

NEAR-LANDING IN 1946 IN JOHANNESBURG

UNUSUAL OBJECT, AND ENTITIES, OBSERVED IN SOUTH AFRICA

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John is a field investigator for CONTACT (UK), and a member of the UFOIN team, who is active in the East Kent region where he worked with the late Sqdn. Ldr. Alastair Prevost. This is his first published report in FSR, which he prepared from material forwarded to UFOIN following the major UFO series in the *Daily Express*, and from interviews with one of the witnesses.

JOHANNESBURG, the "commercial capital" of South Africa, stands at more than 6000 feet above sea level, thus making it the highest city in the continent. It is famous for its surrounding gold mines, and is densely populated. A percentage of the housing is, therefore, "high rise" in nature, in order to accommodate this great influx of people.

In 1946 the area around Dalver Street was typical of the city at that time, with many flats above shops forming a square block that contained some waste ground in the centre. One corner of the square was taken up by the Langum Hotel, a building of some 45 feet. This was the scene of a most peculiar encounter of the third kind that was to befall Vida Goldsworthy and her younger sister, Mrs. Naudwin.

The younger of the two girls moved from Britain to South Africa before World War II, leaving behind her sister Vida, who was six years older and then unmarried. After her marriage to a South African, Mr. Naudwin, she soon invited Vida over for a holiday which was scheduled to last for some three months. This commenced in May 1939, but the onset of the war interfered with this, with all ships being commandeered for military purposes. Vida found herself stranded and had to make the best of it and sit things out. She obtained a job working for the government and took a flat with her sister in Dalver Street, since Mr. Naudwin was quickly drafted into the army. Here they continued to live for the next seven years.

In placing the date of the incident we are certain that it happened in 1946, because it was shortly before Mr. Naudwin came out of the forces. It was also during the summer months, thus placing the incident well before the first UFO publicity and the resultant excitement and, in some instances, hysteria.

It was a warm, still night, about 12.15 am (local time). There were many stars visible. Vida and her sister had been to the local cinema and, on their return decided to take their dog for a walk before retiring to bed. They gained entrance to the waste ground behind their flat by way of an area where a demolished house once stood. They released the dog from the lead and it ran on to the waste ground without hesitation while the two women stood on

the pavement at the entrance, chatting idly about the picture they had just seen.

Suddenly there was a loud thud, as if something had struck the ground somewhere in the darkness before them. Anxious in case an African had thrown something at their dog, they looked around. It was then that Mrs. Naudwin saw the object and drew her sister's attention to it as it hovered over the Langum Hotel by only about five feet, being therefore about 50 feet above the ground. Both women were mystified, having never before seen anything remotely similar, but they were not unduly alarmed. They automatically considered it was some new kind of military device, which was odd, but not out of place in the post war situation. At the time the significance of what they were observing was by no means apparent, and it was much, much later before this was realised.

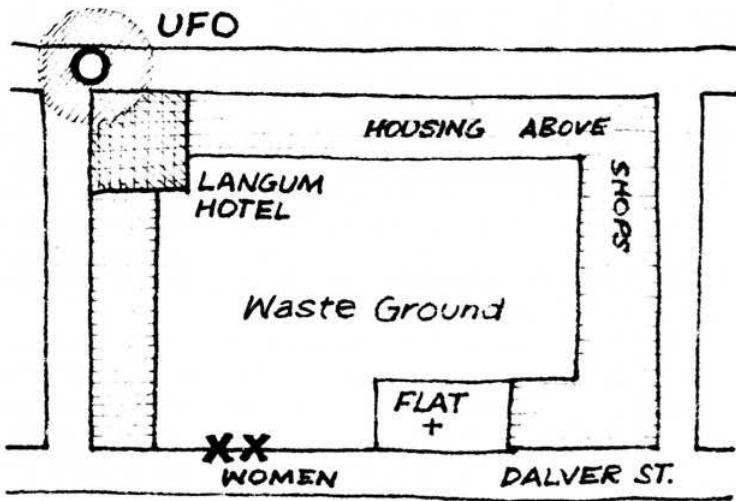
The Object

The thing that hovered, partly over the hotel and partly over the roadway behind it (some 200 yards away) was basically rounded. In the shape of a saucer with a round ball in the centre. When first seen the ball was split exactly in two by the central saucer shape.

The witnesses were able to obtain a very clear view of the object as it hovered quite silently. Whether or not the "thud" they had heard was connected with the object is not known. In size it was about 25 to 30 feet across and about 15 feet high. The rim was of a brownish colour while the centre of the saucer was white. The central ball was a bright golden colour.

Having dismissed it as a military vehicle the women began to lose interest. They had only watched it for a few seconds but already their gaze began to move away from it. It was then that they noticed that the dog was by their feet and very calm.

At this point they heard a clicking noise and, immediately following this, the central ball began to drop down *through* the saucer shape, with a noticeable gap, and stopped when it was directly level with the roof of the hotel. There was no visible hole



through which the sphere could have passed. The underside of the saucer was clearly seen as the object itself seemed to be tilted slightly away from the women (thus explaining, perhaps, the discrepancy between the estimated height of the sphere as 15 feet and the gap between object and rooftop as 5 feet). The ball remained in this detached position for some seconds and then there was a second loud click.

it was a military craft of some type. As the ball raised itself above the main body a further dimension was added to the mystery by the appearance of two figures. They had seemingly entered the gap below the sphere during its passage upwards through the main body of the object.

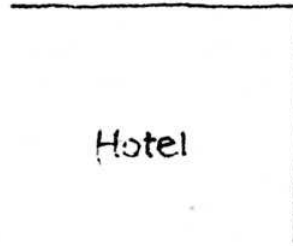
These entities were human in appearance and could have passed quite easily for ordinary persons. They were almost exact replicas one of the other. Estimated to be about seven feet tall they had a fair European skin colouration (possibly Scandanavian?) The hair was short, fair and wavy, and the beings were well built. Vida Goldsworthy describes them as "very good looking."

The figures were wearing an all-white uniform of some type which was gathered in the middle by a brownish belt (possibly with a buckle fastener). There were two pockets at chest height, one on either side of the tunic top, and there were pleats running down the sides. Vida Goldsworthy also feels that there was a line of buttons down the middle of the tunic top, but she is not certain of this. There was a stiff "stand-up" collar at the neck. The legs were mostly obscured, as also were the sleeves, which throughout the encounter were behind the backs of the entities.

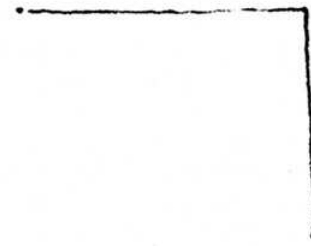
Phase 1



Phase 2



Phase 3



The ball now moved upwards through the saucer again, although once more no hole was apparent, and finally it detached itself above the saucer. This, it was estimated, was some 8 or 9 feet above the main body of the object. The sphere was then seen to be supported by two dark "metal" pillars. They gave off no light and it was just an impression that they were made of metal, but Vida Goldsworthy clearly recalls seeing the sky between them.

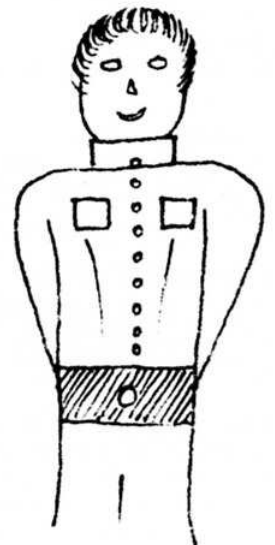
When the sphere was supported above the main body the witnesses became aware that the object was in fact rotating in an anti-clockwise direction. It may well have been doing this throughout the observation. The object retained the shape until it disappeared from view (which was accomplished, after some two minutes, by simply floating away out of view behind the hotel).

The Entities

By now the witnesses were aware that they were watching something extraordinary, but still believed

Above: The swift sequence of events

Right: A sketch of one of the entities, based on the witness's recollection more than 30 years after her brief encounter



By their body angle and their posture the witnesses felt that the entities were standing on a raised surface and leaning against an invisible rail of some kind. There was a distinct impression that the beings were watching the two women throughout this phase, although they were never seen to move.

Conclusions

The women discussed the experience between themselves, but mentioned it to nobody else, not even Mrs. Naudwin's husband when he finally returned home. They maintained their belief that the object was a secret military device, and Vida Goldsworthy still believes this to the present day.

Vida Goldsworthy returned to Britain in 1950. Now aged 78, articulate and intelligent, she lives in Kent. She never married. So far it has not been possible to trace her sister. She has recently moved to another part of South Africa, but as soon as we have the new address attempts will be made to obtain her side of the story. However, the event did take place some 32 years ago and there is no certainty that she will recall it as clearly as her sister.* This is especially true in view of the lack of importance both women placed upon it at the time.

It was only when Vida Goldsworthy read the *Daily Express* series that she decided to divulge her story and she has shown no wish for her story to be

* [Why shouldn't she recall it clearly? we should bear in mind that she was the one who *first saw the UFO and drew her sister's attention to it*, which would seem to indicate she was possibly the *selected witness*—EDITOR]

publicised on a wide scale. She appears to possess little knowledge of the UFO subject, and this was apparent by the way she struggled for the right words to describe the object. After several attempts the best she could offer was "a round thing with half a ball on the top, and half a ball on the bottom," but her drawings make the classic flying saucer shape quite clear.

So far as can be ascertained Vida Goldsworthy has neither psychic experiences, nor any other encounters with the UFO phenomenon. It remains to be seen what the situation is for her sister.

One interesting thing to ponder is the nature of the "thudding" noise that aroused the witnesses' attention. It should be noted that there were few windows at the back of the buildings overlooking the waste ground, and virtually no street lighting. Consequently it would be quite natural for the object not to have been seen by anyone, including the women. Did the noise, and the subsequent clickings (seemingly unique in such incidents) act as a signal aimed quite specifically at these witnesses? American ufologist Ted Bloecher has remarked how humanoid encounters often give the appearance of being stage managed. Things take place precisely where someone can see them, although it would have been very easy for the event to have occurred without any possibility of witnesses. It is almost as if the entities want to make sure they *are* seen. In this case — if, as seems likely, we are dealing with the UFO phenomenon — something seems to have gone out of its way to make sure that two middle aged women saw what it wanted them to see that Summer's night.

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