

Salem Low-Flying Triangle UFO

An Oregon MUFON Case Study

by

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Abstract

Keywords: Triangle Shape—Multiple Witnesses—Low-flying UFO—Strobing Lights—Circulating Lights

Description	A triangle-shaped UFO with white strobing and circulating lights flew low over two witnesses at different locations.
Witnesses	Jackie Montgomery (pseudonym) and husband Mike Montgomery (pseudonym).
Time and Date	January 27, 2007 at about 6:38 to 6:55 PM.
Place	Downtown Salem, Oregon, at Mission and High Streets SE. for Jackie Montgomery and near Shurman Rd. S for Mike and Jackie Montgomery both at their home.
Weather	Clear sky with a few clouds. No precipitation. Winds out of the north at about 12 mph.
Duration	About 17 minutes for Jackie Montgomery and 10 minutes for Mike Montgomery.

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INTRODUCTION

This case involves two witnesses who definitely saw the same unusual object because their descriptions match quite well and because one phoned the other and told him exactly where to look in the sky. The description of lights that were strobing and circulating on the underside of the apparent craft also make this case interesting. Approximate compass directions and elevation angles above the horizon from interviews with the witnesses allow the calculations of position and elevation above the ground.

In addition, the primary witness called the local airport the same evening as the sighting to verify that no aircraft were in flight above downtown Salem at the time. This eliminates most reasonable candidates for a positive identification of the unusual object.

SIGHTING DESCRIPTION

On January 27, 2007, a clear, rainless evening in Salem, Oregon, Jackie Montgomery (pseudonym) left a downtown Salem restaurant at about 6:35 PM with her two and a half year old son Jamie (pseudonym). They traveled down High St. SE going south in her car. At about 6:40 PM at High St. SE and Mission St. SE, Jackie became aware of a low rumbling/droning, somewhat unusual sound. It did not vibrate the car steering wheel, but it was very low. Within a minute or less, she looked up and saw a low-flying set of three extremely bright, bluish-white lights in a more or less equilateral triangle. She could not see anything distinct above or beyond the extremely bright lights. What really set the lights apart from any aircraft or other lights in the sky she had ever seen was their rapid strobing (flashing) action. Each light pulsed from three to five times a second. Also, all three lights appeared to circulate clockwise.

Young Son Sees UFO Too

Her son also gestured and indicated he saw what she did and he talked about it too. Jackie saw a family walking along the sidewalk at High St. SE and Mission St. SE as she turned west onto Mission St. SE. They were also looking at the strange lights in the sky. She traveled another two blocks along Mission St. SE and was aware that the strange light display seemed to be traveling west also at a low speed.

At Mission St. SE and Commercial St. SE, Jackie turned into the lefthand turn lane on Mission St. SE and stopped at the stop light. She could see the lights out ahead of her to the west through her windshield. At about 6:42 PM, she called her husband, Mike, who was at home at the time and told him to go outside and see if he could locate the strange lights in the sky. They talked about a minute or less and he hung up and headed outside.

Husband Hears UFO Sound

At about 6:35 PM, before his wife called him, Mike was working at this computer at home and heard a strange low, droning sound coming from outside. He interrupted his work and went outside into the backyard. He could hear the sound but could not see anything that might be producing it. Mike and Jackie are well aware of Blackhawk Oregon National Guard helicopters based at the nearby Salem airport, McNary Field, and he was quite sure the sound was not one of those. After a minute or so, failing to locate the source of the low, droning sound, he went back inside. Within a minute or so, Jackie was calling him on the phone and telling him about the strange triangle of strobing lights accompanied by the low, droning sound. He rushed out onto the front door landing and within seconds saw the lights emerging from the roofline off to the north. The lights proceeded to move south toward him and farther away at the same time. This he knew to be a southwest direction since his house faces almost due west. He watched the lights for a few more minutes until Jackie arrived with Jamie.

Jackie Arrives at Home

Meanwhile, Jackie finished her call to Mike and the light changed so she turned south on Commercial St. SE and headed three blocks to Owens St. S, turned west on Owens St. S, and then onto River Road S. She drove along River Road S till she came to Shurman Road S and entered her neighborhood. This

drive took around four or five minutes. Jackie could not see the lights as she drove along River Road S because she was on the wrong side (left side) of the car. However, Jamie, in his car seat on the right side of the car in the back seat, could see the lights and continued to observe and talk excitedly about the lights as they drove along. When they arrived at home, she and Jamie saw Mike still looking at the strange, flashing lights, but now looking far away in the distance over the West Salem hills across Minto Island and the Willamette River.

At about 6:50 PM to 6:55 PM, Mike calls a good friend in Independence, Oregon, because the lights seemed to be headed southwest. He reached his friend and described the lights. His friend and his friend's father went outside and even climbed a small hill but failed to see anything but an obvious commercial airliner headed north up the Willamette Valley toward Portland International Airport.

The strange lights finally disappeared off to the north because toward the end of the approximately 15 minute sighting, the lights turned and traveled in a northerly direction.

On Site Investigation

Chief investigator Keith Rowell, Assistant State Director, Oregon MUFON, and State Director Tom Bowden traveled on Saturday, February 3, 2007, to visit the two witnesses, Jackie Montgomery and husband Mike in their home. After an hour or so of a recorded interview, all four went to the scene of Jackie's first and primary observing spots at High St. SE and Mission St. SE, and Commercial St. SE and Mission St. SE in Salem.

During the interview, the witnesses drew position spots on their own map of Salem and environs and on the investigators' map. Mike, who is adept at producing multimedia presentations, showed an iMovie video of his impression of the the UFO outside their home from the vantage point of their front porch and front yard. Mike gave the video to the investigators. See a still from his video in *Figure 1, Enhanced Frame from Mike Montgomery's Video Simulation*.

Jackie produced and gave to the investigators a pencil drawing of the UFO from the vantage point of her primary sighting spot at Commercial St. SE and Mission St. SE. See her drawing in *Figure 2, Jackie Montgomery's Sketch of the UFO*.

Investigator Keith Rowell took photos at the witness's home while Mike re-enacted his initial sighting of the UFO. Keith also took photos at Jackie's primary sighting spots. See *Figure 3, Near Jackie Montgomery's First UFO Sighting Spot*.



Source: Mike Montgomery

Figure 1. Enhanced Frame from Mike Montgomery's Video Simulation

Witness Mike Montgomery created an excellent video simulation of how the UFO appeared both near and far at different times from his front porch. This is an enhanced frame from his video at the nearest point the UFO was from his house. (The frame has been lightened some to show detail better. In addition, since only one spot of light in the upper right quadrant shows in an individual frame, we have modified the frame for this illustration to indicate the equilateral triangle that the strobing and/or circulating lights gave the impression of. We have "cloned" one of the spots of light to make two additional spots of light to form the triangle.)



Source: Jackie Montgomery

Figure 2. Jackie Montgomery's Sketch of the UFO

Witness Jackie Montgomery's detailed sketch of how the UFO looked from High St. SE and Mission St. SE shows a UFO with three conspicuous, bright, strobing lights. At this point, the UFO was at approximately Sighting Spot #2 in Figure 4, UFO and Witness Paths. The UFO probably was somewhat smaller in actual size compared to the street lamp, trees, and water tower structure about 1.5 miles away. The sketch does indicate how prominent the UFO was to Jackie. It wasn't small!



Source: Keith Rowell

Figure 3. Near Jackie Montgomery's First UFO Sighting Spot

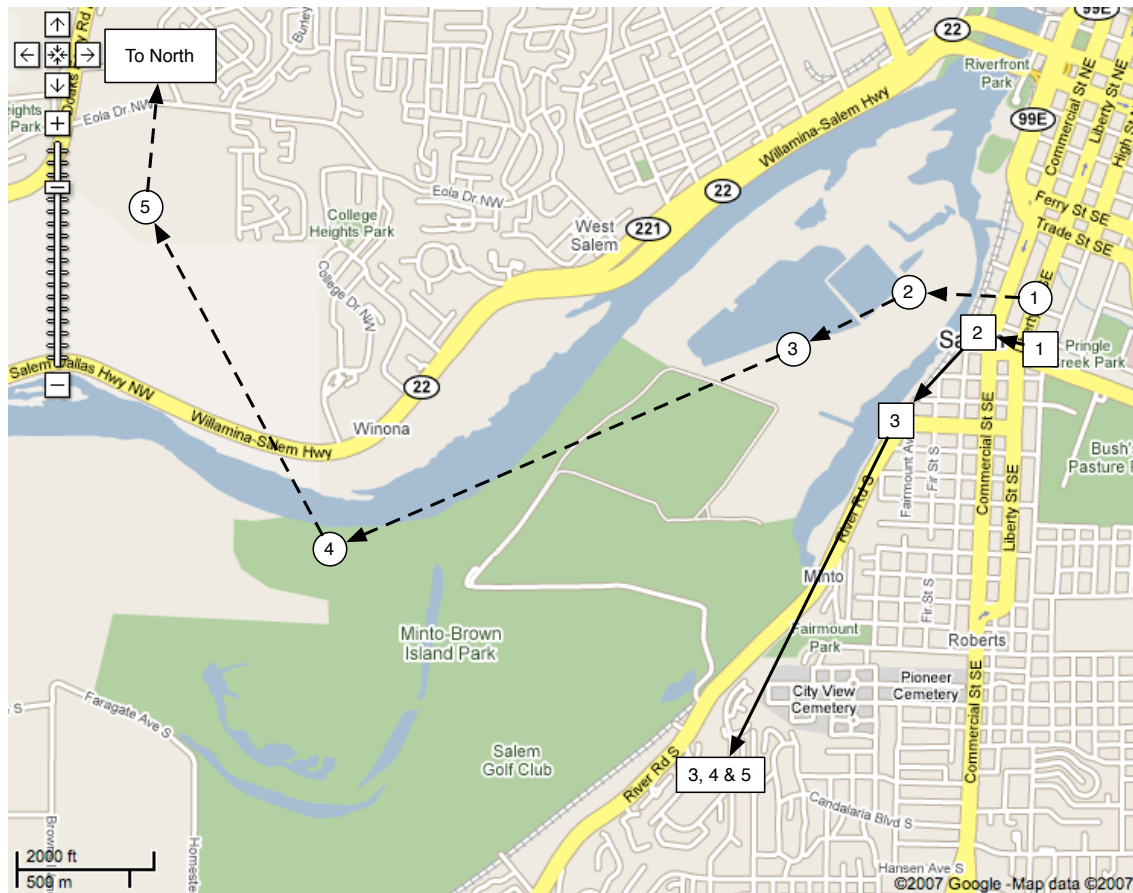
Witness Jackie Montgomery and her son were in their car not far from the camera's viewpoint in this photo. See Figure 2, Jackie Montgomery's Sketch of the UFO. The west hills of Salem are just visible in this photo above the black pickup truck in the center. Jackie had a good long look at the UFO while she was stopped at the traffic lights shown here to the left at Mission and Commercial Streets SE.

Sighting Timeline

The following table shows a timeline as best it can be reconstructed from witness testimony. It shows significant events as the sighting unfolds. See *Figure 4, UFO and Witness Paths*, later for the UFO and witness positions specified in *Table 1, Sighting Timeline*.

Table 1. Sighting Timeline

Time (PST)	UFO and Witness Positions	Events
6:38 PM	0	Mike hears a strange, low, droning sound and goes outside. Jackie leaves the restaurant with Jamie.
6:40 PM	1	Jackie and Jamie become aware of the sound and first see the strange lights. Jackie sees a family walking along looking up to observe the lights.
6:42 PM	2	Jackie calls Mike about the lights. Jackie has the best close view of lights stopped at Mission St. SE and Commercial St. SE.
6:42 to 6:46 PM	3	Jackie is mostly aware of Jamie seeing the lights as they travel south on River Road S. Jackie does not see the lights herself. Mike sees the lights come over the roof line of his house, which is a mile and a half south of Jackie's and Jamie's first sighting.
6:47 to 6:50 PM	4	Jackie and Jamie arrive home and all three watch the lights travel SW, somewhat farther away now.
6:51 PM	4	Mike calls a friend in Independence, Oregon.
6:51 to 6:55 PM	5	The friend fails to see the lights looking north from Independence, Oregon.
6:55 PM	To North	The lights disappear into the north, low on the horizon, having turned from SW to west to north.



Source: Keith Rowell, Google Maps

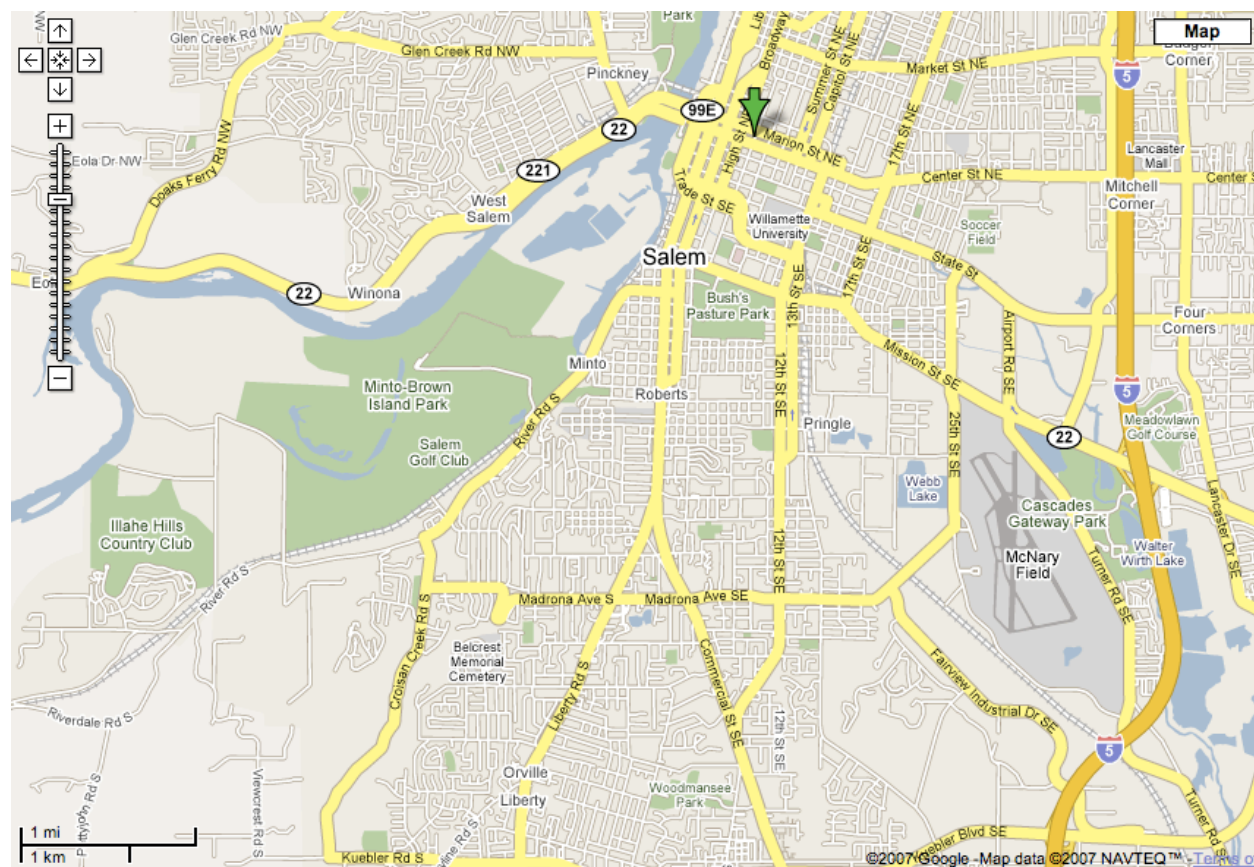
Figure 4. UFO and Witness Paths

Note that the UFO flight path is shown by dashed lines. Jackie's drive home is shown generally by the solid arrow path. Sighting spots and UFO positions are shown by corresponding number. Jackie and her son traveled from High St. SE and Mission St. SE to their home opposite the Salem Golf Club. Note that the three in the "home" box means this is approximately when husband, Mike, first saw the UFO. The four and five in the "home" box are sightings during which both Jackie and Mike saw the UFO after Jackie arrived home.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this sighting was downtown and slightly south of downtown of Salem, Oregon, which is in the middle of the Salem Metropolitan Area of nearly 400,000 people. This UFO meandered around the area during dinner time on a Saturday. Many people were out and about in their cars and even on foot. The early evening was cool, but not freezing.

Salem is the state capital and is a typical busy city. However, Salem does not have any buildings much over five stories if that. The Willamette River runs north and south just to the west of downtown. McNary Field is off to the southeast of downtown about two miles away. See *Figure 5, Salem, Oregon, Environs*.



Source: Keith Rowell

Figure 5. Salem, Oregon, Environs

Note Willamette River and Minto Island immediately to the southwest of downtown Salem. Also, McNary Field is nearby only a few miles southeast of downtown Salem. Its runways could carry air traffic over the downtown area. The Montgomerys live about 2.5 miles west of McNary Field and are well aware of the usual air traffic in and out of McNary Field. West Salem is across the Willamette River and the UFO moved over Minto Island and then northward over west Salem to disappear off in the north.

Neighborhood

The immediate neighborhood where Jackie Montgomery and her child, Jamie, first saw the UFO is mixed residential and commercial small business. The Montgomery's home is in solid residential south along the Willamette River and Minto Island lowlands. The neighborhood is not significant in this sighting except for McNary Field being just two miles away to the east.

Weather

On January 27, 2007, at 6:30 to 7:00 PM, the weather in Salem at the time was about 36° F with no precipitation. It was partly cloudy, but the witnesses had a clear view of the object at all times. The moon was waxing gibbous (about half full) and in the southeast about 67° above the horizon in the constellation Taurus near the Pleiades. It does not figure in this sighting. The winds were out of the north at about 12 mph.

EVIDENCE

The evidence in this case consists of the following:

- Witness Jackie Montgomery's testimony.
- Witness Mike Montgomery's testimony.

Both witnesses have masters level college degrees in education and teach in the Salem public schools. Jackie minored in biology and Mike minored in biology and astronomy. Mike took some training in high school as a student pilot.

Significant Points in Witness Testimony

The following facts from witness testimony are highlighted here for convenience in the analysis that follows. The source of the facts is either the MUFON CMS report, denoted "(CMS)," or our interview, denoted "(Interview)."

- The sound was an unusual, very low frequency, humming/droning sound (CMS) reminiscent of the Goodyear blimp, perhaps (interview).
- The lights were extremely brilliant bluish-white—a level of brightness (brilliance) not seen on a conventional aircraft by these witnesses before in the sky. (Interview)
- The individual lights seemed to flash (or strobe) anywhere from three to five times a second. (Interview)
- The lights seemed to rotate clockwise. (CMS)
- At Jackie's closest sighting, she said the lights seemed to form an equilateral triangle. (Interview)
- The sound was heard 1.5 miles away by Mike at about the time that Jackie first saw the lights and heard the sound. (Interview)
- At Jackie's closest sighting, the lights were of angular size greater than a full moon. (Interview)
- The official on duty at McNary Field said nothing was flying over Salem at that time. Jackie called later the same evening of the sighting. (CMS)
- Jackie estimated the speed of the UFO as slow, maybe 25 mph. (CMS)
- Jackie estimated that the UFO at Sighting Spot #1 was directly over the downtown Salem Public Library at 585 Liberty St. SE (Interview). See *Figure 4, UFO and Witness Paths*.

Some Pertinent Facts

The following facts are drawn from testimony and measurements from maps.

- Witness estimates of angular size of the object were greater than or equal to the moon at 0.5°.

- Witness descriptions of strobing lights and their geometry were brilliant bluish-white lights flashing/strobing at 3 to 5 times a second creating the impression of three lights forming an equilateral triangle.
- Commercial St. SE and Mission St. SE are about 170 feet in elevation according to Google Earth.
- The “water tower in NW salem” is about 440 feet elevation according to Google Earth.
- The distance from Commercial St. SE and Mission St. SE to the water tower is about 8075 ft according to Google Earth.
- The witness’s house is at about 210 feet elevation and is oriented facing about NW.
- From the water tower to witness’s house, it is about 10,425 ft and the water tower is NNW of the witnesses’ house.
- The distance from the witnesses’ house to Sighting Spot #3 is about 6600 feet.

ANALYSIS

This case offers some interesting evidence that we can use to calculate some reasonable estimates of speed and altitude. As the UFO traveled in the sky, its speed and altitude did not seem to vary much according to the testimony of the two witnesses. The UFO seemed to travel slowly in a course from over downtown Salem to over Minto Island to the southwest, turning more westerly, and then turning more northerly as it moved out of sight. The total time was around ten minutes.

UFO Speed

We know reasonably well the path and time that the UFO spent going through the sky, so we can calculate a speed. Referring to *Figure 4, UFO and Witness Paths*, we can measure the approximate distance the UFO traveled from when it was first sighted at Spot #1 to Spot #5. This path is about 14,000 feet. The total time of the sighting was at least 10 minutes. Speed is distance traveled, d , divided by time, t , so we have the following for velocity (speed), v .

$$v = \frac{d}{t} = \frac{14,000 \text{ ft}}{10 \text{ min}} \approx 16 \text{ mph}$$

According to various powered parachute web sites, the cruising airspeed of powered parachute ultralights is around 25 to 30 mph. Thus, the speed of the UFO is rather low compared to the normal speed of a powered parachute type ultralight. Ultralight aircraft with fixed wings have a somewhat higher cruising speed in the range of 50 to 80 mph. General aviation light planes such as the Cessna 150 have cruising speeds of around 100 to 120 mph. So, it would seem the UFO was going too slow for an ultralight or light plane.

UFO Altitude

The UFO altitude seems to have been pretty steady as it traveled its almost three mile or so path from Sighting Spot #1 to Sighting Spot #5. And both witnesses feel that the altitude was low. We take that here to be in the 500 to 2000 feet range. But can we narrow that down to something more specific? As is usual with UFO sightings, we can’t do much without making some assumptions.

We will work with some data from the sighting at Sighting Spot #1 made by Jackie. She said in our interview that she believed the UFO was more or less directly over the Salem Public Library (located at 585 Liberty St. SE) while she was at Liberty St. SE and High St. SE.

Here are some facts for the following analysis:

- The ground distance from the Salem Public Library to Sighting Spot #1 is about 1000 feet.
- Jackie said the UFO was definitely larger than the size of the full moon at Sighting Spot #1.
- Jackie, while looking at a photo investigator Keith Rowell took out of his own car windshield, identified about how high up in the windshield of her car she believes she was looking at Sighting Spot

#2. This was measured by Keith (admittedly crudely) to be about 45° up from the horizontal. She believes that Sighting Spot #1 was even higher. So, we will take a value of about 50° for Sighting Spot #1.

The following calculation gives us some idea of the altitude of the UFO at Sighting Spot #1. Altitude, a , of the UFO can be calculated from the following simple trigonometric relationship. Ground distance, gd , is the distance from the Sighting Spot #1 to the Salem Public Library. Angle, α , is the angle up from the horizon looking up at the UFO.

$$a = gd \cdot \tan(\alpha) = 1000 \text{ ft} \cdot \tan(50^\circ) \cong 1200 \text{ ft}$$

So, the UFO was at a height of about 1200 feet over Salem Public Library, which is right at the FAA legal limit of 1000 feet over congested (populated) areas that general aviation aircraft are supposed to maintain.

UFO Size

Using the UFO altitude and ground distance (to the Salem Public Library) at Sighting Spot #1 (calculated in *UFO Altitude* earlier), we can calculate a minimum UFO size using the fact that Jackie said she thought the UFO was at least the angular size of the full moon (0.5°). But first we need the sighting distance, sd , of the UFO at Sighting Spot #1. This is given by the following equation:

$$sd = \frac{a}{\sin(\alpha)} = \frac{1200 \text{ ft}}{\sin(50^\circ)} \cong 1600 \text{ ft}$$

Now we can use the sighting distance value of 1600 feet to calculate the absolute size, as , of something with an angular size of 0.5°. In the following equation, we have sighting distance, sd , at 1600 feet, absolute size, as , the unknown, and the angular size, α , at 0.5 :

$$as = sd \cdot \tan\left(\frac{0.5^\circ}{2}\right) = 1600 \text{ ft} \cdot \tan(0.25^\circ) \cong 7 \text{ ft}$$

This absolute size value needs to be doubled (because the angular size is measured across two identical right triangles adjoined at the adjacent side) to a value of 14 feet. So, the UFO is at a minimum about 15 feet in size. This is a minimum because Jackie said she felt the UFO was *at a minimum* the angular size of the full moon. Mike, in his interview testimony, said he thought the angular size of the UFO when he first saw it come over his roof line was *twice* as big as the full moon. In addition, he first saw the UFO at a greater distance away than when Jackie first saw it. Assuming the UFO stayed constant in size throughout its sighting path, the actual size of the UFO could be *bigger* than 30 feet across.

Possible Ultralight Aircraft

The most reasonable identification candidate for this UFO is probably a powered ultralight aircraft similar to the one in *Figure 6, Typical Ultralight Aircraft*. The assumption here is that an ultralight owner rigged his ultralight aircraft with a set of three stroboscopic lights. Two ideas come to mind.

- The lights were affixed to the ends of the wing tips and the tail.
- The lights were affixed to the undercarriage of a tricycle frame having wheels at about a five foot distance apart.



Source: Wikipedia

Figure 6. Typical Ultralight Aircraft

This example of an ultralight aircraft is a “weight shift ultralight” made by Trike Flying. Note the possible three points on either the wing or landing gear where strobe lights could be affixed. But see the reasoning in Possible Ultralight Aircraft for why an ultralight is not the explanation for this UFO.

Wing Tips and Tail Case. The typical wingspan of an ultralight is about 30 feet according to <http://www.quicksilverultralight.com/>. Let’s assume that and work out the altitude the ultralight would be traveling at to give an angular size of at least 0.5° , which is the size of the full moon.

It should be noted that objects the size of the full moon flying around in the atmosphere are large enough for people to resolve a reasonable amount of detail in the object, and also that objects of this angular size are not all that common. The ordinary aircraft that you see crossing the sky *more than a quarter mile away from airports* are not often the angular size of the moon or greater. Strange, but true! Aircraft have to be pretty darn close to you to be very big in the sky.

The following math gives us some reasonable estimates of ultralight altitude. The distance (altitude, if looking straight up) of the viewer to the ultralight is given by the following formula.

$$d = \frac{30 \text{ ft}}{\tan(0.5)} \cong 3500 \text{ ft}$$

So, the ultralight with stroboscopic lights on wings tips and tail would be about 3500 feet straight above the witness.

Conclusion. The witnesses said the UFO made quite a bit of sound—enough to get the initial witnesses, Jackie and her two and a half year old son, to notice the UFO inside a car with closed windows. An ultralight 3500 feet up would likely *not* make this much racket.

Tricycle Frame Case. The same reasoning and formula applies here as in the *Wing Tips and Tail Case* above. So, we have the following formula with five feet substituted for the 30 foot wingspan.

$$d = \frac{5 \text{ ft}}{\tan(0.5)} \cong 600 \text{ ft}$$

Conclusion. This time the ultralight is pretty low. So, it would stand to reason that even in the gloom of early evening more than just stroboscopic lights would be visible on the ultralight aircraft. Remember that if the stroboscopic lights were affixed to the tricycle frame as in this case that the fixed wing or parafoil wing above the lights would be *six times* larger and probably fairly evident despite the action of the lights. The lights might even reflect off the wings or parafoil wing and make them visible. Neither Jackie nor Mike said they could make out anything beyond the strobing lights.

CONCLUSION

A good strategy for identifying possible UFOs is to propose a list of identifying objects or phenomena. Then a good faith effort is made to see how many of the typical identifying characteristics of known objects and phenomena do actually fit the facts developed in the presentation of the evidence and analysis of the UFO case. If too many of the identifying characteristics of known objects or phenomena are not a good enough fit, then the investigator is left with a reasonable “identification” of a case as a MUFON “unknown.”

Possible Candidates for Identification

The most reasonable identification candidates for this case are the following:

- **Ultralight aircraft.** This is the most likely identification candidate for the Montgomerys’ UFO. Flying below 1000 feet over “congested” areas is illegal according to FAA rules and also flying over a major Oregon city this way would be foolhardy and, thus, highly unlikely. Also, the strange droning/humming sound was unusual for a small aircraft engine. Also, of course, the brilliant strobing/flashing lights have to be accounted for somehow. This would require, it would seem, an ultralight pilot who would perpetrate a hoax in 36° F weather over a densely populated area. Not a high likelihood. Too many strange characteristics don’t work for an ultralight. *For these reasons and more, the ultralight aircraft hypothesis is rejected as an identification of the Montgomerys’ UFO.*
- **Helicopter.** None of the significant characteristics of a helicopter are present here except for low, meandering flight and loud sound. However, this explanation is rejected because the managing official at McNary would have known about a helicopter flight over downtown Salem. Also, helicopters, though they have unusual lights for an aircraft, do not have strange, brilliant, strobing/flashing lights seeming to form an equilateral triangle as their primary characteristic. Also, the Montgomerys are quite knowledgeable about military helicopters because of the presence of Oregon National Guard helicopters stationed at McNary Field. *For these reasons, the helicopter hypothesis is rejected as an identification of the Montgomerys’ UFO.*
- **General aviation light plane.** This identification candidate suffers from all the objections that the ultralight plane candidate does only more so. The managing official at McNary Field would certainly have known about a light plane flying low, and perhaps even illegally low, over Salem. *For these reasons, the general aviation light plane hypothesis is rejected as an identification of the Montgomerys’ UFO.*
- **Balloon.** A balloon of some sort, perhaps a prank balloon rigged with very unusual lights—lights so bright and brilliant that a significant battery or other power source would have had to be employed—is ruled out because the winds were solidly out of the north for the duration of the time the UFO was sighted meandering about in its changing course, which included moving off significantly to the north toward the end of its duration. *For these reasons, the balloon hypothesis is rejected as an identification of the Montgomerys’ UFO.*
- **Blimp.** A blimp is a possibility because it exhibits many of the characteristics of the UFO and could even conceivably have the equilateral triangle configuration of strobing/flashing lights, but this candidate is dead in the water because McNary Field tower says it knew nothing about a blimp above Salem at the right time. Also, a blimp would certainly have been large enough when it was at its closest approach to Jackie and her son to have been recognized by her. *For these reasons, the blimp hypothesis is rejected as an identification of the Montgomerys’ UFO.*

Final Resolution

Since the identification candidates fail for the reasons just given, we believe that Jackie, Mike, and Jamie Montgomery have witnessed a genuine MUFON "Unknown - UAV."

Appendix A: Notes From Taped Interview

The following are the notes taken from the witness interview done in their home on February 3, 2007:

From Boons Treasury Restaurant; down high streets and mission; rumbling, droning; family on side walk looked; bright, strobing 3 lights almost right overhead over Salem Public Library, equilateral triangle counter clockwise, moving slowly SSW, gave husband a call, he went out on porch, after about 30 seconds he saw it coming around their house, son could still see it on west side of car as they went down river road; "mommy what that light out there?"; got to their house; by this time a small blinking light off to the west at this point; went west and eventually turned north; couldn't tell it was a triangle when she got home; but still flashing; three or four minutes to get home from downtown; tried to get video camera when it was just a tiny light and no point to it; ten minutes after they stopped watching, jackie called airport and she said she checked the radar and nothing was in the salem area at that time; mike, heard low rumbling sound, windows closed, like Goodyear blimp; different from any prop plane; went out back patio and heard it but didn't see anything; 6:40 jackie called; went out on front landing; house due west; saw from NE coming over their roofline three, bluish white lights, very brilliant, much brighter than standard aircraft lights; clockwise direction; each of three lights would blink three times, then next and next clockwise; about a second for all three lights; went sw, behind bank of trees; watch for few minutes; right turn, crossed willamette; above west salem hills; couldn't spot because of obstructions; steady speed all the time; no wobbly or weaving; no ballistic motions; 6:40 to 6:55; clear night completely; whitish blue; like LEDs; possible orange and green in lights far away because of atmospheric distortion; always three lights; each light pulsed 3 to 5 times then next light and next; less than a second for full cycle; moon not up yet; bright orange light on western horizon was venus; nothing else in sky at the time; about 6:50 to 6:55 calls friend in monmouth; friend goes to top of hill and sees no UFO; only airliner; see blackhawks all the time and are familiar; very distinct difference between blackhawks and this UFO; UFO much more low freq; no chop chop sound with UFO; blackhawks have blinking red light on bottom and white light on tail; jackie called national guard on thursday; manager asked people at nat guard office and none said UFO was theirs; altitude estimate: about 1000 feet; guess about size of small airplane or helicopter; called statesman journal and reported sighting; they said no other reports; we'll call back if we do get other reports; no call back and no reports in statesman journal later; could not see solid body above lights; lights very dazzling; like someone was shooting you with bright strobes; two to three times brighter than any aircraft seen before; when jackie first saw it on mission st, the lights were competing with street lights and were much brighter; moved like standard airplane; perfect equilateral triangle; size and height in mike's video jackie thinks is just right; (viewing mike's video) it was something flat with lights on the bottom; jackie didn't go down to spot where she spotted it first for her drawing; jackie: bigger than full moon; mike: twice as big as full moon when he first saw it; mike: droning got louder and softer; jackie: sound was almost low enough to vibrate things; right over me when I first saw it; mike makes speed estimate: about a mile in a couple of minutes.

Appendix B: Witness CMS UFO Description

The following is witness Jackie's CMS UFO description:

Short Description of UFO Event: A triangle of brightly flashing blue-white lights moving slowly westward over downtown Salem, OR

Detailed Description of the UFO Event: I was driving on Mission Street heading west in downtown Salem with my 2 ½ year old son. I heard a low humming sound and looked up to see a triangle of bright white-blue rapidly flashing lights. The craft didn't appear to be much bigger than a prop plane. The craft was flying slowly (25 mph) due west at a low elevation. The lights were moving in a clockwise rotation. I called my husband at home (we live 1 mile south of downtown). He went outside saw it as well, moving towards the West Salem hills. I drove home and we watched it until it made a turn north and moved slowly out of sight. I called the Salem Municipal Airport and the woman there said there were no aircraft over Salem at that time.

