

1956: Jacksonville, FL.

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Multiwitnessed
& extremely "CE"

9 May. Jacksonville, Florida. The real show on May 9th.

"I sure had a fear of being kidnapped."

The real show on May 9th had to be the adventure of Joan Frost of Jacksonville, Florida. Joan was a serious, well behaved, honor student with no interest in the subject of flying saucers, yet, on the night of May 9, 1956, she was the central figure in an episode so strange she hesitated to contact the police even though she experienced a bad scare. Eventually she wrote a letter to her father (who was out of town) knowing that he had complete confidence in her aversion to pranks or lies. The letter refers to some additional witnesses, one of which was her best friend Gertie Wynn.

Joan wrote that she and her friend Gertie had left a dance at 10:15 p.m. and walked to a bus stop close by. It was a neighborhood of few houses and little traffic, in fact at 11:00, at the onset of the UFO incident, no cars or pedestrians were in sight.

At 11:00 p.m. Joan and Gertie noticed two "star-light bodies" pass overhead at a high altitude. Pulsating with light and following one behind the other, the pair of brilliant dots streaked out of sight. A quarter of hour later (the bus still hadn't arrived), according to Joan, the two UFOs:

"...came back and one went up into the other. It came over towards us and dropped lower and lower until it got just over us. It was round and red and had three lights on it. I started to run down the street and Gertie just stood there with her mouth wide open. The thing didn't make a sound, no engine or motor or anything. Just then the bus came and the object rose again. The door (on the bottom) opened up and the other object came out. [The apparent fact that the second object was smaller was confirmed by Joan in a subsequent interview]. The two objects started moving slowly away. There were only a few people on the bus and they and the driver got out. We all watched the objects go for about ten minutes. The bus driver said they couldn't be jet planes because being so low we surely would have heard the jet engines. We knew they weren't jets. Gertie and I skook all night long. We thought we were gonners for sure. Whatever they were they saw us standing there. After our experience, we bought two books on flying saucers and are going to study them." (17.)

A co-worker of Joan's father, Richard Scocchera, learned of the letter and knew the girl wasn't the type of youngster to imagine things. Mr. Scocchera obtained the information and forwarded it to UFO researcher Leonard Stringfield. The CRIFO chief was impressed with the story and contacted the school girl for more details. Joan wrote back, telling Stringfield the area of the sighting was exceptionally dark because there was no street lights. The

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object's size, therefore, was difficult to determine although it was fairly low in the sky, perhaps as low as 3½ telephone poles placed end to end. She didn't know the names of the passengers or the driver of the bus but she still urged Stringfield to investigate, informing him the vehicle was the "22" bus of the Jacksonville Coach Company that operated on the Lake Shore run at 11:00 p.m. on May 9, 1956.

She penned:

"The door on the bottom appeared to be like a bomb bay, shaped in a long square with only three cracks visible. As it came down toward us, and while in the sky, it appeared to have three white lights which were pulsating. However, as it tipped downward and hovered above us it seemed to be surrounded by an eerie deep red mist of light." (18.)

The Jacksonville case was so sensational it called for efforts to confirm its reality. There were many obvious questions. What did Gertie have to say? Did the bus exist, or the driver and passengers?

Mr. C.W. Fitch of Cleveland, Ohio, volunteered to carry out a follow-up investigation of the Jacksonville case, eventually identifying the bus driver and obtaining his confirmation of the incident. The driver, Wallace L. Marlowe, had no trouble recalling the event which he said had given him an eerie feeling. He told Mr. Fitch he saw a couple of strange objects in the air above the two girls as he drove up to the bus stop. The girls, he remembered, quickly boarded the bus and seemed badly frightened. The two, he said, exclaimed that they feared a kidnapping was imminent. Amazed, Mr. Marlowe stared skyward at the mysterious objects. One of the UFOs was much larger than its companion. Its not clear from the driver's testimony but it is assumed both UFOs had the same general appearance in spite of the size difference: round-shaped and glowing red on bottom and white on top. After hovering for awhile, the UFOs zoomed soundlessly out of sight upward.

Gertie told investigator Fitch she had a strong impression someone or something was about to carry her off, adding: "It was also an exciting feeling of something different." (19.)

Joan also contributed additional details to Fitch, stating that the "door" in the bottom of the big UFO seemed sizeable and was very visible because a bright red light, flame-like in color, was shining through the crack that outlined the opening.

Neither girl stared very long at the UFOs because the "kipping feeling" enveloped them causing them to panic. The bus evidently had made a timely arrival.

Locating the two passengers on the bus seemed an impossible task but Fitch had some luck and found both persons. One was a Mr. W.T. Hill and the other as a C.R. Lewis. Unfortunately neither man wanted to be quoted in print but they did talk freely to Fitch off the record. Hill and Lewis confirmed the stories told by the girls and the bus driver. (20.)

Are abduction stories true?

Incidents like the Jacksonville case provide evidence that the abduction stories often reported in the 1980s and 90s might well be real events. That's a fantastic thought!

Mr. C.W. Fitch of Cleveland, Ohio, who used to investigate UFOs for Leonard Stringfield's CRIFO group in the 1950s, and now was a member of Coral Lorenzen's APRO, had his memory jarred when news of the Hills encounter came to his attention. For Fitch, the Hill's story was not that improbable. He told Coral about an impressive multi-witnessed case that had taken place in May 1956 that might have a bearing on the reality of the Hills' claims. It had to do with the possibility UFOs might be kidnapping people.

The case in question, which Fitch personally investigated at the time, occurred on May 9, 1956. The location was Jacksonville, Florida.

This story concerns the adventure of Joan Frost and her girl friend Gertie. Joan was a serious, well behaved, honor student with no interest in the subject of flying saucers, yet, on the night of May 9, 1956, she was the central figure in an episode so strange she hesitated to contact the police even though she experienced a bad scare. Eventually she wrote a letter to her father (who was out of town) knowing that that he had complete confidence in her aversion to pranks or lies. The letter refers to some additional witnesses, one of which was her best friend, Gertie Wynn.

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(xx.) *Orbit*. Vol. III, No.4. 6 July 56. p.3.

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In her letter to Stringfield, Joan also said:

“The door on the bottom appeared to be like a bomb bay, shaped in a long square with only three cracks visible. As it came down toward us, and while in the sky, it appeared to have three white lights which were pulsating. However, as it tipped downward and hovered above us it seemed to be surrounded by an eerie deep red mist of light.” (18.) Ibid.

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(xx.) Stringfield, Leonard. *Saucer Post 3-0 Blue*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Civilian Research Interplanetary Flying Objects (C.R.I.F.O.), 1957. p.36.

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