

# MAPLE RIDGE "DIAMONDS"

*Graham Conway*

We are grateful to Miss O. Beaton of Vancouver B.C. for sending this interesting item to Flying Saucer Review

TOM MICHAUD, a 37-year-old truck driver, pulled into the yard of North Slope Ready Mix Co. two miles east of Haney; the time was 2.50 a.m. and the date was August 23, 1977. He proceeded to unload his 84,000 lb streamlined cement truck's contents into a tall silo located in an unlit company yard. The yard is situated at the end of a lonely road. The whole operation took just over an hour, and nothing unusual took place during this period. The night was dark and fairly miserable. Cloud ceiling was 2,500 feet, visibility 6 miles, there was a light mist, and scattered rain helped make viewing conditions far from perfect.

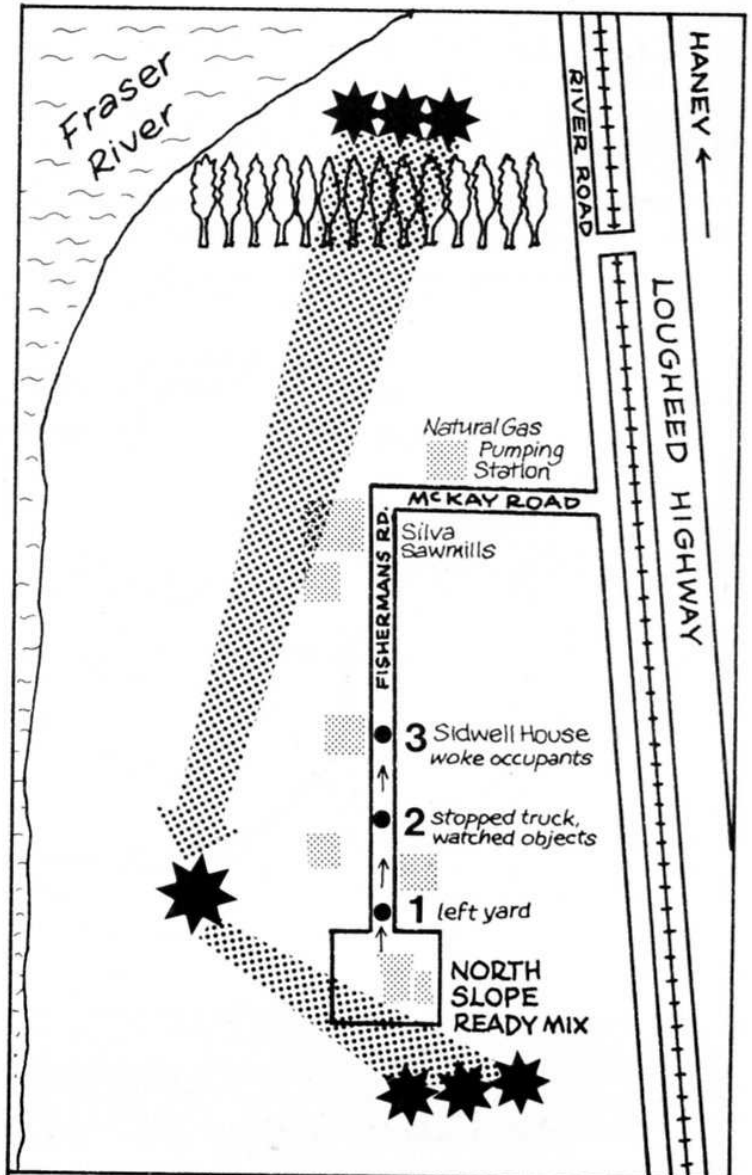
## The incident

The job took longer than usual due to a broken air line. However, at 4.05 a.m. Tom went back in the cab and ready to return to his base in Burnaby. As he left the yard, heading in a westerly direction down Fisherman's Road, he spotted three bright lights through his steamed up, rain-spotted windshield. Although travelling already at 20 m.p.h. he stamped on the brakes and came to a halt. He could now observe the lights more clearly. Thinking they were probably reflections, he wiped the glass, and to his astonishment saw that the intensely bright objects seemed to be zigzagging in the air over a stand of poplar trees about a mile away.

From then on time and detail become blurred, as Tom readily admits. His attention was centred on the middle object which began at regular intervals to eject a red laser-like beam towards the ground. Apparently this took place in a methodical sequence, whereby the brilliant light decreased in size as energy left it, and flowed down into a vertical beam. The moment the red beam reached its objective, whatever that may have been, the original light source immediately resumed its original brilliance. This light projection sequence occurred at least three times, but no more than five. The witness also added that despite the magnificence of the brilliant lights, they did not appear either to throw a light glow on to the surrounding area, nor to reflect off the low cloud cover. His estimate of distance was that they were no more than two miles away, with a possible altitude of 100-1500 feet. At no time could he detect either a shape or indication of mass behind the powerful lights, which appeared to him, at that time, to be the size of peas.

Suddenly, without warning and any apparent visible flight path, the light changed its position and was now over Tom's left shoulder, possibly 500 feet up and less than ¼ mile away, giving him the feeling

of being watched. He turned round, and quickly rolled the window down and stuck out his head, but could hear no noise from it. He recalls a mixture of awe and being mesmerized by this diamond-like object that held his attention. Where the other two lights went he has no idea. If they were close by, then he has no recollection of seeing them. When asked what the basic colour was, he is unable to find words that are suitable. He constantly returns to recalling the brilliance that radiates from a fine gem, now the size of a quarter. During this period of time he had no feeling of fear. Suddenly it occurred



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to him that the object might land and he had no desire to meet "them." The same instant that that thought crossed his mind, the object left, retreating half a mile to the south east. As if released from a spell, Tom put the truck in gear and drove a short distance to a small house alongside the road. It was now 4.13 a.m.

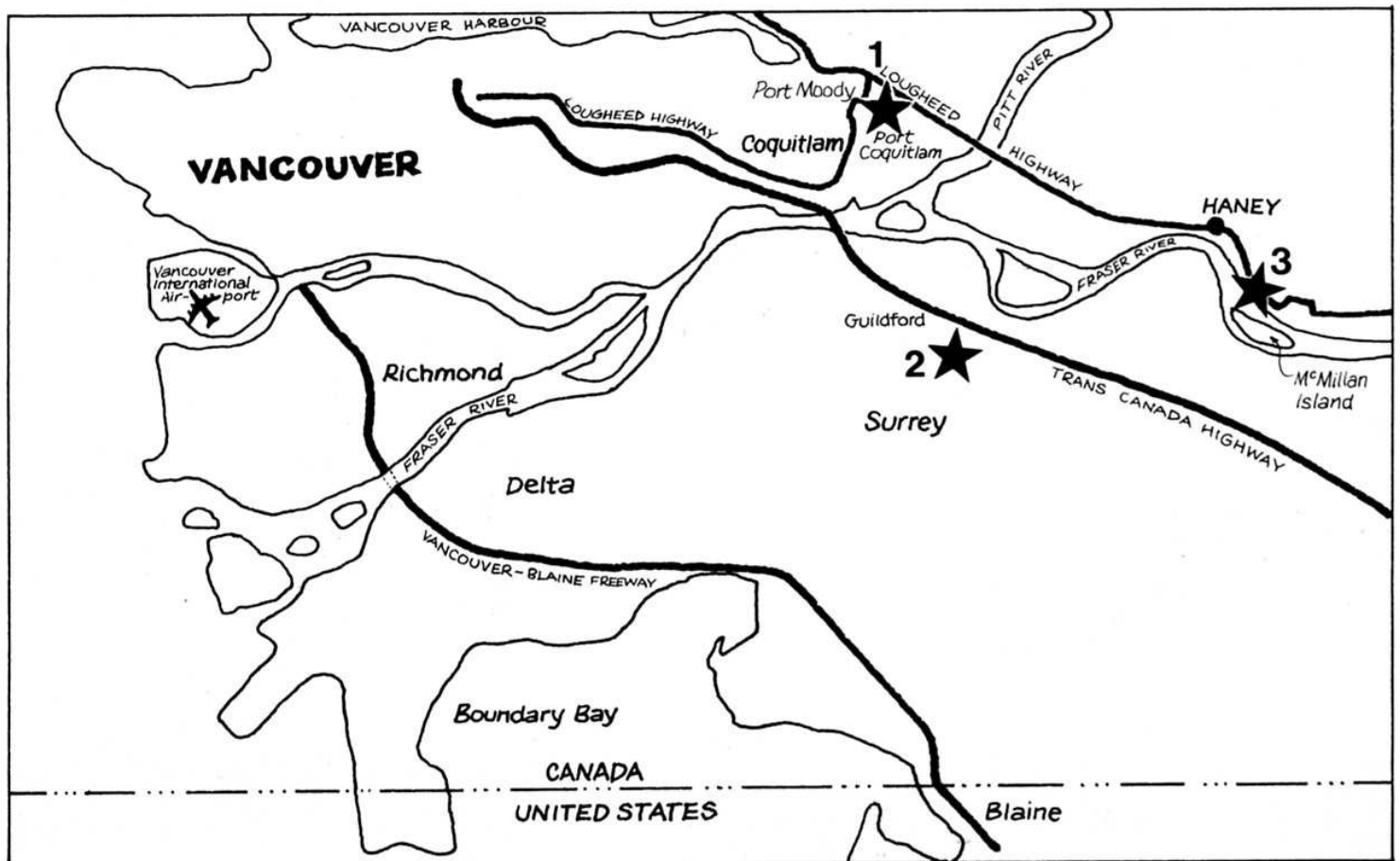
The witness commenced to bang on the front door of the house until he aroused the occupants. The owner, Mr. Sidwell stuck his head out of the basement window shouting "what the hell's going on?" Mrs. Sidwell described the driver's extremely excited condition and his repeated statements that he had seen a "flying saucer" close to the house. Melody, the Sidwell's 14-year-old daughter, stepped on to the porch and looked through the trees in the direction in which Tom was pointing. Admitting to having seen three lights "bobbing up and down" in the sky she also added that in her opinion they certainly didn't look like flying saucers. When pressed to describe the colour she too hesitated a long time, then said, reluctantly, they were yellow. Ten minutes elapsed while the driver described what had taken place, less than 160 yards down the road from where the Sidwells lived. Mr. Sidwell also confirmed the presence of the lights in the sky.

Re-entering the cab of his huge truck Tom drove to nearby Haney to call the police; it never occurred to him to ask to use the phone at the Sidwell's home. The person who answered the phone was facetious, stating that if the witness would supply a few more

details, the police would go out and find the U.F.O. Tom hung up in frustration and disgust. The return journey to his base in Burnaby took 40 minutes, he has no recall at all of travelling this route back to his depot. On arriving, quite naturally much later than anticipated, he poured out his story to the night mechanic, Cliff Nyland, and his relief driver Brian Ayre. They described him as being white faced and "bug eyed". Apparently Tom asked Brian Ayre three times where he was going and three times Brian replied; it seemed that something of a state of shock existed.

When Tom Michaud returned home and told his wife of the night's events, he was still in a state of excitement. During breakfast, his alert young daughter noticed that her father was going back and forth from the kitchen sink to the bathroom, drinking glass after glass of water. It was then that Tom noticed that he had a curious metallic taste in his mouth similar, he said, to the after-effects of having a dentist fill one's teeth and leaving residual particles with accompanying taste. This state of apparent dehydration lasted until around about noon. At no time were the eyes of the witness irritated or inflamed. The only other unusual event was that when he went to bed he could not sleep, which was not his normal style, for he usually goes right off and never hears a sound. After considerable thought, Tom's one word summary of the night's incident was that of being "privileged."

The following night, when Tom left Burnaby to



Locations of incidents: 1. August 16, 1975; 2. August 11, 1976; 3. August 23, 1977

drive home after completing his night's work he had a sudden overpowering compulsion to return to the scene of the sighting. He possessed a feeling of *wanting* to meet "them." When he arrived in the yard, and turned his car around in the same direction that his truck had been facing, he suddenly asked himself "what on earth am I doing here?" Re-starting the car's engine and switching the lights back on, he left for home in a hurry.

The next night he says he experienced the same compulsion to revisit the area. This time, however, Tom Michaud found excuses for not going, and says he resisted a return visit.

### Investigation

The principal witness, Mr. Tom Michaud, has a young family and is a resident of the Fraser Valley (address on file). He is a former Canadian Navy man, and also a student pilot and keenly interested in all aspects of aviation.

He is employed by Trimac Transportation Company in Burnaby, B.C., having worked as a truck driver for a period of nine years for this particular company.

The events described took place close to Haney and Albion, between the Fraser River and Loughhead Highway, at a point approximately 30 miles east of Vancouver.

Investigation revealed that Pitt Meadows airport, which is located about five miles west of the sighting area, closes down at 8.00 p.m. each night. This airfield handles small private planes and received no reports of the incident near Haney.

Abbotsford airport, twenty odd miles to the east, and equipped to land the largest commercial aircraft should Vancouver International be fogged in, also reported no sightings, and to my surprise stated they do not possess radar.

The R.C.M.P. (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) office at Haney, Mission and Langley, admitted to having received a UFO call from a "trucker," but state that none of the officers on duty that night saw anything while on highway patrol.

The crew of the Langley car ferry that operates across the Fraser River twenty four hours a day, and which is located only half a mile east of the sighting area, also saw nothing unusual at 4.00 a.m. The captain and two crew members volunteered that it was a miserable night with visibility very poor due to the rain.

Ironically enough, the headquarters of the Maple Ridge Amateur Astronomers' Society is situated only a ¼ mile east of where Mr. Michaud witnessed the three lights. Although it is possible the last position

in which they were seen was close to this building, no further information was forthcoming from this group of skywatchers.

In this particular case it would appear that the inevitable high tension wire grid system is missing. The light probe appears to have been directed at a densely covered bush area, triangular in shape, a mile long, bordered on one side by a heavily used railway line and on the other side by the Fraser River. It would appear that nobody inhabits the piece of ground. As far as can be ascertained domestic animals don't use it for grazing either. If, as is quite possible, the witness misjudged the viewing distance that night, then it is reasonable to assume that the red light probe was directed on to the surface of the river itself.

A silent but unquestionable witness to the night's events turned up unexpectedly. Mr. Michaud casually reported during our conversation that all times could easily be verified, accurately too, thanks to a built in time clock sealed within the truck. Required for insurance purposes, this seismograph-type circular card records all stops, the period of time that has elapsed before proceeding, engine revolutions per minute. Tom secured this paper disc and made it available to me. It certainly verifies the times that he describes.

As the investigation proceeded a curious pattern emerged. This sighting took place in Maple Ridge on August 23, 1977.

A resident of Maple Ridge, Mr. Gordon White, an R.C.A.F. veteran reported an illuminated object ten miles to the south of his home on August 11, 1976. He watched it execute a variety of manoeuvres, through binoculars, for a period of 45 minutes. He estimates it was over the Surrey area.

Three small boys reported a circular metallic object with flashing lights landed in a sandpit closeby. This occurred in Port Coquitlam, ten miles to the west of where Mr. Michaud watched his exquisitely "beautiful" brilliant lights. In the case of the landing report, the date was August 16, 1975.

So we have had three reports within three years, and with a twelve day spread.

Finally I wish to add that my associate Brian Foster, a member of the Vancouver Flying Saucer Club, researched his files and located a matching case. The *Flying Saucer Review* for July-August, 1972, contained an article about an object that appeared over Tenby, West Wales, on October 8, 1966. The writer, Mr. F.W. Holiday, refers to two cloud-like objects which appeared over a group of fishermen. A dark object emerged from one and proceeded to emit a "ruby red light" that it beamed on those below.

## FSR & UFO INVESTIGATORS' NETWORK are a great team

If you are involved in any way in, or learn of, a UFO incident, please get in touch with

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