

## **APRIL 7, 1967 – OPA LOCKA FLORIDA**

On the morning of April 7, 1967 over 200 students and staff at Crestview Elementary School in Opa-Locka, Florida (a city located in Miami-Dade) observed a UFO silver/metallic oval-shaped "flying saucer" in the sky behind the school during recess. Witnesses, a number of teachers, described the scene as "chaotic" as excited students rushed towards the schoolyard fence to observe the strange hovering disc.

Children at Crestview Elementary School saw an object which appeared in a tree dotted field behind the school. The next 10 minutes were chaotic. Mrs. Virginia Martin, a 6th grade teacher, said that there was a lot of excitement. She wasn't paying any attention to what the children were pointing to at first, but was trying to get them lined up, to watch. Most of the 200 girls & boys at morning recess were running towards the school ground fence, yelling and pointing. Mrs. Martin, Bob Apfel, a 4th grade teacher, and Miss Marian Waters, a 6th grade teacher, spotted the oval shaped object hovering behind a pine tree in an open field. It seemed to move in toward the school, then went straight back and dropped below a pine tree. It then came up again and went westward, and seemed to hover. Teacher Bob Apfel exhibited no qualms: It was a flying saucer. This was the second consecutive day he and his class had seen similar, metallic like objects north of the school grounds. Andy Cohen, who said there were two objects, became the closest to a consensus spokesman for the kids, sat

in a car and told what he saw: They looked like long cigars. They were flying apart one at a time. Some of the girls got hysterical when they saw them. Later in the day it was discovered that the UFO sightings were not limited to the children and teachers at Crestview. Mrs. Mary Troesser, called at the Herald to inquire about any strange sightings. Mrs. Troesser had been out in the yard and happened to glance in the direction of Crestview Elementary School. There was this oval object with red lights just over the trees. Dr. Lillien carefully checked atmospheric and astronomical conditions and ruled out associated phenomena. He also pointed out that in an area where there is a proliferation of ordinary sky objects such as planes, helicopters and even an occasional blimp, the witnesses were absolutely sure that the phenomena they observed was completely unlike anything they had seen before.

The teachers spent Friday afternoon talking to three Air Force investigators who drove to the school from Homestead Air Force Base. Mr. Breast heard the news of the sighting at noon on Friday, the 7th, and at 1:30 pm he went to Crestview Elementary School in Opa Locka, Dade County, on the northwest edge of Miami. He learned that unidentified objects had been seen on two days, Thursday and Friday. The only data he could secure was that the object was larger than a kite and when he requested to speak to the principal he was informed that Homestead AFB had been contacted, and that an investigator was being sent out and that no information would be given out. He did not even learn the name of the teacher who witnessed the UFO with the school boys on Thursday,

This seems to be a part of a strange series of events. A day or two before the alleged incident, according to very reliable informants in the area, a psychic or mystic predicted, on radio that UFOs would be seen in the vicinity. Apparently one male teacher was on the lookout for the objects, and had the children outside searching the skies. The Opa-Locka School UFO Sighting, which was part of a larger localized UFO flap around Miami-Dade, was formally investigated by the leading UFO research organizations at the time (APRO and NICAP). Air Force Investigators, from nearby Homestead AFB, were also on site and conducted interviews. The mass UFO sighting was reported on in the Miami Herald, the Miami News, and other local newspapers - including the National Enquirer tabloid which was based in Lantana, Florida. The Air Force, within days of the publicized UFO Sightings encounter, announced that the unknown observations were likely misidentified military flares and conducted demonstrative flare drops to lessen public concern (a move that actually angered the community which was familiar with nearby military aviation activity).

This report covers less than 10% of this event, which appears to have been first tracked on radar coming South out of the Arctic Circle, down over Canada, continuing South over the US East coast and Eastern Florida, over Homestead and over Key West toward Cuba, where two Cuban Migs were sent up to investigate the expected intrusion of their air space, and that resulted in the lead aircraft being totally destroyed when it turned on it's weapon system. Reading the book "Unknown

Down" written by Jack Roth, as told by two of the original radar operators, Bill Schroeder and Dennis Force were actually tracking the crafts in "real time" in 1967. There were two separate sets of crafts flying South over Florida in parallel patterns that appeared to be in a search mode. These search pattern flights continued intermittently for a few months, and were seen by hundreds of both military and civilian witnesses.



*Andy Cohen (left) and his teacher Robert Apfel (right)*



*Hovering site at the school field, today*

**Reliability evaluation:**  
**TRUE**  
**unknown craft!**

