

You All Just Haven't Talked About It

By John Farmer

(As published in Mark Gaffney's book: "The 9/11 Mystery Plane & The Vanishing of America")

In mid-2006, I began a research project on 9/11, designed to allay my own personal concerns after becoming aware of Operations Mongoose, and Northwoods developed by our own military-intelligence network, and advocating staged civilian attacks on United States citizens for the purpose of provoking a military conflict with Cuba in the 1960's. Although these plans were rejected by President John Kennedy at the time, it did concern me that anyone in our own government would seriously entertain such a plan.

In light of the events of September 11, 2001, which bear a striking similarity in concept to those earlier plans, I opted to focus on the events as the Pentagon on that day. It seemed to me that if the military-intelligence community were involved somehow, then that attack would have to be very controlled, to limit the casualties to the nation's command-and-control facilities and personnel.

I am a process control engineer with a working knowledge of measurement systems. Prior to returning to college in the early '90's to study mathematics, I had spent 12 years in law enforcement, and then more in operations management while I attended college. I thus have extensive experience working with witnesses and security surveillance systems, which has served me well in this project. Moreover, due to my engineering and mathematics background, I set a high standard for any conclusions regarding the evidence set being considered. Before I consider an aspect of the event to be "historical," it must be supported by empirical (objective) data and backed up by non-empirical (subjective) data.

Regarding the Pentagon attack, most of the eyewitness statements are either ambiguous or tainted by the effects of time, and the empirical data is extremely limited. The flight data recorder released by the National Transportation Safety Board has significant irregularities at the end-of-flight, the Federal Bureau of Investigation is refusing to release the information in their possession (videos and photographs), and the Federal Aviation Administration has been reluctant to release the air traffic control recordings and radar data for the Washington D.C. area for that date. This is an issue of a Federal Court Complaint that is currently pending, which readers are welcome to examine for details.

In early-2007, I was able to obtain the VHS tape sent to Scott Bingham by the FBI as a result of his Federal Court Complaint, which represents the security system video from a Citgo service station confiscated by them on September 11, 2001. The Citgo station (also known as the Barracks K) is located on South Joyce Road, between the Navy Annex (to the west) and the Pentagon (slightly north of east), at the intersection with Columbia Pike. To the north of the station is Arlington National Cemetery, and an elevated section of I-395 is to the south.

According to the overwhelming majority of eyewitnesses, American Airlines Flight 77 (AAL 77) flew down from the south side of the Navy Annex (on Columbia Pike), passed within a few

hundred feet of the Citgo gas station at between 100-150 feet above ground level (agl), then struck the tops of five light poles along Route 27 at Columbia Pike, and then impacted the Pentagon at an approximate heading of 60 degrees from north. This path corresponds to the damage pattern observed within the Pentagon.

After receiving the VHS tape, I took it to an independent video firm here in Memphis, TN to have it evaluated and reproduced in DVD format. The original VHS was then shipped back to Bingham along with a DVD copy for his use. At that time, no significant issues with the VHS tape (symptoms of alteration) were found by either me or the technician processing it. The security video consists of seven multiplexed camera frames captured on a single VHS tape such that all seven are visible at once. The image is split into four quadrants, with three cameras (two cash registers and north-west pump bay) occupying a single quadrant each and the remaining one split into four additional quadrants.

Of these smaller quadrants, three are occupied by camera footage (south-east pump bay, the south entrance and sales floor area), with the other filled with a composite of the complete multiplexed image. This final quadrant appears to have at one time been occupied by an additional exterior camera, most likely the one on the south-west corner facing the ice machine (labeled "ICE"). Each of these camera views is refreshed according to multiplexer sequence in a set order of nine steps. Most refresh once every nine steps, while a few refresh twice. Since the frame rate of the video is 30 frames per second, this means that most of the cameras are refreshed at a rate of 3.33 frames per second. This frame rate for each camera will become critical as I continue the discussion.

I went to such lengths to obtain the best copy of the video available was due to a mathematical model and 3D study of the flight path in the vicinity of the Citgo done by me suggested that AAL 77 should have cast a rather significant shadow on the ground as it passed by the station to the south-east [sic]. Since the position of the sun is known, the range of possibilities is easily determined. In reviewing the YouTube version of the video, I ad[sic] determined that there was a high probability (80%) that camera 5 (south-east pumps) would have captured a portion of that shadow. Unfortunately, due to the small size of the camera view on that video and the poor quality of the YouTube version, I could not locate the shadow. On the copy received from Bingham, the shadow was located in the area predicted at 09:40:35 (video time), confirming the 60-degree heading flight path discussed earlier.

Over the months ahead, I continued evaluating the video, especially the five seconds following the first appearance of the shadow. I examined every flash of light or other optical event fully, until I was satisfied with the source of each.

One such flash is seen in camera number 3 from a car as it begins to pull away at 09:40:38. With the known location of the sun (113 degrees azimuth, 32 degrees altitude) and a little trigonometry, it is relatively easy to demonstrate what is happening: the bumper or back window is passing through a point where the incidence angle is exactly right between the sun and the camera to reflect sunlight into it. This can be confirmed by watching other cars passing through the same area before and after this time, and seeing the same flash of light from them.

Another event is a dimming of light observed in camera number 7 at 09:40:39. A careful study of the way the window is shaped reveals that there is an area where the camera is in line with the impact point at the Pentagon through the end of the bay window located on that side of the station. After the flash of the fireball is glimpsed in camera number 5, camera number 7 responds to that event with an auto-iris adjustment. As in this case, most such anomalies could be associated with real-world events with the exception of one.

At 09:40:37, in camera number 2 (south entrance), a light begins to appear on the rough concrete wall to the left of the entrance door. This is a shadowed area which immediately rules out light from the Pentagon fireball. If that were the light source (a diffuse source), then it would illuminate the entire area under the canopy, not just a spot on the concrete wall. Moreover, the gas pumps are a very reflective white metallic surface which would have much more readily shown signs of the fireball light than a rough concrete wall, and there is no evidence of that at all. This particular camera is one of the few that refreshes twice in the multiplexer sequence. So it captures a frame, and then $1/30^{\text{th}}$ of a second later captures another. Then it must sequence through 7 frames before refreshing again. This is fortunate, since the first captured frame gives for that instant a definitive clue to the origin of the source.

The point of impact at the Pentagon relative to the Citgo was located 70 degrees from north. The wall upon which the light is cast is perpendicular to the south-east wall which is aligned 52.5 degrees from the north. This is significant, since in the very first frame, the light is shining over the top of the corner of that wall, which is slightly raised from the roof line. Based upon photographs and measurements I took on a trip to the location in April of 2007, the light is originating from a point to the left (less than 52.5 degrees from north) and approximately 3 degrees upward relative to horizontal. In simpler terms, the light source is airborne at a relatively low altitude and at least 17-18 degrees north of the impact area!

This lighting effect can be observed associated with a car pulling away and turning on the same camera at 09:41:45. As the car turns, sunlight strikes it and is reflected onto the wall directly above the south entrance door. This illustrates on a smaller scale the most likely source of the lighting effect under discussion. The light is consistent with sunlight reflecting off a highly reflective airborne surface, but the altitude would have to be extremely low in an area north-east of the station.

The Citgo is at roughly 50 feet elevation and the spot on the wall in the first frame is around 10 feet above that. Using that as a starting point, with the 3 degree angle elevation, at the distance to Route 27 on a straight-line (1500 feet), the source would be at an altitude of 140 feet. The elevation at this point is approximately 35 feet, so the source would be just above 100 feet agl.

Further, this line-of-sight does not cross the flight path of AAL 77! Since light on the wall is relatively contained and localized, the light source would have to be reasonably close to the station. Quite frankly, none of this made sense to me with the information available at the time.

Visible on the video are a number of individuals outside the station at the time of the event who should have had a good view of what happened, so I began searching for any statements in

the public domain form any of them. An Italian researcher (who wishes to remain off the record) alerted me to the work of a group called Citizen Investigation Team (CIT). CIT had gone to the area and interviewed a number of individuals, among them Defense Protective Services (DPS) SGT William Lagasse, who is seen on camera number 3 fueling his car. SGT Lagasse asserts that he saw the plane pass by the north-west canopy, corresponding to a flight path that would account for a reflective body in the right path to explain the lighting observed on the wall.

SGT Lagasse, however, describes the plane as doing a yaw maneuver that significantly changed its alignment. He asserts that the jet wash from the plane knocked him into his car as it passed to his left. Then he states that it approached the Pentagon at another angle consistent with the actual flight path of AAL 77. In other words, when he first saw it, he was looking at the right side of it, and then at the end he was looking at the left side of it (as he would have a plane passing the south side of the station where he shadow is visible on the ground). So his account is inconclusive.

Another of the CIT witnesses was DPS SGT Chadwick Brooks. SGT Brooks was parked across Joyce Road from the station in a parking lot. He asserts that his car was parked in a northerly orientation and that he saw the plane fly past the north side of the station exactly as described by SGT Lagasse. However, he gave a 2001 audio interview wherein he asserted that he observed the plane clip light poles along the flight path south of the station. There is an oddity in his earlier statement which may help explain this inconsistency. He asserts that he is watching a plane to his left: "I just happened to look up to my left up in the air and just seen a plane." Yet he feels intense vibration and noise coming from behind his vehicle: "A few seconds shortly after that I heard a, what seemed to be a tractor-trailer or something coming behind me, well... felt like it was coming behind me, and I looked again but this time I looked and I didn't see a truck." If the orientation of his vehicle is as he claims, then that would be consistent with the southern approach.

Unexplained is the plane he is watching at the same time, which he does not associate with the noise because after looking behind, "I looked to my left and low and behold I noticed that the plane was just going awfully low." When he gets out his vehicle that is when he sees the, "very awful sight because, at the very end the plane literally just full throttle and to this day I don't know if I was able to watch it or not, but just to be frozen in time like that, and to see the plane literally just clip the lamp poles."

When SGT Brooks and SGT Lagasse's accounts are taken objectively, they both seem to be describing two different plane approaches simultaneously. One is consistent with the southern path (Lagasse's yaw and Brook's vibration) and the other with a northern approach. If SGT Brooks 2001 account is taken literally, then he was hearing a plane pass behind him while watching another plane to his left. This scenario simply did not make sense, since the only other airplane known to be in the area was a C-130 from Andrews AFB that did not arrive in the vicinity until at least a minute later. The closest approach it made was to the west of the Navy Annex, where it veered away to the west. This plane was never lower than 2200 feet according to the 84 RADES radar data, confirmed by amateur video which captured its turn.

There was one public domain eyewitness statement that I hoped would perhaps shed some light on the situation. A Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article dated 12/20/2001 reported that the Army Center for Military History (CMH) was conducting a historical[sic] project to record as many eyewitness accounts as possible for historical purposes. Among these were interviews with Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) employees who were located to the north of the Citgo station. Among these, one reported “a mysterious second plane was circling the area when the first one attacked the Pentagon.” In late 2007, I filed a Freedom of Information Request for a number of the interviews conducted by CMH.

Across Columbia Pike from the station are the ANC maintenance offices and shops. A number of ANC employees were eyewitnesses to the event from the area, and those I have seen thus far describe AAL 77's fate and the C-130 approach later. At the far corner of this area, closest to the Pentagon, is a warehouse facility. This is an important location, because it is almost directly in the line of sight for the light source that had puzzled me for over a year. If any people could have seen anything to explain it, they would be located there. On May 21, 2008, I received the CMH statements from the employees located there, collected April 2002. Among them was an interview (NEIT 428) which includes the following:

“Well, when we came out of the warehouse we heard this boom, you know, this big explosion. And we, all we could see was the smoke and the heat. We could feel the heat. And it was so intense that after that happened, we looked up in the sky and there was another plane. So, you know, so we panicked. So we started running, you know. So I just dropped on the ground. The plane was so low we were thinking it was going to do the same thing, but the plane made a turn and went in the opposite direction.”

My first impression was that this must surely be the C-130 known to arrive in the area a minute or so later. However, the altitude of that plane was relatively high, and it seemed unusual that they would duck for cover in response to it. The interviewer fortunately asked a follow-up question regarding the altitude. Answer: “It was low enough that it could touch the building, the warehouse. It was close.”

The witness continues asserting that it was close enough to see the pilot through the window and that it looked like a large commercial plane. The full interview is 17 pages and worth a complete reading, eg.,

“All I know is it was a big plane. I was a big plane and I could see the pilot. It was just so quick. So I'm assuming that it was one of our planes because it didn't go into the building. I just made a turn, you know.”

The witnesses at the ANC claim the plane turned back to the left towards the Washington, DC area. Mark Gaffney and “Pinnacle” have documented a plane that approached the White House from the Washington Monument area, which was photographed by Linda Brookhart as it turned over the White House towards the Capitol Building. Further, Peter Jennings reported a plane over the White House at 09:41, 2 ½ minutes after the Pentagon event official time of 9:38. So is the plane witnessed by the Citgo and ANC witnesses the same plane? Without more definitive evidence regarding the direction the plane left the area, it is difficult to say.

There are also a number of ambiguous statements by people who seem to have associated the plane over D.C. with the Pentagon attack. “My Team Leader came in to say as he was coming in to the building, he saw a 757 flying in a peculiar location roughly over the Mall. (We know that was the 757 that hit the Pentagon as it did circle downtown DC, supposedly looking for a target, possibly the Whitehouse [sic] which is not as easy to pick out from the air as the Capitol or the Pentagon, before heading west again, then turning east for its final run at the Pentagon.)

With witness statements like these, it is clear that the 911 Commission failed in its job to fully explain to the American public exactly what happened at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. As the ANC employee put it, “...a whole lot of people out here seen what I seen, but you all just haven’t talked about it.”