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OUR 102nd YEAR SERVING THE GREATER CARBONDALE, PA. AREA

UFO witnesses stick to their original stories

BY TOM MOYLAN

While many people have dismissed the UFO incident at Russell Park this week as a hoax, many others are still not satisfied with the conclusion.

At the top of the list of those who still believe that something other than a lantern was seen entering and glowing in mine water pond are the three boys who first saw and reported the incident: Bob Gillette, 15; Bill Lloyd, 15; and his brother John, 14.

Two of these three young men visited the NEWS office Tuesday afternoon three days after they sighted something entering the pond and one day after it was dismissed as a hoax by authorities. They still stuck to their original story. As told to the NEWS, here is their story.

Between 7 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday evening, the three youths were standing on the corner of Church Street and 12th Avenue when they observed a light come from behind Salem Mountain and fall in an arc toward the pond and cemetery area. The light given off was described as white and yellow. The boys heard no sound.

Walking back to the pond they observed waves in the water and a yellowish light with a spot of red coming from beneath the surface. The lighted area was approximately four feet in diameter.

They left the pond to summon their

friends who were standing near Russell Park. When the six of them returned, they noticed that the underwater light was about 20 feet from shore, and that it had moved from its original position.

The Carbondale police were summoned twice before arriving at the scene. They estimated that it was an hour and a half since they first spotted the glow that the police cruiser arrived. The time was approximately 9:30 or 10 p.m.

Upon arrival, they said that officers admitted that "something was there" and that two officers fired their service revolvers into the water. They said the light was observed to move when the bullets were fired.

The boys said that the Mitchell Hose Co. emergency truck was called along with a boat. Portable lights were set up on the shore and retrieval operations begun. They also noted a photographer on the scene taking pictures of the operation.

Later the boys were told to wait in the police car, where they remained until 1 p.m. The boys heard, via police radio, orders to "hold off the news media." When the youths were finally released around 1 a.m., they were told by police to remain quiet. Bob Gillette reported that his grandfather was told by police that his grandson was working back at Russell Park. Both Gillette and Lloyd affirm that police officers told them the object in the pond was a meteorite.

On Sunday, the boys said they returned, but were not allowed in the area. They

reported that a crane was seen moving back into the pond area, but that it was not seen leaving. They speculated that it may have left from another road in the area.

One interesting sight the boys reported was a delivery truck from a department store going down the road to the pond at one point Sunday.

The boys also report that a scuba diver was in the pond Sunday afternoon and that he emerged white-faced and gestured a size with his arms. They report that law enforcement officers hushed the diver.

The boys returned to the site Monday afternoon when another scuba diver went under the surface. Two minutes later, according to the youths, he returned with the widely-publicized railroad lantern.

The boys told the NEWS that they still stick to their original stories and leveled a few verbal blasts at the Carbondale police. They speculated that someone placed the railroad lantern in the pond and that the "show" Monday afternoon was designed to "make fools of them."

They also pointed out that the UFO official from Philadelphia noted no discrepancies in their stories and that he believed what they told him.

(Editor's note: The NEWS has received many different bits of information on the sighting. Perhaps the most interesting is a report that an orange-red glow near Russell Park was observed from upper Dundaff Street between 8 and 9 p.m. Saturday night.)