

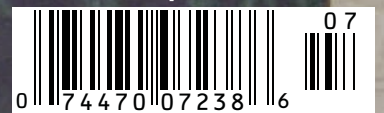
Jesse Marcel: WHAT I SAW THAT NIGHT

UFO

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July 2006



Vol. 21 No. 5

GARY MCKINNON
UNLOCKING THE SECRETS

T H E

P H O E N I X

On March 13, 1997 in Phoenix, Arizona thousands of people reported seeing triangular objects, some more than a mile wide, silently traversing the skies above them. The Phoenix UFO flap would eventually draw the attention of the worldwide media, as well as dramatically polarize many area residents seeking to explain what had happened in real-world terms. For most of those who were there, the over-flight of those ominously quiet unidentified flying objects still remains unexplained.

Dr. Lynne D. Kitei, M.D. was one of those residents. She was able to provide a videotape frequently seen as part of television coverage of the event for several months thereafter. She shot the videotape herself, from her home.

But for Dr. Lynne (the name given her during her TV-health-reporting days), the story had begun more than 2 years earlier when she looked out her bedroom window and saw three glowing orbs in a triangle formation, an event that would repeat itself for her many times. When I spoke to Dr. Lynne by phone recently, she began by giving an overview of her own life, since it is so relevant to the events she and thousands of other Arizonans are still struggling to come to grips with after more than 9 years of wondering.

“What’s really ironic about this whole thing,” Dr. Lynne said, “is that I had no interest or knowledge of this topic at all. If anything, I kind of shied away from it because of all the horror stories, the abduction stories. I was too busy devoting my heart and pocket to community education.”

Dr. Lynne is a physician who specializes in community education on health issues. Prior to attending medical school, she worked in professional musical theater, appearing with Gordon MacRae in *Oklahoma* and Betty Grable in *Guys and Dolls*, as well as understudying for Barbara Eden in *The Sound of Music*. She combined her skills as an entertainer with her medical background and went to work doing medical reporting for NBC, as well as in syndication.

Some years after moving to Phoenix in 1980, she produced an international health prevention/education series called *You Make It!* through her own company, Health Education Learning Programs (H.E.L.P., Inc.), aimed at changing negative peer pressure for youths into a more positive peer pressure designed to keep them away from substance abuse and other risky behaviors. The award-winning series is currently being distributed by Discovery Education and includes appearances by basketball stars Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan, the cast of *Beverly Hills 90210*, and singer Paula Abdul.

NIX LIGHTS AND DR. LYNNE

But Dr. Lynne says that nothing in her background up to that point prepared her for what would happen on February 6, 1995. “I remember the date because it happened to be the eve of my birthday,” she said, “and I thought wow, what a neat birthday present this is. Both my husband—who is also a physician and a healthy skeptic, as I am—and I witnessed a very close sighting of amber orbs in a triangle formation very close to our home.

“We live mountainside in Paradise Valley. It’s nestled in the mountain range, but one of our views is the Phoenix skyline. We see a very nice view from the window in our bedroom. One wall is a window, so if anything pops up out there that’s unusual, we get to see it. We’re very familiar with what planes look like—and helicopters and streetlights, and car lights, and so forth.”

Dr. Lynne said her husband, a normally unflappable prominent physician, called her to the window in a voice that was uncharacteristically alarmed. “I quickly grabbed my towel from the bath,” Dr. Lynne said, “and ran to the window. We both witnessed three amber orbs, one on top and two closely aligned, about 50 to 75 feet above a private desert area, a gated area, and needless to say, I was really taken aback.

“It was something that I just couldn’t imagine. It was just so awesome and unusual. I immediately looked underneath [the lights] to see if anybody was creating this array, and it was pitch black. I thought to myself: ‘If I don’t get a camera, nobody’s going to believe this.’ ”

So she made a dash to get her 35 mm camera from the closet just as her husband called out that one of the lights was starting to disappear. “When we watched the orb disappearing,” she said, “it didn’t budge at all. It was quite extraordinary. It just started to fade very slowly from view. But I felt like it was still there after it disappeared. I got on to the balcony and shot a quick picture of the two bottom orbs and immediately noticed an eerie silence, as if time had stopped. It was quite amazing.

“As intently as I was watching these two bottom orbs—and it took me years before I shared this with anyone, because it sounds so absurd—but it felt like something was watching *me*. And going through my mind at that moment, I thought: ‘Who are you? What are you? Do you know that I’m here? I’d love to meet you.’ Those were the exact thoughts that were going through my brain. The next thing that I remember is that the left bottom orb started to disappear.”

At which point, Dr. Lynne took one last picture.

BY SEAN CASTELL

WE CAN MOVE FORWARD IN OUR

"I didn't know who to show it to, who to share it with," she said. "I kind of thought about it for the next 2 years and looked out periodically from our bedroom window, but I saw nothing similar to this phenomenon at all."

Then 2 years later, just 2 months before the mass sighting of March 13, 1997, Dr. Lynne again saw three amber orbs, this time in the far west. "This time they were at a distance and they were in a row," she explained, "but equidistant from each other."

"I thought to myself, 'Jeez, they're amber, they're in a formation, they're hovering for minutes—strangely similar to 1995.' And as I watched, each one—from right to left—very slowly seemed to implode from the outside inward until it was like a tiny dot. One, two, three and they're gone."

The three lights returned the following evening, and this time Dr. Lynne was able to shoot 18 seconds of video before her battery went dead. The lights disappeared before she could charge the battery, then appeared again about 8:30, just as her husband was returning from a medical board meeting.

This time Dr. Lynne grabbed her 35 mm and was rewarded by the sudden appearance of six amber orbs, a massive span over a mile wide, that appeared directly above the earlier three.

"It was unnerving," Dr. Lynne said. "I started to shake. My first thought was, 'Is this the mother ship? Is this a fleet?' I didn't sleep well that night."

While the incident was happening, Dr. Lynne had called the Phoenix area's main daily newspaper, the *Arizona Republic*, saying they should hasten to see the lights for themselves. But as soon as the words were out of her mouth, the lights were gone. By the next morning, Dr. Lynne began, in earnest, her search for a logical explanation.

"I called the *Arizona Republic* again," she said, "and I asked them if anybody had called the night before to report strange lights in front of South Mountain. The operator said, 'Nope, nobody called.' Well, I know I called. So I said, 'Well, we did see something strange. I'm just trying to hunt out what that might be.'"

The newspaper operator suggested that Dr. Lynne try calling nearby Luke Air Force Base to find out if there had been any maneuvers the previous night that weren't reported to the public. Dr. Lynne said she viewed the suggestion as a reasonable one and called the Air Force base. She spoke to a female lieutenant.

"And from the get-go," Dr. Lynne said, "she had an attitude. She said the lights didn't come into Luke Air Force Base and they didn't come out from here, so the Air Force had nothing to do with it."

When Dr. Lynne asked to be referred to a UFO organization, the female lieutenant again could offer no help. But she did suggest that Dr. Lynne try calling the local airport, since the sighting had taken place near there in front of South Mountain.

"Now it was a mission," Dr. Lynne said. "I had to find out what this thing was. Again, I wouldn't have been so persistent if it wasn't so unusual. And certainly, because I had experienced the 1995 sighting and hadn't had that explained to me, I was more curious than ever."

"I got the FAA on the phone," she continued, "and told them the story." After what seemed like an eternity on hold, Dr. Lynne was connected to an air-traffic controller who immediately asked, "Did you see the six lights that were equidistant from each other hovering in a formation last night at 8:30?"

The details of what they had both seen meshed perfectly, and the air-traffic controller offered up the information that in spite of a clear visual sighting of the objects, none of them were visible on radar, but they were in restricted airspace, which he and his fellow controllers had thought was very strange. Through binoculars, they had all seen six points of light, totally equidistant from each other; a massive span moving in synchrony slowly behind South Mountain.

"So I asked, 'What were they?' " Dr. Lynne recalled. "There was silence for a few seconds, and then he said, 'Beats me.' I said, 'Wait a minute. You're an air-traffic controller. You're supposed to know what's in our airspace. And you don't know what they were?' And he said, 'No, actually, I don't. And no one else does either.'"

Having sought help from the news media, the military, and the FAA and having no luck with any of them, what was next on the program? The answer came in the form of more sightings for Dr. Lynne. The mysterious orbs returned every night that January of 1997, and she continued videotaping and photographing their appearances, which reached a halt by the beginning of February.

Throughout that time she had built up a goodly collection of videotapes and photos and had begun to show them to her friends, which eventually led her to a former president of the area Mutual UFO Network group, which in turn led to Dr. Lynne's making an appointment for Friday, March 14, 1997 to share her photographic evidence with a MUFON field investigator.

"At any rate," Dr. Lynne recalled, "Thursday night arrives, March 13. A beautiful, quiet spring night. Thousands of people statewide are outside doing their thing, whether it's jogging or playing baseball or going for swim meets, or whatever, and purposely looking up at the sky to see the Hale-Bopp comet, which was very clear in the northwest sky, when they also saw a massive phenomenon or object blocking out the stars. Some people actually describe seeing a craft with gunmetal, with windows. Other people saw, just as the air-traffic controller described, lights that seemed to be attached to something—but they couldn't see what it was attached to—glide right over their heads at 30 miles an hour.

"Some people saw it take it take off at a tremendous speed," Dr. Lynne continued. "Others said they could have thrown a rock at it, it was so low. Totally, totally silent. That's what really got people. We also have a number of reports of people coming up the main highway I-10 towards Phoenix from Tucson, who saw this thing right over them. The wings of this object were over not only the highways in both directions, but also over the land on either side of the highways. It was more than a mile wide, maybe even 2-miles wide. So we're talking incredible, extraordinary technology here which traversed throughout an entire state over many hours."

For Dr. Lynne, however, the night of March 13 was nearly uneventful. "About 8:20 I noticed one lone light in the



Dr. Lynne speaking at the Barnes & Noble book store in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania in July 2004.

far west," she said, "just like I did that first night in January. I didn't jump to film it because it was only the one light, and I figured I had enough in the can to show the MUFON guy the next morning anyway."

At 9:20 she saw one lone light far south. Then at 10 P.M. the familiar pattern of six lights again popped up suddenly in the same formation as the previous January. Dr. Lynne rushed out with her video camera and captured three lights above the city in a triangle formation.

"I was thrilled," she said, "because I had something to show that was similar to 2 months before for the investigator the next morning.

At the International Cosmic Conference with fellow researchers and journalists Paola Harris, Massimo Fratini, (left) and Jaime Maussan.



When Dr. Lynne arrived for her appointment that fateful Friday morning, the first question the field investigator asked her was, “Did you see the big sighting last night?” She replied that she had seen something similar to her previous sightings.

“No, you don’t understand,” he said. “While hundreds if not thousands of people were outside looking up at the Hale-Bopp comet, this mile-wide formation of lights went right over their heads.” He said that his phone had been ringing off the hook, and that NBC would be arriving to interview him in half an hour.

“And I said, whoa, you know? I had done health reporting in the early 1980s for NBC and they might know who I am. I didn’t know what we were dealing with. I didn’t know if it was military or a hoax or whatever. Besides, it’s not about me, it’s about the data. I’ve always stuck to that.”

Dr. Lynne decided to leave before NBC arrived but said she was willing to answer questions by phone and left a copy of her videotape behind to be used by the media without giving her name. “By 4:30 the next day,” she said, “my video was plastered on every news station as the lead story. It was pretty exciting stuff.”

Videos taken by other witnesses began to surface soon after, and Dr. Lynne was very happy to realize that thousands of people now reported seeing the same phenomena

that had haunted her for more than 2 years. It was a week later during a TV news program that again featured her video, that Dr. Lynne first saw Jim Dilettoso, a local computer specialist and longtime UFO researcher.

“And he happens to be showing—and this is the first I’ve heard about this—he is showing these amber orbs in triangle formations from all over the world. I had no idea. This was the first time I had heard that these phenomena were appearing worldwide, and that other countries were much more open to these phenomena as being unearthy. As a scientist, I was now really curious. What is going on here? I know what I saw, and I know I had no idea this was happening. I wanted to find out.”

Dr. Lynne contacted Dilettoso and he agreed to examine her photographic evidence and to keep her name out of it. “I asked him to please keep this confidential. Until I could do my own homework and know what we’re dealing with, I really did not want to publicly announce any of this. And he respected that. Talk about integrity.” Dr. Lynne said that Dilettoso kept her secret for 7 years, in spite of pressure to reveal the source behind her videotapes and photos.

Meanwhile, in the wake of the March 13 mass sighting, Frances Emma Barwood, a Phoenix city councilwoman who was also the vice-mayor of the city, reported receiving over a thousand calls seeking an explanation for the

IT IS HAPPENING WORLDWIDE

strange over-flight of UFOs. “Lo and behold,” Dr. Lynne said, “at a council meeting, she finally just asked a simple question.

“She did not see the sighting, and she had no preconceived notion about anything. She was just asking, for the sake of her constituents, that maybe they should look into this? She got plastered to the wall, I have to tell you. When I saw the ridicule and the snickering and the discrediting that was going on with people who did come forward, including Frances, I was horrified. I was very content to just stay anonymous, do my own homework, and try to find out what was going on.”

Then on June 18, 1997 an article appeared on the front page of *USA Today* about the Phoenix Lights, which started a deluge of worldwide media coverage. The Arizona Air National Guard quickly released a cover story, saying that an Air National Guard group visiting from Maryland had been in the area sending off flares over the Barry Goldwater Gunnery Range at the time of the March 13 mass sighting.

It was suggested that perhaps the military could duplicate the events of that night by dropping flares there again. “A week before the third anniversary of the Phoenix Lights event,” Dr. Lynne recounted, “headlines in the newspapers and on radio and television news programs said that three Air National Guard groups were coming into town to send off flares and show everybody the Phoenix Lights. We were ready. We were waiting. We were really thrilled that this was finally going to happen. Myself, and others included, were very open to an explanation.

“So, hey, if the military did it, terrific. Do it again. The media was out in force. We were told that [the Air National Guard units] were supposed to do a 2-week run, but after media and witness scrutiny, by the second day they scrapped the whole thing.

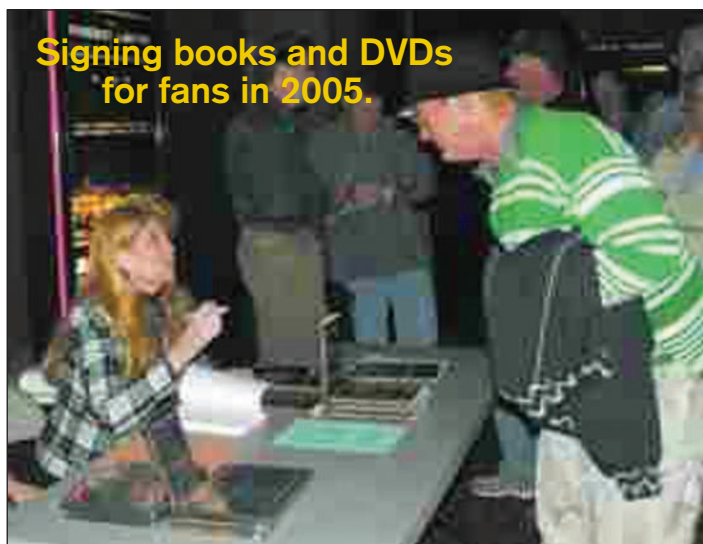
“It just was significantly different from what we had photographed and witnessed. They did not do the line formation. They tried to make a triangle, but it was upside down and fell apart immediately. Again, flares don’t keep formation. They drift and they fall and have smoke trails that you can see. They also illuminate the ground. That’s what they’re supposed to do.”

Meanwhile, Dr. Lynne had been keeping a journal since shortly after the March 13 event which had grown to a whopping 750 pages. She kept intricate notes about her experiences and research as she educated herself about the UFO phenomenon.

She boiled all that down to 220 pages for her book *The Phoenix Lights: A Skeptic’s Discovery That We Are Not Alone* (Hampton Roads Publishing, 2004) and finally went public with her name after years of being referred to only as “Dr. X.” Along with a very detailed history of what happened to her as she dove headfirst into researching UFOs, Dr. Lynne also described making a very personal connection to whatever was flying around in the skies over Phoenix.

“When I was interviewing witnesses,” she said, “I was taken aback when a number of witnesses shared with me that they had had childhood near-death experiences that had been reawakened by the Phoenix Lights. Well, I did, too, which I go into detail about in my book. I had long buried the memory of it for over 40 years, but it was definitely reawakened by the Phoenix Lights event.

“And I thought, jeez, could there possibly be a connection between all unexplained phenomena? Be it a near-death experience, an out-of-body experience, or unexplained aerial phenomena—all of which have a mystical light associated with the experience.



“What really touched me very deeply, because again I am an experimenter myself, was the after-effect. I realized that I had been transformed at a very early age, at 8 years old, after my near-death experience. I had never really thought about it. It was just part of my life.

“But here I was, seeing that other people worldwide had had these unexplained phenomena experiences. I started calling them all UPs, an UP Experience. Because the positive after-effects, the enlightenment, the awakening that happens within an individual who really experiences an UP, whatever it is, is so profound, so important, so positive.

“That’s one of the major reasons that I felt I had to come forward, to impart that information. I don’t know who is doing this. I don’t know what it is. But I know that it *is*, and it’s happening worldwide.”

Dr. Lynne said that after looking into the data, she found many more instances of both children and adults who felt their own personal connection to the phenomenon. “They felt they were so lucky to see it, that it was awesome and exciting. Especially when it passed over them, there was a transformation at that moment, in real time, of their whole perception of what was going on.

“This was an incredible experience that they felt they were so fortunate to have had, and kids even wanted to have their parents jump into cars and chase after the phenomena. Many people worldwide have had experiences out of our reality box that are real to them. So it’s time to get this out in the open: Address it, accept it, and study it.”

Along with her book, Dr. Lynne has also put together a documentary film that deals with both the Phoenix Lights and the UFO phenomenon in general. “And the message,” she said. “That’s the bottom line here, the message is so important, which people worldwide are getting. Whoever is doing this is not only waking us up to their presence, but they’re also waking us up to what we’re doing to ourselves and the planet. And how we’re intimately connected to the universe, to the earth, and to each other—so much more than we had ever imagined. It’s time to wake up to that and really get our act together before we destroy ourselves.”

The documentary is also called “The Phoenix Lights,” and is available at Dr. Lynne’s website, www.thephoenixlights.net, where you can also view a 2-minute trailer. The film has already played to packed houses in Scottsdale, Arizona and won some international film festival awards. Dr. Lynne is currently revising the film and looking for a theatrical distributor. Besides numerous appearances on the Travel and Channel and National Geographic TV, she has also taken part in the making of a new DVD called *UFOs Unplugged*, which was due out in late May of this year and stars paranormal seeker Dan Aykroyd.

While the ultimate explanation for the Phoenix Lights has yet to reveal itself, Dr. Lynne made reference to another interesting theory. “Some experts have speculated that there’s a gateway in this area,” she said. “The area is very close to the Estrella Mountains. And by the way, *estrella* means star in Spanish. How did it get its name?”

After the mass sighting, Dr. Lynne called some Native American acquaintances who lived in the area where the light formations she has photographed seem to be located and asked if they had seen the Phoenix Lights.

“They started to laugh, and I asked, ‘Is that funny?’ They said, ‘Are you kidding? We’ve been looking up at them for centuries.’ They called them ‘light beings’ or ‘star people.’

“There are cultures right here, Native-American cultures, that feel these orbs are from the spirit world and that they’re actually their ancestors. They’re not afraid of them. They welcome them. And they call the Estrella area ‘the gateway to the stars.’ ”

It is now incumbent upon the rest of us to prepare ourselves, according to Dr. Lynne. “If we are not alone, who’s preparing us for what’s ahead?” she asked. “I think one of the biggest fears has been that people will panic. I hope that my heartfelt endeavor will help others prepare for what’s ahead emotionally and psychologically. If they educate themselves, the fear factor will dissipate and we can move forward in our own evolution.” **UFO**

Visit Sean Casteel’s UFO Journalist website at www.seancasteel.com. Casteel is the author of *UFOs, Prophecy and the End of Time* and *Signs and Symbols of the Second Coming*. His most recent book is *The Excluded Books of the Bible*, which deals with the Gnostic scriptures. All three books are available online at Amazon.com and via the Filament Book Club at www.filamentbooks.com

