came to a stop at a distance estimated by

McAlister to be approximately 8 miles, this having been covered in roughly 2 to 3 minutes.

## Secondary Events And Witnesses

For the next 2 hours and 45 minutes, until 7:05 a.m., the object remained at its distant location, and was viewed by a number of people, these including the seven members of the McAlister family, four next door neighbors, two from several miles away, and, four deputies of the Anderson County Sheriff's Department.

The deputies, who had been called twice by the McAlister's before their arrival, watched for 2 hours, 10 minutes through binoculars and a 60-power telescope provided by one of the neighbors. Everyone present had ample opportunity to view the objects through both instruments.

McAlister and his wife stated that the windows and rotating lights were still plainly visible and that the wobble was the same as before. The light was still bright enough to hurt his eyes, even at that distance, said McAlister. In fact, he stated that they were "so bright, they still blinded you!"

During this entire period, McAlister said that the object was gradually rising in the distance until 7:05 a.m. when, as he put it, it "shot out of sight and was gone — a beautiful sight."

## Deputies' Comments

The four Anderson County Deputies who witnessed the event had various statements to make on their observations of the far-off light source.

Mike Burton said that he observed the object rising and turning constantly for over an hour, but, could

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(Anderson, continued)

not make out a definite shape. He also said that he observed it changing colors from red, to hazy blue, to bright white, and to yellow! He stated that he thought it was not an aircraft, and, that the object was smaller than the moon, but much larger than a star.

Rock Nation said that he didn't know what it was, and Lt. Joseph Simmons was an observer but has not been questioned as of this writing.

The Department contacted the local Anderson Airport and Greenville Aviation, a little after 5:00 a.m. while the event was in progress, but neither was open. However, the Greenville-Spartanburg Jetport was, but Air Traffic Control there said that radar noted nothing unusual.

A strange note involving only one of the Deputies (who, it is not yet clear) and McAlister's daughter Shirley concerns the observation of a red light, or lights, coming out of the bottom and top of the object. Shirley saw hers on the bottom; the Deputy saw his on the top. McAlister said that the Deputy kept saying he saw red lights, though no one else, save Shirley, did.

(Further statements and comparisons, whether of significance or not, are made here, in the event of their possible future use in this case, or others.)

One of McAlister's more interesting comments, at least to this investigator, was that there was no question in his mind that, as soon as he initially saw the object, he knew that it was a "flying saucer." How he arrived at this conclusion so rapidly is anyone's guess. He also stated that he wasn't scared, just thrilled by his experience.

Saying that he had never believed in UFOs, he interestingly added that his wife's sister did, and that she had read extensively on the subject, and had told him and his wife all about UFOs prior to their sighting.

McAlister also said that he knew it was not a balloon, helicopter, nor any type of known aircraft.

As to the extreme loudness of the initial encounter, described as like a

"helicopter crashing," and "loud as a helicopter starting to take off," he had no explanations as to why such a noise didn't wake his wife or children, though his ears "roared" for 3 days afterwards. From the distance of 110 measured feet from his bedroom window, it must have been awesome, indeed.

The next door neighbor described what he heard as a "muffled" sound, and the cross-street couple said they were awake at that hour yet heard nothing at all.

McAlister said his dog, which was sleeping at the foot of McAlister's bed, didn't bark during the incident, as he could recall, though in the excitement, he wasn't sure.

Questioned as to any time loss, either by any individual or clock, there was none, McAlister stated.

Physiologically, in addition to the previously mentioned effects of the bright lights and intense sounds, McAlister complained of a "terrific headache" all the next day with swollen glands in his neck through the day after that, and burning, reddened eyes. As for the burning eyes, it must be considered that McAlister had been up for a considerable time both prior to and after the event.

A possible EM effect occurring after the event was over, was that for 7 hours, according to McAlister, no modulation (transmission) could get out on his C.B. unit, though his signal was detectable by others. He could receive normally, but only a buzz came through when he attempted to transmit. Further, McAlister's antenna was located almost directly underneath the object's position in his back yard, and if his estimates of its altitude are correct, only a few feet away from its bottom.

The factor of Venus in its relative position at the time of the object's distant hovering is another interesting aspect of this case, as it appeared to rise as Venus did and was only approximately 15 degrees away from the planet's position at the time. Both were visible until approximately the same time that morning when they were lost in the brightening sky.

When questioned about these facts, both McAlister and his wife were sure that Venus was to the right and below the object and was considerably brighter.

### Radiation and S.B.I.

S.B.I., or the "Scientific Bureau of Investigation," based out of New York, and represented by Pete Mazzola, a N.Y. police detective, and Jim Fillow, a retired New Jersey policeman, descended on the scene the day after the event, calling it one of the best documented cases they had come across. Apparently involved to some degree with the popular "That's Incredible" T.V. program, they brought a PSE "lie detector," and some type of geiger counter, leaving behind many more questions than the event itself caused.

McAlister, himself, said that they checked his eyes with a pen-light type flashlight, detecting a glazed effect, and called it "radiation burns." No qualified medical personnel had yet, however, checked anyone for anything at the time of this interview several days later.

Various reports of the McAlister's themselves being radioactive by some vague amount, and even increasing that radioactivity sometime later, as well as radioactivity considerably above normal background levels in the back yard, surfaced after S.B.I.'s visit or visits, whatever the case may be. Mazzola was quoted in one news article as saying that there was a "decided jump on the geiger counter."

Thanks to Allan Hendry of CUFOS, who, upon hearing of all this, brought a counter to the site, he and this investigator finding no levels higher than background, though our readings were made, in all fairness, 3 days after the event.

As for myself, I found the statements made concerning all this somewhat less than agreeable, having worked in nuclear weapons for several years in the U.S. Army and having undergone extensive training in radiation handling and detection procedures.

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times that we would be surprised if it happened to us and

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(Anderson, Continued)

As of this writing, it has been relayed that "That's Incredible" has visited the McAlister's twice now, with one national T.V. airing already.

Information concerning additional sightings in at least five different locations and towns later the same day as the original will be forthcoming as soon as logistically possible, including statements from a number of persons involved, supporting the McAlisters' description of the object.

From 12-9-80 National Enquirer

# Burned by a UFO

A monstrously huge, incredibly bright UFO burned one close-up observer and was seen by 16 others, including four South Carolina policemen.

Described as a "perfect flying saucer," complete with windows and a high-pitched whine, the amazing, slow-moving craft not only left behind awed eyewitnesses but traces of radiation as well.

"It was incredible — absolutely out of this world!" declared 40-year-old Jerry McAlister, who sustained superficial burns on his face after being subjected to the full intensity of the UFO.

The bizarre encounter was investigated by top professionals who say they're absolutely convinced of its authenticity.

McAlister, an electrician in Anderson, S.C., was startled out of a deep sleep at 4:20 a.m. on September 11 when he heard "a loud whining noise" and what sounded like "a thumping of rotating blades."

But what he saw was no helicopter. "The bedroom was flooded with light," he recalled. "It was literally like someone turned on a bright light bulb in the room."

"I went to the window overlooking my backyard and there was a huge craft, two stories high by 70 feet in diameter, hovering above a thicket of 40-foot-high pine trees 100 feet from my home."

"It was a perfect flying saucer! Imagine two huge, deep-dish saucers to-

## 'Perfect Flying Saucer' Amazes 17 Eyewitnesses

gether, facing each other. Around the outer rim of the saucer were windows. And the whole craft was encircled by powerful lights. It was made of a dark gray metal. It was spinning in a clockwise direction. I was absolutely stunned."

In addition to his burned face, McAlister suffered from migraine headaches and a ringing in his ears for four days after the sighting.

His wife and children also saw the object — as did police.

"Four of us deputies in two separate cars arrived at the scene outside McAlister's house and watched the object in the sky," said Anderson County Sheriff's Deputy Mike Burton.

"It was a huge object and moved very slowly. As I watched, it changed colors."

"I watched the UFO for 1½ hours (before it finally disappeared in a



**BURNED ON HIS FACE**, Jerry McAlister holds artist's impression of huge UFO, which he saw hovering 100 feet from his home.

northeasterly direction). There is no earthly explanation for it."

Just hours after the sighting, New York City Police Officer Pete Mazzola and former New Jersey Police-

man Jim Fillow arrived on the scene to investigate.

They are international directors of the Scientific Bureau of Investigation Inc., staffed by off-duty policemen who probe UFO encounters.

"This was definitely a close encounter of the second kind — a UFO where physical evidence is found," said Mazzola.

Geiger counter readings over the exact spot where the UFO was seen to hover showed that the soil was dramatically more radioactive than soil nearby, he said.

He added: "Jerry McAlister had mild facial burns. The skin wasn't broken, but it was seared a bright red due to his long exposure to the very bright light emitted by the UFO."

Mazzola revealed further that all 17 witnesses to the sighting passed truth-detecting tests on a Psychological Stress Evaluator (PSE), which can determine when a person is lying by measuring voice patterns electronically.

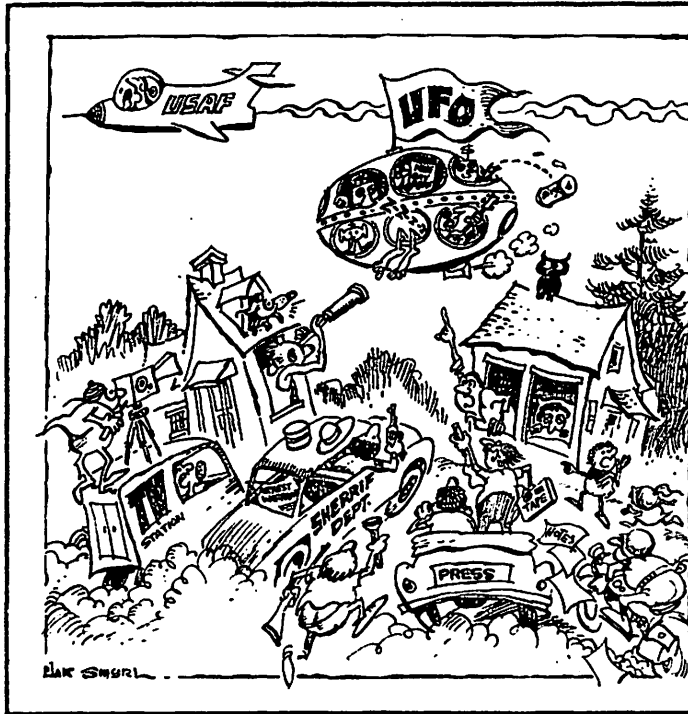
"This case can be classified as absolutely authentic," Mazzola declared.

— JAMES McCANDLISH



## And the Sore Loser Is . . .

Even without the trophy and the flowers, it would be easy to pick out the winner in this picture. Little Michelle Pompey isn't exactly playing the gracious first runner-up as she glares at the new "Little Miss Moonshine," Angie Lent, in New Straitsville, Ohio.



## Humming Noise, Bright Lights

# Anderson County UFO

Associated Press

ANDERSON — A disc-shaped unidentified flying object awakened some Anderson County residents with a humming noise and bright lights before speeding away, they said.

The UFO also was spotted at a distance by several Anderson County deputies and residents of Powdersville and Williamstown who telephoned local radio stations.

Jerry McAlister said he saw the object up close for about three minutes as it hovered over his home near Broadway Lake. "I couldn't see anyone, just all those windows lit up," he said.

Lt. Keith Lerner, a spokesman at Shaw Air Force Base near Sumter, said the Air Force had received no report of a UFO. He said the Air Force "closed its investigation of UFOs back in the 1960s." Radar operators at Greenville-Spartanburg Airport did not record the object, an airport official said.

McALLISTER, 40, said he awoke at 4:20 a.m. when he heard a loud humming noise. "I thought it was a

helicopter crashing in my backyard," he said.

McAlister said he went to the window after hearing the noise and saw the UFO. He awoke his wife, and she awoke one of their daughters.

The object was about 70 feet long, about two stories high and had two rows of windows, all so brightly lit that it was impossible to see anything inside, he said.

"It hovered over the same area for about three minutes," he said. "Then it turned up on its side and sped off like a streak of lightning at treetop level."

THE OBJECT stayed within view, however, and a neighbor, Steve Partain, brought out a telescope. McAlister's wife, Faye, said the UFO's windows were easier to see through the telescope.

"It was beautiful, just beautiful," she said. "It was just like a giant star. But it wasn't a star and it wasn't a weather balloon."

(See UFO, 15-A, Col. 1)

*The Columbia South Carolina STATE PRESS, Sept 17, 1980*

## UFO Is Reported

(Continued From 1-A)

McAlister said he reported the object to the sheriff's department. A short time later, he said, he overheard deputies on his police radio monitor saying they believed the sighting was a prank. He called again and told them to come to his home. Then the officers saw it, he said.

"It was so bright it could hurt the naked eye," McAlister said. "They apologized to me. We watched it for two hours."

Finally, he said, "it went straight up out of sight."

A spokesman for the Anderson County Sheriff's Department said the object was spotted from a great distance by deputies.

The spokesman, who refused to identify himself, said the department's dispatcher quoted a deputy as saying he saw "some sort of light that was a great deal brighter than anything around it."

Asked about a possible investigation, the spokesman replied: "What is there to investigate? An object was seen. An object left. We couldn't get a tag number on it so we couldn't investigate."