

CEI: 1955.

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'Our 1950s X-Files experience'

More than 47 years ago, an unidentified flying object was spotted in the Bexleyheath area by several people. Now a former policeman is doing research on the sightings. **LINDA PIPER** investigates ...

TWO Bexley men, both now in their 60s, have recently been reliving their own X-Files experiences from their childhood.

Rodney Maynard, from Belvedere, who is now 62, has contacted the News Shopper to reveal he was one of the youngsters who saw the UFO featured in our September 4 edition.

Retired policeman John Hanson, from the West Midlands, was appealing for a group of children who saw the craft land in the King Harold's Way area of Bexleyheath in 1955 to get in touch with him, as he is researching the incident for a book.

Mr Maynard was 15 at the time and was working as a labourer on a building site in nearby Streamway.

He remembers the incident vividly.

"We were on our lunchbreak when we heard something was happening in King Harold's Way. So we went up there to have a look.

"This thing had landed in the roadway. It took up the whole width of the road and overlapped onto the pavements.

"It wasn't on the ground, it had about eight massive suckers. The centre was still, but the outer rim was spinning slowly and it had white lights flashing, like a camera flash," he recalled.

"There were about 30 of us staring at it. We could hear it humming.

"It had what looked like windows but the glass was concave and moulded together so you couldn't see in. A couple of

us went forward to try and touch it and it began to spin faster.

"Then it lifted slowly off the ground and hovered above our heads, tilting slightly."

The craft moved slowly until it was over Bedonwell Primary School, where it stayed for about a minute, then shot up into the sky and disappeared.

Mr Maynard, whose 16-year-old brother also saw the craft said: "It was black, sleek and streamlined with a surface like polished metal. It was very fine and beautiful. It certainly wasn't a prank."

He went on: "I have never forgotten it but I don't talk about it because people would think you were barmy.

"We used to talk about it among ourselves but our mums kept telling us we hadn't seen anything."

As well as his brother, Mr Maynard listed several other pals who were also there — "Ron Deadman, Tony Savin, Vic Clarke, Tommy Staggs, we were all there."

Ken Fairman knows just how he feels.

Mr Fairman, from Bexleyheath, says he saw a very similar craft with his pal Roy Beadle three years before, in 1952.

They were out walking Ray's dog at an old farmstead in Bexleyheath known as The Warren (now the Warren Road area).

"It was late afternoon. We had just come home from Bexleyheath School and we had Ray's young border collie with us. We saw it come down and hover about 18ft above the ground. There was no noise at

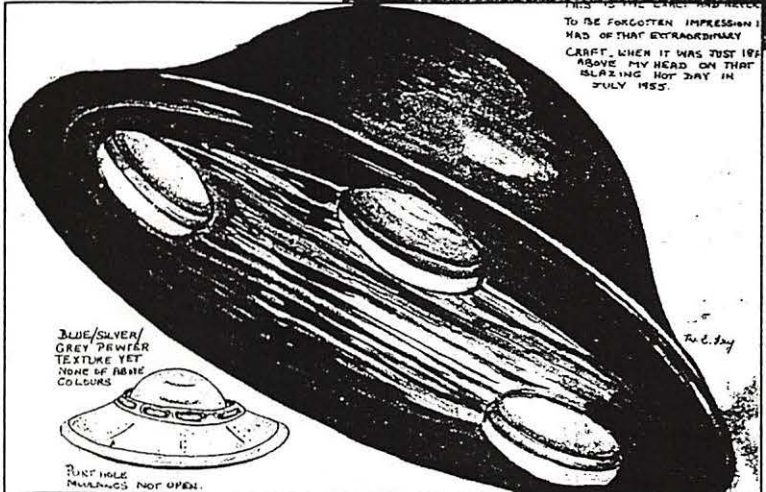
all. We threw ourselves down on the ground and watched it. The dog which was young and usually lively lay down between us. We lost all track of time.

"It was about 20 or 30ft wide, with terrifically bright white lights underneath. It looked very similar to the drawing in your September 4 issue. Then it shot off and disappeared from view before you could click your fingers.

"I could still take you to the exact spot. I don't know how long we watched for but I got told off for being late home for tea. I told my parents but they thought I was crackers."



THIS TO THE LEFT AND BELOW TO BE FORGOTTEN IMPRESSION I HAD OF THAT EXTRAORDINARY CRAFT, WHEN IT WAS JUST 18ft ABOVE MY HEAD ON THAT BLAZING HOT DAY IN JULY 1955.



BLUE/SILVER/ GREY PAINTER TEXTURE YET NONE OF THESE COLOURS

PUNCT HOLE MOUNTINGS NOT OPEN.

● **UFO SPOTTER:** Ken Fairman (top) recalls his sighting and (right) Margaret Fry's sketch which was published on September 4 in News Shopper

● John Hanson is still looking for a group of children who saw the UFO. If you were one of them, or know anything about the incident email him at hanson45@btopenworld.com or write to him at PO Box 10467, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B30 1WF, or call News Shopper on 01689885723