

Clarifying

Level 4

A Collection of Readings

**Reading
Wings** 4th
Edition

The Savvy Reader

This project was developed at the Success for All Foundation under the direction of Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden to utilize the power of cooperative learning, frequent assessment and feedback, and schoolwide collaboration proven in decades of research to increase student learning.

The Savvy Reader—Clarifying, A Collection of Readings

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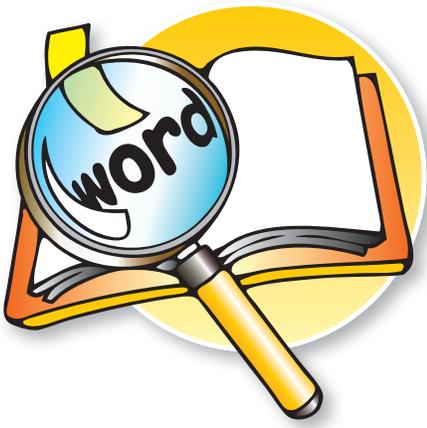


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SCOTLAND

Scotland lies in northwestern Europe and is one-third of Great Britain. Scotland is a mountainous and rocky land that consists of almost 800 islands and many freshwater bodies. The country's flower is the thistle. People of Scotland speak English, Gaelic, or Scots, depending on where they live in the country.

Scotland is known for many things. Perhaps you have seen bagpipes. They are a wind instrument that men wearing traditional Scottish kilts often play. Scotland is also known for golf, which began in Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland. Scottish people also enjoy rugby and football.

Many famous people have come from Scotland. One of those people is Alexander Graham Bell, the creator of the telephone. A famous actor named Sean Connery also hails from that country. Scotland was also home to such famous writers as Arthur Conan Doyle, who wrote *Sherlock Holmes*, and Robert Louis Stevenson, who wrote *Treasure Island*.

Loch Ness

In northern Scotland lies the famed Loch Ness. A loch is like a lake. Loch Ness is famous for the Loch Ness Monster, or Nessie. Some sightings of Nessie date back centuries. Thousands of people have claimed to see Nessie. They usually describe her as a large, dark object with a tail, which emerges from the surface of the water and leaves a wake behind it.

There are many websites dedicated to the sightings and studies of Nessie. Some of these websites include photos of the sightings. Often people find that these photographs are hoaxes. However, that doesn't keep people from studying Loch Ness and the possibility of there being a monster in it. There are studies and school trips to the loch. There are also boat cruises that take tourists across the loch hoping for a sighting. These cruises leave it up to the visitors to believe or not believe in the famed Loch Ness Monster.

Mack MacLean, Kid Detective

Story by Terrence Parker
Illustration by Bill Petersen



Chapter 1

My name is Mack MacLean. You may have heard of me, and if you have, good for you. If you haven't, well, you're about to. I'm a detective—a kid detective. In fact, I'm the greatest kid detective ever. If you don't believe me, check the record books. I've solved more cases than any other kid detective.

For a long time, solving cases was easy. Someone lost a kitten. I found it in the cupboard. A family couldn't figure out where their newspapers were every morning. I found a stash of them in a hawk's nest up in a pine tree. The cases were always very easy.

Of course, I've always had help too. I've got a great team. First, there's Vic, my right-hand man. He's got a nose for details. Or is it an eye? Anyhow, he's always been a good helper. There's also Susie, my other assistant. She always seems to stumble across lucky clues. That's why we call her "Lucky Susie." Vic and Lucky Susie—they're my team. They're also my best friends. That makes my work much easier. It's always easier to work when you're working with friends.

About a week or so ago, Lucky Susie, Vic, and I were hanging out in my office. My dad calls my office his garage. Anyway, we were playing darts. I'm almost as good at playing darts as I am at solving cases. You could even call me the "darting detective." Anyhow, there we were in the office. We had the door open, and up walks Mrs. Wilson. She seemed upset about something.

"What's the matter, Mrs. W.?" Vic asked her. Mrs. Wilson was wringing her hands and wiping her brow with her handkerchief.

"I seem to have lost my Little Muffin," she said, her voice quivering.

"What kind of little muffin? Blueberry? Bran?" Lucky Susie asked.

Mrs. Wilson responded. "No, she's my precious darling, my pride and joy. She's my puppy dog." It looked as though Mrs. Wilson was about to cry at any moment.

“Now, calm down, Mrs. Wilson.” I said, trying to reassure her. “When and where did you last see your Little Muffin?”

Mrs. Wilson explained that she had last seen her puppy while pulling weeds from her petunia garden. “I was weeding, and Little Muffin was playing in the yard. Next thing I knew, she was gone!” Mrs. Wilson cried.

I told Vic to take down everything Mrs. Wilson said. So Vic started jotting notes in his spiral notebook. I explained to Mrs. Wilson that we would be glad to help her find her Little Muffin. The fee would be a half-dozen of Mrs. Wilson’s Famous Fudge Delight Spectacular Brownies. Mrs. Wilson agreed, so we drew up a contract.

Then we were on the case.

Vic suggested we go over to where Mrs. Wilson last saw Little Muffin. So we got on our bikes and rode over to Mrs. Wilson’s backyard. Well, actually, we packed snacks and water first. You never know how long you’ll be on a case or where the case may take you. So we grabbed our backpacks and off we went.

When we arrived at Mrs. Wilson’s backyard, Little Muffin was nowhere to be found. The only things in the backyard were Mrs. Wilson’s gardening tools. Well, and also some trees and shrubs too. We started combing the backyard.

“Here, Little Muffin!” Vic called as he looked through the petunia plants.

“Come here, Little Muffin!” Lucky Susie called as she lifted up the gardening tools. Apparently, Lucky Susie thought Little Muffin might be really, really little.

“Here, Little Muffin!” I called as I walked around the pine tree. But no luck. No Little Muffin.

Then Lucky Susie stopped. “Do you smell that?” she asked Vic and me.

“All I smell is petunias,” Vic grumbled.

“No, that bakery smell,” Lucky Susie responded. Indeed, there was a faint smell of cakes and pies in the air. “I wonder where that smell is coming from,” she said.

It seemed as though Lucky Susie had luckily stumbled onto another clue. Then I remembered that Mr. Boccelli had recently opened a bakery somewhere in town. “Let’s follow that smell,” I said.

So we climbed on our bikes and followed the smell. As we turned from Elm Street onto Sycamore Avenue, the smell grew strong. When we turned onto Pinehurst Road, the aroma was even stronger. Down at the end of the block we saw a sign that read Boccelli’s Baked Goods. We raced down to the bakery.

Sure enough, there was a little dog right in front of the bakery door. Its nose was in the air, savoring the delicious aromas. Its little tail was rapidly wagging back and forth.

“Little Muffin?” I called. “Is that you?” When the dog heard its name, it jumped up and down and starting barking. Lucky Susie climbed off her bike and called the dog over to her. When the dog ran over, Lucky Susie scooped it up and placed it in her bicycle basket.

We rode back to Mrs. Wilson’s house and knocked on the door. She was delighted to see her Little Muffin safe and sound. “Thank you so much!” she cried. And, as promised, she gave us a half-dozen of her delicious brownies. When we got back to the garage (I mean, to the office), we enjoyed the brownies with milk.

So finding some lady’s lost dog was no big deal. That was an easy one. Most cases are easy, like I said before. But not every case, and that’s for sure. Let me tell you about the one that almost had me stumped, flummoxed, bamboozled, and at a loss. I call it the Case of the Eerie Nighttime Lights. You might not believe it, but I’ll write it all down so you can read about it. My pen’s full of ink, so here goes.

Chapter 2

Actually, I may be getting ahead of myself. Before I get into explaining the case, let me give you some background. As I've stated before, my name is Mack MacLean, and I'm a kid detective. How did I get to be a detective, you ask? Well, it runs in the family you could say. My dad, Mark MacLean, is a detective with our town's police department. His dad, my grandfather,



Mike MacLean, was also a detective. So I guess you could say I'm bred to be a detective.

Also, I learned a lot from books. The Sherlock Holmes stories were always my favorites. I've read most of them, and I like the original ones—the ones that came first—the best. Somebody named Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote them long ago. Sherlock Holmes was an excellent detective, and I try to model myself after him.

I first got into detecting when I was really young. I remember once, when I was about six years old, my dad couldn't find his garden rake. He looked all over for it. He searched the garage. He searched the backyard. He even searched the shed. But the rake was nowhere to be found. He thought that was strange since he had just used it the day before. Then, I remembered something. I remembered that my dad had quit raking the leaves the day before because a thunderstorm had come along. It had started raining, and the wind was blowing everywhere. I remembered that my dad had run inside, leaving the leaves only partially raked. So, I thought of something. I walked outside and looked underneath a pile of leaves. I found the rake. Dad had dropped the rake, and the wind had blown the leaves over it, covering it up. I was really proud of myself when I brought the rake

to my dad. I remember that he smiled and said, “You found my rake! You’re a regular Sherlock Holmes! A real kid detective!” And that’s where it all started.

So, I started solving problems all over the place. I found lost socks, misplaced cake bowls, missing lawnmowers. You name it, I found it. Then I started solving all kinds of other puzzles. I figured out why Mr. Johnson’s dog always hid under his porch in the morning (some bullies were teasing the dog on their way to school). I discovered why Ms. Phillips was always losing food from her pantry (she had a rascally raccoon living in her backyard who’d creep inside at night and steal her dry goods). I became known all over the neighborhood, and then all over the town, as the kid who could solve puzzles.

As the puzzles grew more and more complex and harder to solve, I began to realize that I might need some assistance. First, I hired Vic, my best friend from kindergarten, to help me. If I’m like Sherlock Holmes, then he’s like Dr. Watson. (Dr. Watson is Sherlock Holmes’ right-hand man in those old stories.) Vic really helps me out sometimes. He’s even solved a few cases on his own, like when I was too busy with schoolwork or baseball practice. Vic’s a great detective. I’m sure he’ll have an assistant of his own someday.



As our detective agency (as I like to call it) grew, Vic and I realized that we needed even more help. That’s when we came across



Lucky Susie. She was a new kid in town. She had heard of Vic and me, so she came to our office (the garage) one day and offered her services as a detective’s assistant. Like I said, Vic and I needed some help, so we gave her a chance. On our very first case with her, she helped us out in a big way. I won’t go into details about that case, but understand that she always earns her nickname.

So that's our team, and how we all got into the detecting business. Like I said before, teamwork is great, and it's especially great when you're working with friends. I think Vic, Lucky Susie, and I get along really well. We always share the profits from our cases. For instance, when we all found Mrs. Wilson's dog, we split up the half-dozen Famous Fudge Delight Spectacular Brownies fair and square. Each of us got to enjoy two of the brownies. Some people might think that I should get a bigger share of the profit since I'm the boss. I don't agree. We're a team. It's all for one and one for all (of course, that's a slogan from a whole other set of stories, but I won't get into that here). Besides, you wouldn't want more than two of Mrs. Wilson's Famous Fudge Delight Spectacular Brownies anyway. You'd spoil your appetite for at least a week, and that's for sure.

Now that I've given you the history of the Mack MacLean, Kid Detective agency, I should get back to the story. So, make sure you're comfortable. Grab a cold glass of lemonade if you're at home. Gather around your desks if you're at school. Like I said before, you just might not believe the story of the Case of the Eerie Nighttime Lights.

Chapter 3

It was a dark and stormy night. I know, I know. A lot of mystery stories start that way, but it really was a dark and stormy night. My family had invited Vic and Lucky Susie over for dinner, and after dinner the detectives and I were going over some paperwork regarding a recent case. We had just figured out why Farmer Buck's sheep kept disappearing from his farm (it turns out there was a loose board in his fence). Farmer Buck had paid us with four gift certificates for hayrides at his farm. Vic, Susie, and I were trying to figure out who should get the extra certificate, since there were only three of us.

We decided to donate the extra ticket to charity because that seemed like the right thing to do. I said, "Well, that's settled then," as we waited for Vic and Lucky Susie's parents to pick them up and take them to their homes. We had the office door open, and we were looking out at the rain.

"I love thunderstorms, don't you?" Lucky Susie asked.

Vic teased her, "Well, I know ducks like to get wet, and thunderstorms make you wet. I guess that means you're a duck, Lucky Susie."

"Knock it off, Vic," Lucky Susie said, although she was smiling. She loved Vic's jokes. Vic was quite the comedian at times.

Vic continued on. "Yeah, instead of Lucky Susie, we're going to start calling you Lucky Ducky. Lucky Ducky, Kid Detective. How's that sound, Mack?"

I was about to respond when something caught my eye. Outside, across the street and over the tops of the trees, a strange light was circling in the sky. It swooped back and forth, back and forth. Sometimes it would disappear for a second and then reappear.

"Whoa! Look at that!" I said, pointing at the strange light in the sky. "What do you think that is?"

Vic looked where I was pointing. "Gee, I don't know. Maybe some kind of spotlight?"

Lucky Susie said, “It doesn’t look like a spotlight to me,” as she gazed up at the light. We watched as the light darted back and forth, flitting in and out of the clouds. The dense, pouring rain made it difficult to tell just exactly what the light was. It was eerie, and, to be honest, the three of us were a little freaked out. And a good detective is always honest. Well, usually honest anyway.

Vic was the first person to say what we all might have been thinking. “You don’t think it’s, you know, a UFO, do you?” he asked.

Lucky Susie didn’t like the sound of that. “It couldn’t be. Could it, Mack? I mean, there are no such things as UFOs, right?” She looked at me as though she wanted me to tell her what she wanted to hear.

I, of course, don’t believe in UFOs, Unidentified Flying Objects. Of course, technically, this *was* a UFO: it was an object, it was flying, and we couldn’t identify it. But that didn’t mean some strange little green men from Neptune or Pluto were flying it.

“There’s no such thing as UFOs,” I told both of them. I reminded Vic and Lucky Susie that they needed to look for clues before they started jumping to conclusions. I reminded them that good detectives don’t just jump to conclusions. “C’mon folks. Think. Let’s list all the possible things it could be. It’s not a UFO.”

We all started racking our brains, like good detectives do.

“Maybe it’s a military spy plane,” Vic suggested.

“Or a spotlight for a new dance club across town,” said Lucky Susie.

“Or the reflection of the moon off Lake Ponderosa,” I said.

“Or a commercial jet trying to land at Heathcliffe Airport,” said Lucky Susie.

We went through a number of other possibilities, but each one didn’t seem to make much sense. This case seemed like it was going to be a tough one. We decided to sit down and polish off the last of Mrs. Wilson’s Famous Fudge Delight Spectacular Brownies and think about the eerie lights for a while. The three of us ate in silence. We all realized we were too tired to think about the lights that night.

“How about we call it a night and meet again tomorrow morning after breakfast?” I suggested, as Vic and Lucky Susie’s parents both pulled into the driveway at the same time. The others thought that would be a good idea. We all said goodnight to each other.

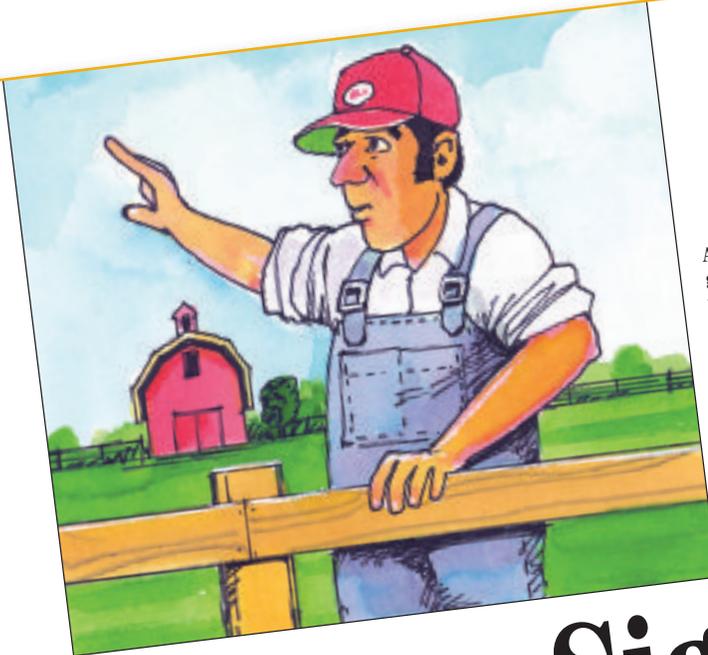
I went inside and went to bed. As I lay in bed, I thought about the lights. What could they possibly be? My thoughts kept me awake for much of the night.

Chapter 4

I awoke the next morning and went downstairs to have breakfast with my family. My dad was reading the paper, and my brother was cooking eggs and bacon. I sat down at the kitchen table, after pouring myself a cup of orange juice, and asked my dad if I could read the “Local News” section of the newspaper. My dad had just finished with that section, so he handed it over to me.

I opened up the newspaper and started perusing the headlines. There were a lot of uninteresting articles about local taxes, library board meetings, and other stuff that I didn’t care about (not the stuff that drives a great kid detective like me). Then, a certain headline and article caught my eye, and I began reading.





An unusual sight greeted some viewers who were watching the thunderstorm that hit town last night. According to eyewitnesses, at about 8:05 p.m. last night, a strange light flitted in and out of the clouds in the night sky for about ten minutes.

Strange Sights Light Night Sky

By Yolanda Franklin

An unusual sight greeted some viewers who were watching the thunderstorm that hit town last night. According to eyewitnesses, at about 8:05 p.m. last night, a strange light flitted in and out of the clouds in the night sky for about ten minutes. Some witnesses described the light as a "fast-moving object that was difficult to make out." Others described it as "some sort of flying thing."

"I've never seen anything quite like it," said local farmer Jim Brown, 67, who was in his field last night making sure the storm hadn't knocked down any fences. "I had just finished putting new fence posts in. I looked up at the rain, and then I saw this strange light. [It] moved in and out of the clouds, like a strange flying object. At first, I thought it might be an airplane, and then I thought maybe it might be a spotlight of some sort."

Local business owner Rocco Boccelli, 43, of Boccelli's Baked Goods, also claims to have seen the strange lights. "I've never seen anything like it," he said. "It was moving very fast. Too fast to be an airplane, I think. Sometimes it would disappear behind the clouds. Sometimes

the rain would make it hard to see. I wonder what it was?" he said.

Indeed, many people in town wonder what the lights might have been. According to local Chief of Police Julia Suarez, the police department received many calls about the lights. "We had about 30 people call headquarters, reporting a strange light to the east of town. At this point, we aren't exactly sure what it was. However, we have officers investigating it right now," Suarez said.

Calls to Mayor Ben Ishmael were not returned, as the mayor is out of town for a conference.

While many wonder what the lights might be, some local townspeople have their own ideas. "I always knew there was life on other planets," said Professor Higgins Wigglesworth, 68, who teaches astronomy at Benson University. "It is very possible that these lights are alien people trying to contact us. I only hope the lights return, so we can study them some more."

It is safe to assume that many people will turn their eyes to the night sky tonight, perhaps to catch another glimpse of these strange night lights.

I finished reading the article and put the newspaper down. I turned to my father, who was reading the sports section of the paper. “Did you see those strange lights last night, Dad?” I asked.

He said, “No, your mother and I were watching television. I read that article though.”

I asked him what he thought about the lights. He said that when he went to the police station later, he’d asked around to see what was up. I said, “Well, I’ll do the same. This does indeed seem like a case for the Mack MacLean, Kid Detective Agency, doesn’t it?”

My dad chuckled. “It sure does. Don’t get into any trouble though. And don’t get in the way of an official investigation,” he warned me.

“I won’t, Dad,” I replied, though I wasn’t sure I could stay out of trouble. A good kid detective has to search for clues wherever they might be found. I decided to call Vic and Lucky Susie to tell them that we were going to take this case, the Case of the Eerie Nighttime Lights. Vic and Susie were both excited to take on such an interesting and exciting case. They both said they’d be over to the office soon.

Chapter 5

Vic, Lucky Susie, and I all met after breakfast in the garage—I mean, the office. I had told them both to bring their complete detection kits.

A complete kit is a backpack that contains the following:

- a flashlight
- a canteen of water
- trail mix (peanuts and raisins)
- a chocolate bar
- a notepad
- three pens

You never know how long you're going to be on a case, so you have to be prepared. That's where the flashlight, water, trail mix, and chocolate come in. (Vic often munches on his trail mix. I try to remind him that the trail mix is for emergencies only, but he has a mind of his own.) And every good detective needs to take good notes, so that's why you need pens and a notepad.

Anyhow, we met in the office. I asked both Vic and Susie if they had read the newspaper article about the strange lights. They both had. Though neither one had any ideas about what the next step should be. So we brainstormed for a while. Brainstorming is a good way to come up with ideas. When you brainstorm, you basically write down any idea that pops into your head. Some ideas might come as a result of other ideas. Brainstorming, especially when you don't have any clues, is a crucial part of detective work. If you can't brainstorm well, you won't be a detective for long.

So anyway, after a fruitful brainstorming session (in which we only took a break for lemonade), we came up with a few good ideas. We realized that we needed more information about these strange lights.

We realized that we needed to figure out how to get more information. Vic suggested that we try the authorities. I thought that was a good idea. Lucky Susie thought that perhaps we should speak with a professor who studies

the weather, a meteorologist. Luckily (of course), Lucky Susie's mother knew someone who taught meteorology at the local university.

I decided I'd pay a visit to Mr. Boccelli down at the bakery, whom I'd read about in the paper this morning. I also decided that, if I had time, I'd also go and see Farmer Brown over at his farm, since he was also an eyewitness.

Before we all left, I double-checked Lucky Susie and Vic's detection kits to make sure that they were both complete. Lucky Susie's kit was completely in order. She had everything she needed.

"Do you know how to get to the university, Lucky Susie?" I asked.

"Sure do, boss," she replied, buckling the strap on her bicycle helmet. "I just bike up Franklin Avenue and turn left into the university. I'll go and have a chat with the professor." I told Lucky Susie to give me a full report when she returned. She agreed, climbed onto her shiny blue bicycle, and pedaled off down the road.

I checked Vic's detection kit, and sure enough, he didn't have nearly enough trail mix. "Vic, where's your trail mix?" I asked, sternly.

"Had some on my way over here today," he replied, a bit sheepishly.

I sighed. "You'll never learn, will you?" I said. "Wait here and I'll go get some from our kitchen.

Vic waited in the office, while I went inside to the kitchen to forage for some trail mix. I found a bag in the cupboard and brought it out to Vic. "Here you go, Vic. Now, are you going to go talk to the police today?" I asked.

"Sure. I'll find out what they know about these strange lights. They ought to know something, don't you think?"

"I do," I responded. "Sounds like a plan. Give me a full report when you get back."

"Sure thing," Vic said. He put on his helmet and skated away on his skateboard.

We have a computer in my house. I logged on to look up the address of Jim Brown, the farmer. I jotted down the address in my notepad, saving it for later. As I said earlier, I planned to go to the bakery first to see what Mr. Boccelli had to say about the lights that he'd seen. I predicted that it was going to be an interesting day.

Chapter 6

predicted correctly.

I remembered where Rocco Boccelli's bakery was from the small case of Mrs. Wilson's lost puppy, Little Muffin. So I decided to head over there and speak to Mr. Boccelli. I made sure my own detection kit was complete, which it was. (I like to think I run a pretty tight ship. I keep my affairs in order.)

But, sometimes, unexpected things happen. Like what happened on my way to visit Mr. Boccelli. Before I tell you what happened, I need to explain something. You see, detectives, even kid detectives, aren't just detectives. They're also public servants, just like detectives who work for the police station. All detectives should remember that whenever they can help somebody out, they should.

So I was on my way to Mr. Boccelli's bakery. It was a beautiful day, and I was going over some ideas about the strange lights. Up ahead of me, I saw a younger kid sitting on the sidewalk. He was holding a dog's leash. From a distance, I could tell that he was crying. I rode over to him.

"Hey, buddy," I said reassuringly as I got off my bike, "what's the matter?"

The little boy, his voice choked with tears, cried, "I've lost my dog Max!" He started crying again.

I realized I was near the bakery, so I had an idea. I asked the boy, "Are your parents home? Because if they are, ask them if you can come with me, and we'll go find your dog."

The boy looked up at me. The faintest glimmer of a smile crossed his face. "Okay!" he shouted and ran inside. A few moments later, he came out carrying his skateboard, helmet, and safety pads. His mother was following him.

When she saw me, she said, "Oh, you're the famous kid detective. You'll help Johnny find Max?"

I said, confidently, "Mack MacLean, kid detective, at your service, ma'am. We'll be back soon, with Max in tow. C'mon, Johnny, let's ride."

Johnny strapped on his helmet, elbow and kneepads, and climbed onto his skateboard. I told him to follow me, and we headed off down the road. I was on my bike, and Johnny was in hot pursuit on his skateboard. As we rode down the street, I remembered how Vic, Lucky Susie, and I had found Mrs. Wilson's dog at the bakery. I figured that it was worth a shot.

Sure enough, when Johnny and I rode up to the bakery, there was a small beagle puppy. He was sniffing the air, and wagging his tail excitedly. Before I could say anything, Johnny jumped off of his skateboard. "Max!" he yelled, "Come here, boy!"

Max heard Johnny call him and immediately ran over. Max was barking happily, and his tail kept wagging quickly back and forth. Johnny knelt down and attached the leash to Max's collar. "I can't thank you enough, Mr. Detective," Johnny said with tears in his eyes. They were tears of happiness, it seemed.

I said, "It was no big deal. Good detectives like to do good deeds whenever they can." Johnny asked if maybe one day he could be a kid detective. I told him, "Do well in school, respect your parents, and maybe one day, when you're a little older, I'll have a space for you on my staff. We're always looking for good people. Good luck, Johnny."

Johnny said, "Thanks a bunch!" and he rode away on his skateboard, with Max jogging close behind. I thought to myself, "Another case solved by Mack MacLean, kid detective."

Luckily, helping little Johnny had led me exactly where I wanted to go—Mr. Boccelli's bakery shop. That had worked out really well. So I unbuckled my bicycle helmet and locked my bike up against a parking meter. Stashing my helmet in my backpack, I walked in through the bakery's front door. It was time to get to work.

Chapter 7

The interior of the bakery was almost as brightly lit as the outside. Everything was covered in bright colors. The tablecloths were a bright red and white. The counter was a bright blue and white tile. But the most exciting part about the bakery wasn't the color. It was the aroma. The smell of freshly baked cookies, pies, cupcakes, and tarts was almost overwhelming. I could hardly stand it. My mouth started watering almost immediately after I walked through the door. I could imagine spending a lot of time here, sampling the different baked goods, fresh out of the oven. It was delightful.

But I knew I had work to do. There would be other times for enjoying the fruits of Mr. Boccelli's labors. There was a man leaning against the counter, his apron the same red and white pattern as the tablecloths throughout the bakery. He was reading a section of the daily newspaper. I figured he must be Mr. Boccelli.

I cleared my throat. "Mr. Boccelli?" I asked. The man raised his head, and looked at me through thick glasses with the kindest eyes I'd ever seen.

"Oh, hello, young man," he said with a smile. "Did you come for your puppy?" he asked.

"Excuse me?" I said. I wasn't following what he was saying.

He continued, "There was a lovely little puppy sitting just outside the door a minute ago." Mr. Boccelli looked out through the open door. "But he seems to be gone now. I figured he was somebody's lost dog. I usually don't let dogs into the bakery. They can cause trouble. But he was a cute one. Funny thing, there was another lost dog here just the other day."

I realized Mr. Boccelli must have been talking about Max. Also, the dog from just the other day must have been Mrs. Wilson's Little Muffin. So I said, "No, the dog that was just here belonged to a friend of mine. I helped my friend find him. They just left."

Before I could say more, Mr. Boccelli said, “Well, that was a good deed. Good deeds deserve rewards. How about a cupcake?” Mr. Boccelli motioned to a glass cabinet filled with the most beautiful cupcakes you could imagine. Chocolate-frosted cupcakes. Cupcakes with candy-colored sprinkles. Red-and-white checkered cupcakes, just like Mr. Boccelli’s apron. I knew I had work to do; I wanted to discuss the night lights with Mr. Boccelli. But I couldn’t resist the offer. Everything just smelled too good!

I said, “Well, sure, Mr. Boccelli! I’d love a cupcake. How about a red-and-white one?” I pointed to the second shelf in the cabinet.

He said, “Aah, one of my specialties. Coming right up.” He opened the cabinet and fished out the biggest of the red-and-white cupcakes. He continued talking. “You can’t have one of my cupcakes without something to wash it down. Let’s see,” he said, scratching his chin. “Oh, I know, how about some lemonade?”

A cupcake and lemonade sounded pretty good to me. “That’d be great!” I said. Mr. Boccelli presented me with the cupcake on the plate and a glass of cold, refreshing lemonade.

Before I ate, he said, “You know, I think I’ll have one myself.” He grabbed a cupcake and poured himself a cup of coffee from a coffee pot behind him. “Coffee’s not good for kids your age,” he said with a wink. “It’ll stunt your growth. You want to grow up big and strong, don’t you?” he asked. I agreed.

Mr. Boccelli raised his coffee cup and said, “To finding lost dogs!” I clinked my lemonade glass against his coffee cup. For a moment, we sat in silence, enjoying our cupcakes and beverages. I’d almost forgotten why I had come to see him.



Chapter 8

Mr. Boccelli finished his cupcake and washed it down with a swig of coffee from his cup. He said, “Well, what’s your name, son?”

I said, “My name’s Mack MacLean, sir.”

He said, “Well, My name’s Rocco Boccelli. It’s an absolute pleasure to meet you, Mack.” He put out his hand, and I shook it. Then he continued talking. “You see, this is exactly why I opened this bakery. When I was a boy in Italy, *mio padre* owned a bakery. My father’s bakery was a place where everybody in town could come, sit, talk, and meet new people. When I came to the United States, I knew I wanted to own a shop just like the one *mio padre* owned. And now I do.” He was beaming.

I said, “It’s a very lovely place, sir. And that cupcake was one of the best cupcakes I’ve ever had. No lie. One of the best in my entire life.” I wasn’t just being polite. It really was one of the best cupcakes I’d ever had.

Mr. Boccelli smiled and thanked me for the compliment, and then a thought crossed his mind. “Well, you haven’t seen anything yet,” he said. “You ever tried *biscotti*?” he asked. I told him that I hadn’t. I’d never even heard of it.

“Well,” he said, “biscotti is an Italian cookie, kind of like a biscuit. People in Italy like to eat them when they drink their coffee. Would you like to try one?”

The cupcake was so good that I couldn’t imagine that anything Mr. Boccelli baked wouldn’t be tasty. “Sure,” I said, basically forgetting why I was in the bakery in the first place.

From a jar on the counter, Mr. Boccelli pulled out two of the most unusual biscuits I had ever seen. They were long and thin. They looked very flaky. He put one on my plate and one on his own. Refilling my lemonade, he said, “Like I told you, it’s better with coffee, but I think you’ll stick with lemonade, no?” Once again, I agreed. In turn, he refilled his own coffee cup with coffee.

And, once again, we sat in silence, enjoying our biscotti. Being a kid detective has its perks. Having the opportunities to try new things was one of them. Here I was, in a fancy bakery, trying a new treat that I'd never had before. And boy was it good. It was crunchy, sweet, and very tasty.

But, as I've said before, I was at the bakery for a reason, and I had work to do. So, I washed down my biscotti with lemonade and explained to Mr. Boccelli why I had come to see him. I explained about the strange lights in the sky the night before. I told him that I was trying to figure out what the lights were. I also told him that I had read about him in the newspaper. I explained that I wanted to get a fuller account of his story, since he was an eyewitness to the whole thing. "Would you mind telling me what happened, Mr. Boccelli?" I asked, as I fished my notebook and pen out of my backpack.

Mr. Boccelli said that he'd be glad to help, and started to speak. "As you may recall, it was raining really hard last night. Unfortunately, I have a leak in my roof. So, after I closed up shop last night, I spent a good deal of time emptying buckets of rainwater that I had put under the leak. They would fill up so fast that I barely had time to empty them out before the next one would fill up. It kept me moving.

"Anyway, I was so busy with the buckets that I didn't have time to take down the chalkboard sign outside on the sidewalk. When I finally got the leak under control I ran outside. The rain had washed away all of the chalk from the board, and there was a colorful stream of red, blue, and yellow water running down the sidewalk. I felt a little silly for not remembering to take down the sign. So, there I was outside, looking at the colorful stream. It was actually kind of nice. Except for when it leaks through my roof, I rather like the rain. So, I stood out there, looking up at the sky."

As he spoke, I jotted notes down in my notebook. Mr. Boccelli continued. "Anyway, that was when I noticed the strange lights. They darted in and out, behind the clouds. Sometimes they would dip below the horizon. Sometimes it seemed like the lights would vanish into thin air, and sometimes they would then reappear. It was, to say the least, very eerie."

Chapter 9

Mr. Boccelli finished his story, and I finished taking notes. Folding up my notebook and stashing it back into my backpack, I said, “Well, Mr. Boccelli, I’d like to thank you for your time, the lovely treats, and the information.”

Mr. Boccelli said, “Any time, Mr. MacLean.” I told him to call me Mack. He said, “Okay, Mack. You tell your parents to come by someday, okay?” I said I would, and walked outside. As I was buckling my helmet, Mr. Boccelli came running after me.

“I completely forgot something,” he said. “Earlier this morning, one of my customers mentioned something to me. We were discussing the lights from last night. He mentioned that he remembered seeing something very similar in the night sky many years ago. Does that help any?”

It did, indeed. I said, “Well, I’ll have to do some research, Mr. Boccelli. But thanks. I’ll make a note of that and let you know what I find out. See you later!” I rode away on my bike, thinking about all the things that Mr. Boccelli had said. The most interesting thing was the last detail. Somebody had seen these lights before? How odd! I decided that rather than going to see Mr. Brown, the farmer, I’d better go to the library.

For a kid detective, the library is one of the best places for information, clues, facts, and all sorts of other things. I love the library. What’s weird is that you don’t find many more people using the library. Whenever I go there, it’s always almost empty. That’s strange. So many books, newspapers, and other interesting stuff is at the library. If you have a library in your town, you should check it out. Libraries are great.

So I rode to the library and locked my bike to the bike rack outside. I opened the giant metal doors and walked inside. As usual, there was Dr. Johnson, the head librarian, at the main counter.

“What’s up, Dr. J.?” I asked.

“Hey, Mr. MacLean, my favorite detective!” he exclaimed. “What’s the news?” I told him I was working on trying to figure out what the strange lights were in the sky the night before. “Yep, I saw those,” Dr. Johnson said. “Mighty weird, if you ask me.” I told Dr. Johnson that I would need to use the computers in the computer lab.

“Sure thing,” he said, “but you’d better hand over your backpack. Or at least the trail mix and chocolate bars you’ve got in there.” Mr. Johnson never lets me take food into the library. I suppose that’s fair. You don’t want chocolate gumming up computer keyboards. So I handed my goods over to him.

“Don’t eat my snacks,” I joked. He winked at me. I went over to the computers in the computer lab. I was thinking about what Mr. Boccelli had said about somebody seeing the strange lights years before. I wondered if anybody else had. So I decided to do a search of the archives of the local newspaper. I logged onto the library’s database and found the newspaper archives. Archives are great because they give you the opportunity to read the collected past articles from any source, like a newspaper. I narrowed my search down to articles with the words and phrases *eerie*, *lights at night*, and *strange* in them.

You are not going to believe what I found.

Chapter 10

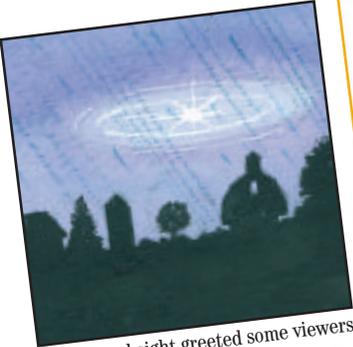
I'm not even sure where to start. Well, let's see. The first article I found was from fifteen years ago. The headline was "Local Sky Lights Up Bright at Night." Rather than describe what the article said, let me show you an excerpt.

Here it is:

Local Sky Lights Up Bright at Night

By Yolanda Franklin

While many wonder what the lights might be, some local townspeople have their own ideas. "I always supposed there was life on other planets," said Professor Higgins Wigglesworth, 53, who teaches astronomy at



An unusual sight greeted some viewers who were watching the thunderstorm that hit town last night.

Benson University. "It is very possible that these lights are alien people trying to contact us. I only hope the lights return, so that we can study them some more."

Now, if you remember the article from today's paper, you can imagine how stunned I was. Here I'd found an article written fifteen years ago about strange lights that a few people had seen over the town's night sky. It seemed as though the same strange lights had appeared over town fifteen years ago. What was weirdest, of course, was what this Professor Higgins Wigglesworth said. His quote in the earlier article and his quote in the later article were *exactly the same!*

Weird. I kept searching. And it got even weirder. I found two more articles—one from thirty years ago, and one from forty-five years ago. Do you know what?

They each were about the same thing. Apparently, every fifteen years, strange lights appear over my town's sky. And every single time, people turn to Dr. Wigglesworth for information. And every single time, he says the same thing. Odd, very odd.

I kept searching, and I learned something else. I discovered that there were never any follow-up articles to the ones about the strange lights. I don't know why. Maybe people just wrote it off as an unexplainable event.

Or, maybe it was more than that. Maybe people didn't want to believe what Dr. Wigglesworth seemed to believe. The idea of aliens is probably downright frightening to some people. Maybe most of the townspeople just wanted to forget what they saw and pretend it had never happened.

But a good detective can't do that. A good detective has to have an open mind. A good detective has to be ready and willing to learn things that he or she might not want to believe. Now I, for one, don't believe in UFOs, aliens, or little green men from Mars. I don't follow that mumbo-jumbo. But I knew I was working on a case, and I had to investigate every possibility. I knew I had to speak with this Professor Higgins Wigglesworth. I had to get to the bottom of this case.

Chapter 11

I logged off the computer after printing out all the articles I needed for my files. I approached Dr. Johnson's desk. I cleared my throat and said, "Hey, Dr. Johnson?" He looked up from his newspaper.

"What can I do you for, Mack?" he asked. Dr. J. always said "do you for" instead of "do for you." I liked that, although I didn't quite get it.

See, Dr. Johnson knows everybody in this town. He's been the head librarian for decades. So I decided to ask him a few questions, about the strange lights, and about this Professor Wigglesworth.

I spoke up. "Well, Dr. J., would you mind telling me what you think about the lights you saw last night?"

Dr. Johnson looked at me with a very serious look. "Well, Mack," he said, "here's what I figure. I figure it could be any number of things. It could be light reflecting off of Jenny Lake. It could be swamp gases from Fungus Hollow Swamp mixing with the electricity of the lightning in the sky. Who knows? It could, I suppose, also be UFOs. You never know."

So I said, "Well, the whole UFO thing. I'm not sure I believe it, but I suppose it's possible."

"That's right," he said, "nothing's impossible."

I continued. "Right. So, I want to pursue that idea. Do you know this Professor Higgins Wigglesworth who teaches astronomy over at Benson?"

Dr. Johnson laughed heartily. "Hah! I know ole' Higgy. Everybody knows Higgy! Maybe that's why the newspaper always turns to him every time these lights show up at night. He certainly seems to believe in UFOs, that's for sure."

I asked Dr. Johnson if he might do me a favor. "Dr. J, would you call and ask Professor Higgins if he might speak to me this afternoon? I'd like to discuss some of his ideas with him, if that's possible."

Dr. Johnson said, “Sure, Mack, anything for you. I’m glad you’re trying to get to the bottom of this strange mystery. Maybe Higgy can help you. Maybe he can’t. You’ll have to find out for yourself. I’ll be right back. Let me go use the private phone in my office, okay? Watch the desk for me.”

Dr. Johnson left to go to his office, and I stood behind the counter. Aside from a kid about my age stopping by to check out a book (I stamped the cover with the return date stamp), there weren’t many people in the library, so I wasn’t too busy.

Not too much time elapsed before Dr. Johnson returned. “Higgy said he’d be glad to speak with you, Mack. He said he’ll be in his office for the duration of the afternoon. Do you know where the Lee Building is on campus?”

Dr. Johnson asked.

I’d been on campus quite a bit during my time as a kid detective, so I knew precisely where to find the Lee Building.

Chapter 12

I realized that I had been gone quite awhile. So I thought it would be a good idea to call home and check in. I found the pay phone in the lobby of the library and put two quarters in. I dialed my house. My mom answered.

“Hi, Mom. It’s me,” I said. “Have Vic or Lucky Susie come by the office, I mean, the garage?”

Mom said that she hadn’t seen Lucky Susie all day. But she did say that Vic had been by earlier.

“He asked me to tell you that he had some information about the case that you all are working on,” she said. “He asked me to tell you to call him later.”

I told my mom that I would call him later. I also told her that I had a few more stops to make, and that she shouldn’t keep dinner waiting for me because I’d be home a little late.

She said, “Okay. But don’t stay out too late. You may be a famous detective, but you’re also my son, and you do have a curfew.”

“I know, I know,” I said and assured her that I wouldn’t be much longer.

I hung up the phone and returned to Dr. Johnson at the front desk.

“Can I have my snacks back, Dr. J.?” I asked.

He laughed. “I was just about to eat them myself,” he said, handing over my trail mix and chocolate bar. He continued, “Good luck in your meeting with Professor Wigglesworth,” he said.

I thanked Dr. Johnson for his help and left the library. I walked out to my bike and got ready to ride over to the university to meet with the professor. As I was strapping on my helmet, Lucky Susie rode up on her bike.

“Hey, boss,” she said as she coasted her bicycle to a stop in front of me.

“What’s up, Lucky Susie?” I asked.

She reminded me that she had been speaking with the meteorology professor at the university. “I don’t really have much to report,” she confessed.

I told her that that was okay. I also filled her in on the things I had learned from the newspaper archives, and that I was headed over to the university myself to meet with Professor Wigglesworth in the astronomy department. “Would you like to come?” I asked.

“That’s sounds really exciting!” she exclaimed. “I’d love to come.” So I told her to follow me, and we pedaled over to the university and stopped in front of the Lee Building.

“You ready?” I asked Lucky Susie as we locked our bikes to a lamppost.

“I sure am,” she said, grinning. I could tell that Lucky Susie was very intrigued by what we might learn from Professor Wigglesworth. We walked into the building.

Chapter 13

We found the office we were looking for with ease. As good detectives, we first studied the directory in the lobby of the Lee Building. That directed us to the second floor of the building, room 213. We climbed the stairs and followed the arrows to room 213. “Professor Higgins X. Wigglesworth, Ph.D.” the door read. Below his name were the following phrases: Professor of Astronomy and Member of the National Association of Stargazers. Lucky Susie knocked on the door.

A small, weak voice called from within, “Please, do come in,” so I opened the door.

Professor Wigglesworth’s office was a disaster. There were piles of books and papers everywhere. Every horizontal space had something on it. All the bookshelves were full. The windowsill was full of papers. The professor’s desk was piled high with towering stacks of papers and books. There were even books on the floor and on all the chairs!

I can barely even describe the professor himself. He was a tiny fellow, about five feet tall. He had a bushy gray mustache. His beady eyes peered out from behind thick eyeglasses. His polka-dot bowtie was crooked, and his shirt had what seemed to be coffee stains on it.

He spoke. “Ah, you must be Mack MacLean, kid detective,” he said. “You’ve come to speak about the strange night lights that graced our night sky last evening, no?” he asked as he stood up to shake my hand. He also appeared to be quite old. I guessed he’d been a professor for many, many years. Decades, even.

I introduced myself and explained that Susie was one of my detective assistants.

“Quite right,” he said, “Good to work in teams, I always say. ’Tis a pleasure to meet you both.” He spoke with a British accent. Professor Wigglesworth offered both of us seats and moved piles of books and papers from the two chairs in

front of his gigantic oak desk. By moving the papers and books, he made even more towering piles of books and papers elsewhere. I wondered how the professor could ever find anything in this office.

Anyhow, Lucky Susie and I sat down. Professor Wigglesworth asked us what he could do for us. I explained that we were trying to figure out what the strange night lights were in the sky last evening.

He told us that he figured we had read his quote in that morning's paper. I explained that we had. I asked the professor to give us his professional opinion about what the lights in the sky might mean.

Professor Wigglesworth began to speak. "Well," he said, "I've thought quite a bit about it. I've also discussed it with my colleagues, the other professors at the university. Nobody can seem to come up with a reasonable explanation."

Lucky Susie took notes as the professor spoke. I listened as the professor continued.

"It has long been my belief," he said, "that human beings on Earth cannot be the only life forms in the universe. Not even the only ones in the galaxy. "Unfortunately, most of the people in my field, other stargazers and astronomers, don't agree with me. We are people of science. That is, we want proof of things in order to believe in them. But the way I see it, I want proof that human beings are the only life forms in the universe. See, you can't prove it either way. But when I see strange lights in the sky, as we all did last night (and fifteen, thirty, and forty-five years ago), I tend to believe that they are clues that might actually be proof of other life forms. So...."

I held my breath, aware of what the professor was about to say, but unable to believe it myself.

Chapter 14

Sorry, I just ran out of ink. Not a good place to stop telling the story, but I have more ink now. So, where was I? Oh, right. The professor was speaking. Here we go. The professor continued. “So,” he said, as I held my breath, aware of what he was about to say, “I believe that the lights in the night sky are actual alien beings coming to contact us. I believe it is a very exciting time, and I hope they try to contact us again. Perhaps they will. Maybe even tonight!”

I thought this was a strange thing for the Professor to say. Why did he have any reason to assume that the lights would return tonight? That didn’t make any sense to me.

At any rate, the professor kept speaking. “I have studied the possibility of alien life for my entire professional career. I have been laughed at. I have been mocked and jeered by other scientists. I have always tried to ignore what they said. But it has been difficult. And now, now that I am about to retire (for I’ve been teaching a very long time), I would like one chance to prove that I have been right all along, and that the others have been wrong all along.”

I thought this was strange. You see, I’ve always believed that being a scientist was much like being a detective. In both fields, you’re not supposed to let your feelings get in the way of your search for facts. It seemed like the professor was doing just that.

I cleared my throat. “Well, Dr. Wigglesworth,” I began, “My assistant and I are very pleased to hear your, uh, professional opinion about this matter. We’ll take it into consideration. Thanks for your time, and thanks for speaking with us. C’mon, Susie, let’s get back to the garage. I mean, the office.” I motioned for her to follow me to the door.

The professor said, “It was my pleasure. Let me just say that I, for one, will be outside, again tonight, hoping for more contact from these exciting alien beings.”

“Maybe we will too,” I said, as Lucky Susie and I walked out the door. “So long, Dr. Wigglesworth!” I called.

When Lucky Susie and I were outside, I asked her what she thought of what the professor had to say.

“Well,” she began, “he really seems to think those strange lights were UFOs, doesn’t he? I mean, I’ve never really believed in UFOs, but I guess nothing’s impossible.”

“You’re very right, Lucky Susie,” I said, “that’s a motto all detectives should live by: Nothing’s impossible.” I explained to Susie what I thought about the professor’s insistence that there must be life on other planets. “It seems odd to me. I think the professor’s letting his personal opinions get in the way of his science.”

Lucky Susie looked at me as though she didn’t understand what I meant. So I said, “I’ll explain later. Why don’t you go home, have some dinner with your family, and then meet me back at the office, afterwards? I’ll call Vic and tell him to do the same thing.”

Lucky Susie agreed, and off she rode on her bike. I found the nearest pay phone and plugged two quarters in. I called Vic’s house. As soon as he answered, Vic started talking about his trip to the police station to talk to the authorities.

I interrupted him. “Hold on there, Vic.” I said. “Let’s save it for after dinner.” I told him to meet me at my house after dinner.

Vic agreed to do so, and I hung up. I rode home to my house, almost famished from my long day of detective work.

Chapter 15

Like I said, I was hungry, so I was glad to sit down and eat dinner with my parents. They'd kept dinner waiting after all. We usually eat at six o'clock, but it was nearly seven by the time I got home. My mom heard me come in the door.

"There's my little detective," she called, "I hope you're hungry because dinner's almost ready."

I sat down across from my mom and dad, like I always do. As we ate, I figured I could use this time to ask them a few questions. I knew my mom used to teach at the university, so I figured I'd start with her.

"Hey Mom," I said, "did you know Professor Higgins Wigglesworth when you worked at the university?"

My mother rolled her eyes. She began, "I sure did, that crazy fellow. Higgy, as we preferred to call him, always had the wackiest ideas. He was always going on about aliens and spacemen and whatnot. Why?"

I told her all about my meeting with Dr. Wigglesworth this afternoon, and about how strange I thought it was that he insisted that there were alien beings trying to contact planet Earth.

My dad spoke up. "I went to a party with your mother one night, and he was there," he said. "Dr. Wigglesworth talked my ear off about aliens the whole night. I tried to be polite and listen patiently, but it was difficult, that's for sure."

My dad continued. "Anyhow, you're showing some good detective skills by doubting his motives, or his reasons for acting the way he does," my dad said. "What's your next step?"

Now, as I may have said before, any good detective should be willing to take suggestions from others. So, I told my dad what I'd learned so far. I told him about what Mr. Boccelli claimed to have seen. I told him all about what I read

about in the archives. I told him what Lucky Susie and Vic had been up to all day, speaking to other professors and the police about the strange lights. I also told Dad that Vic, Lucky Susie, and I were going to meet one more time that night to discuss what we knew.

So my dad said, “Well, I’d suggest that you have your meeting. Listen to what Vic has to say, and then go from there.”

I told my dad that that made sense. Suddenly, my mom spoke up. “All this talk about space aliens and UFOs. I’m not sure it fits the dinner table. Let’s talk about something else, shall we?”

So for the rest of the meal, we talked about other things. We talked about the things my mom had done at the hospital that day. We talked about another case that my dad had been working on down at the police station. We also discussed the local baseball team, the Rangers.

As much as I enjoy being a detective and focusing on the task at hand, dinner with my parents was a nice break, I have to admit.

After dinner, I helped clean up the kitchen and do the dishes from dinner. As I was rinsing off the final plate, there was a knock at the front door.

My mom answered it. I bet you can guess who it was. Yep, it was Vic and Lucky Susie. It was time to have our meeting.

Chapter 16

called the meeting to order. Since I had already spoken at length with Lucky Susie today, I thought it best to have Vic tell us about what he learned at the police station today.

Vic started talking. “Well, I saw your dad down there. It’s so cool that your dad’s a cop.”

I interrupted Vic. “Yeah, I know, Vic,” I said, “but it’s getting late. It’s almost dark. So, hurry your story up, okay?”

Vic apologized and continued. “Okay. So, anyway, I spoke to Sergeant Harris. He said that the station had received quite a few calls last night. He also said that the calls reminded him of a night fifteen years ago, when people had called in to report the same sort of lights. I thought that was weird,” Vic said.

At that point I explained to Vic what I had read in the archives at the library. Vic listened and then said, “Well that makes sense.” Then he continued. “Well, anyway, the most important thing I learned was this. Sgt. Harris told me that the most unusual call he’d received was from Mrs. Wilson. Remember her? Well, she apparently said that she had seen somebody running around in the woods at the end of Clover Lane last night, right after the lights appeared in the night sky. Sgt. Harris told me that he’d sent a squad car out to investigate, but the car didn’t find anything.”

As soon as Vic said that, I had an idea. “Come with me,” I said to Vic and Susie, and we went to my dad’s study. I asked my dad if it was okay if we checked something on the Internet really quickly.

“Sure, go ahead,” my dad said.

I logged on to the Internet and found a map of our town. It was a map that the County Commissioners had made. It actually had the address of each house in town on it. I zoomed in on Clover Lane. The house at the end of Clover Lane was

1818 Clover Lane. I jotted that number down. Then, I went to the online phone book. I had an idea.

In the online phone book, I looked up the address of Higgins X. Wigglesworth. Can you guess what his address was? Sure enough, it was 1818 Clover Lane.

Vic and Lucky Susie saw what I had found. “Well, that’s a coincidence, isn’t it?” Lucky Susie asked.

“I don’t think so, Lucky Susie,” I said. I called for my dad. “Hey, Dad? Do you think you could drive us somewhere?”

“Sure thing,” my dad called back. We all walked into the kitchen and waited while my dad found the car keys.

It was beginning to get dark outside. We all piled into the car, and I asked my dad to drive us to the end of Clover Lane. As he did, I explained to everyone what was going on.

I said, “See, today Professor Wigglesworth was talking about how upset he was that nobody had ever believed in his ideas about UFOs. He also said that he wanted to prove to everyone that there were UFOs before he retired. Now, if you take into account what Mrs. Wilson saw behind Dr. Wigglesworth’s house, I think the Professor is behind these strange lights. He said that he’d be watching for them tonight. So let’s see what happens when we get there.

After I finished speaking, we drove in silence. I could tell that everyone was thinking about what I had just said. Vic had a doubtful look on his face, but maybe that was because he was hoping that the aliens might actually be real.

My dad drove us to the end of Clover Lane, and parked just beyond #1818. Dad turned off the lights, and we sat waiting. The sky grew darker and darker. Soon, it was exactly the same time it had been the night before when the lights showed up. I said, “If anything’s going to happen, it’s going to happen soon.” We all quietly crept out of the car.

Chapter 17

We sat on the hood of the car, all four of us, in silence, gazing up at the night sky. I also looked around, peering into the woods behind the Professor's house. It seemed like hours went by, but in actuality it was probably only a few minutes.

Then, all of a sudden, Lucky Susie gasped, "Look! Up in the sky!" She pointed upward.

We all looked up. Sure enough, there were the lights. They darted in and out of the clouds, so it seemed. They sometimes vanished and then reappeared. Everybody seemed intent on watching the lights, but not me.

I shined my flashlight into the woods. I scanned to the left. I scanned to the right. Then, all of a sudden I saw something, or somebody, in the beam of the flashlight. It was Dr. Wigglesworth!

He had a dark coat on, and he held something in his hands. I ran after him. My dad, Vic, and Lucky Susie were in hot pursuit. "Professor!" I shouted. "Professor! What are you doing in there?!"

When Dr. Wigglesworth saw me, he froze. From his hands fell a metal box with knobs and an antenna. It was a remote control!

"I think I know what's going on here, Professor," I said. "May I see that remote control?" Sadly, the professor picked it up and held it out to me.

I studied the remote control. There was a knob, very similar to a pilot's stick, which read "UP/DOWN/LEFT/RIGHT." There was also a switch that read "LIGHTS ON/LIGHTS OFF." I looked up in the sky. Above me hovered a makeshift flying saucer. It was circular, and it appeared to be about five feet in diameter. Using the remote control, I guided it to the ground where it landed next to my feet.

"So this is the strange flying saucer that everyone has seen, huh?" I asked the Professor.



The Professor held his hat in his hands. He began speaking. “When I first became a professor, I began to realize that my lifelong dream of studying UFOs might not come true. I realized that there might not be things such as UFOs after all. So, many years ago, I decided to play tricks on the people in this town. Every fifteen years, I would send my remote control UFO up into the sky, just long enough for people to see it and wonder what it was. So, that’s what’s been going on. It’s always been me.”

At first, I thought I should be upset with the professor’s trickery. But then I realized that, you know what? The professor hadn’t hurt anyone. It really wasn’t a big deal. But still, I told the professor that he’d probably be better off if he quit doing it.

“I know,” the professor said. “It was fun while it lasted. For a couple of days, every fifteen years, I’d hear people start getting excited about UFOs. It was neat. But it’s over now.”

Suddenly, my dad started speaking. “Hey, Professor Wigglesworth. You might not remember me. My name is Mike MacLean. When I was in college, I took your astronomy class. It was a big class. There were about 150 people in the class, and it was long ago, so you might not remember,” my dad said.

The professor peered at him. “I can’t say that I do remember, son,” Dr. Wigglesworth said.

My dad continued, “Well, I remember being in your class. I remember how excited you were when you started talking about the possibility of life on other planets. You loved talking about that. Right then, I realized that I, too, wanted to have something that I was that excited about. That’s when I decided that when I figured out what I wanted to do with my life, I would be just as excited about it as you were about the planets in the galaxy. So, in a way, you made me the detective that I am today, proud and excited to do what I do.”

Dr. Wigglesworth cleared his throat. “I don’t know what to say,” he said.

I said, “Well, I do. It sounds like my dad is the great detective that he is because of you, professor. And that means that I’m the great kid detective I am because of you, too! I became a kid detective because I saw how much my dad enjoyed being a detective. So, thanks, Dr. Wigglesworth!”

The Professor picked up his flying saucer and I handed him the remote control. “I think it’s time to retire these things,” he said. “I think it’s probably time to retire myself, as well. Thanks for everything, kids,” the professor said. He walked over to his house, opened the door, and went inside.

As we walked back to the car, my dad said, “Well, looks like you solved another one, Detective.”

I couldn’t help being proud of myself and my team. I said, “Yep, the Case of the Eerie Nighttime Lights is now officially closed.”

Chapter 18

Dear Editor:

My name is Mike MacLean. I would like to let the town know that Professor Higgins Xavier Wigglesworth, Ph.D., has recently retired from his position as a Professor of Astronomy at Benson University. I had Professor Wigglesworth when I was a student. There was never a more excited and happy professor than he. He will be greatly missed by everyone who ever had a class with him.

Sincerely,

Detective Mike MacLean

Police Department

“That’s a pretty good letter, Dad,” I said as I folded up the evening paper. “You must’ve really liked Professor Wigglesworth.”

“Well, I did,” my dad said. “And I thought the town should know. If people ever hear about his tricks with his remote control, I want them to have heard another side to the story as well.”

“That’s a good point, Detective,” I said to my dad. We were sharing ice cream floats after dinner, sitting out on the porch. It had recently grown dark. The mosquitoes were just beginning to bite. It was a beautiful night.

Dad asked me what I had found most challenging about the Case of the Eerie Nighttime Lights, aside from having too many pieces of biscotti at Mr. Boccelli’s bakery.

“That’s a good question,” I said. “I think the hardest thing was trying to accept the fact that there might be UFOs, even though I don’t really believe in them.”

My dad said, “Trying to accept facts that you might not want to believe is one of the most challenging parts of being a detective,” Dad said. I agreed.

We sat in silence for a while, and in my mind I ran through all the steps I had followed to solve this case. It had definitely been one of my tougher cases, as I believe I said before.

But, I must admit, I was pretty proud of myself. I’m always proud of myself and my team whenever I solve a particularly difficult case.

As I sat there, I gazed up at the night sky, the words “case closed” echoing in my head. As I was looking up, suddenly I saw a strange light darting in and out of the clouds. It didn’t look like an airplane, but it didn’t look like lightning either.

As I heard my phone start to ring, I realized that maybe the case wasn’t closed after all. I knew Vic and Lucky Susie would be here soon. It was time to get to work.

The End?

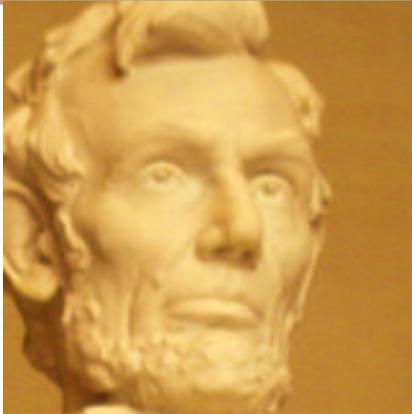


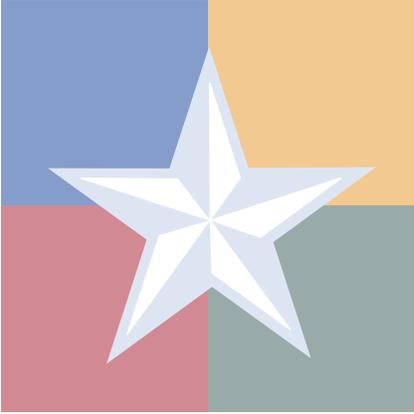
Capital
Monuments:

• MEMORIES IN STONE •



By Andy Wolinsky





• INTRODUCTION •

MAKING MEMORIES

From the earliest times, people have tried to think of ways to remember those who have come before them and those who have passed away. People have wanted to honor the people who have played important roles in their families, their towns, their countries, or in history. Whenever a person creates something to honor the memory of someone else (or a group of people), this is called a memorial. Memorials can come in many forms. They can be songs, operas, symphonies, novels, poems, gravestones, and even buildings.

When a memorial takes the form of a building, tower, or other construction, it is called a monument. Monuments are sometimes carved from stone. Mount Rushmore in South Dakota is one such monument. This monument has the faces of Presidents Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Washington carved into the face of the mountain. Even the buildings on Ellis Island in New York, where thousands of immigrants entered our country in the 1800s, are considered monuments.

One city in particular, however, has a great number of monuments and memorials—our nation’s capital, Washington, D.C. Almost everybody has heard of the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. These two monuments were built to honor two of our greatest presidents. Many people have also heard of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which was built to honor the thousands of Americans who fought courageously during the Vietnam War. These are but a few of the famous memorials and monuments in our nation’s capital. We will explore some of the most famous memorials and monuments in Washington, D.C., and some of those that aren’t so famous, but that are just as important.

WORDS TO KNOW**monument:**

A building or other construction built to honor the memory of an important person or event.

• HAIL TO THE CHIEF! •

THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT

The presidential monuments are some of the most famous monuments in Washington, D.C. Almost everyone recognizes the Washington Monument, the memorial to our first president, George Washington. It towers over the National Mall (a large park that extends from the United States Capitol Building to the Washington Monument), standing more than 555 feet tall. The monument was built in two stages: from 1848–1856 and 1876–1884. Political problems and the civil war interrupted its construction. You might notice that the marble changes color part of the way up the monument. You can tell where the first stage of construction ended. All the marble for the monument came from the same quarry in Maryland, but by the time construction began for the second stage, they were taking marble from a different part of the quarry. When it was first built, the Washington Monument was not just the tallest building in the United States, but the tallest in the world. Inside the tower, there is another wall consisting of stones that came from each of the fifty states. So, you could say that our entire country helped build the Washington Monument. The monument was closed in September 2004 for renovations but has since reopened. Be sure to visit it, but remember that it is very popular! Admission is free but requires a ticket.



Would you like to know more about the Washington Monument?

Then check out:

www.nps.gov/wamo/index.htm.

Monumental fact! The Washington Monument in the capital wasn't the first one built in the U.S. The first monument to Washington is in Baltimore, Maryland. Both Washington monuments were designed by Robert Mills.

THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL

Perhaps the other most famous presidential monument in Washington, D.C. is the Lincoln Memorial. It stands as a tribute to our sixteenth president, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln led the country through one of the darkest periods in its history, the American Civil War. He served from 1861 to 1865 and led the Union army to victory over the Confederacy during that war. Many historians believe that it was Lincoln's steadfast leadership that kept the country from splitting into two.

The Lincoln Memorial resembles an ancient Greek temple. It is a giant marble structure surrounded by thirty-six Doric columns. Doric is a style of ancient Greek architecture. The thirty-six columns represent the number of states that were a part of the union at the time of Lincoln's death in 1865. Inside the memorial itself is a giant statue of Abraham Lincoln, seated on a marble throne. Behind him, the Gettysburg Address is inscribed on the wall. You may have heard of the Gettysburg Address. It is one of the most famous presidential speeches in history. It begins, "Four score and seven years ago..." Lincoln gave this speech at the site of one of the worst battles of the civil war, the Battle of Gettysburg. Along with the Emancipation Proclamation, which legally ended slavery in the United States, the Gettysburg



Address is one of Lincoln's most amazing creations. So it is fitting that it is inscribed on the wall of his memorial. This memorial has also served as an important symbol in many movies and as a backdrop for inspirational speeches. Like the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial is free and open to the public.



WORDS TO KNOW

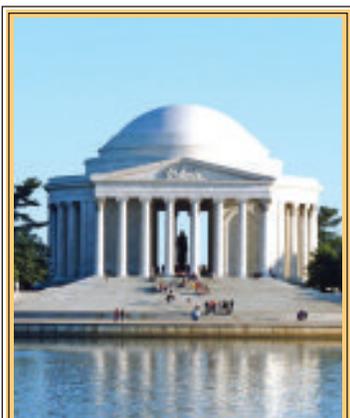
Doric:

A style of ancient Greek architecture. Many of the monuments and memorials in Washington, D.C. are built in the Doric style. Other ancient Greek styles are Ionic and Corinthian.

THE THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial is another presidential monument in Washington, D.C. Thomas Jefferson, our third president, served from 1801–1809. Jefferson is probably best known for writing the Declaration of Independence. However, Jefferson was not only a president and politician. He was also a great philosopher, scientist, and educator. In fact, Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia, the first public university in the United States. This was just one of Jefferson’s many acts of philanthropy, which means giving money charitably.

The Jefferson Memorial overlooks the southeast bank of the Tidal Basin, an artificial body of water in Washington, D.C. that was created from the Potomac River to improve navigation through the city. The memorial itself is very similar to the Lincoln Memorial in that it, too, is constructed of marble and surrounded by dozens of columns. Also, like inside the Lincoln Memorial, it has a statue of the president inside the memorial. In Jefferson’s case, however, the surrounding



Would you like to know more about the Thomas Jefferson Memorial?

Then check out:
www.nps.gov/thje/index.htm.

columns are Ionic and his statue is a majestic bronze, not stone. The Jefferson Memorial is best known for its strikingly beautiful domed roof and the Japanese cherry blossom trees that surround the memorial. The Jefferson Memorial was designed to look like the Pantheon, an ancient temple in Rome. The stone that makes up the domed roof is Indiana limestone, and it is an unbelievable four feet thick! Inside the memorial are several inscriptions, excerpts from Jefferson’s numerous writings on America, history, freedom, government, and democracy. It is only fitting that the words of a man who wrote the Declaration of Independence should be etched in stone for eternity. Like the other presidential memorials, admission is free.

THE NEWEST PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL



The Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial have been around for decades. But there is a newer presidential monument in Washington, D.C. that is drawing tourists and visitors by the thousands. It is the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. It was opened to the public on May 2, 1997, and since then thousands of people have come to see it.

Aside from being the newest presidential monument in Washington, D.C., the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is also very unique—it has four rooms versus the single-room structure of most other monuments. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the country’s longest-serving president; he served four terms, before Congress passed a law that stated that a president could only serve two terms. Therefore, his memorial is a series of four outdoor rooms. Each room symbolizes one of FDR’s terms in office. Throughout each room, plaques and statues tell the stories of the important historical events of that term. There are many stories to tell, for Roosevelt was president during some of the worst times of the twentieth century, the Great Depression and World War II. You may have grandparents or great-grandparents who were alive, or maybe even who served in the armed forces, during these terrible times. While Roosevelt was president, he led the country through the depression and the war. People can see pictures of Roosevelt and read the words he wrote, as they walk through shaded alcoves, sit on benches, and smell the Japanese cherry blossoms that bloom in the spring around the memorial. It is truly a beautiful memorial that covers acres and acres of the Tidal Basin’s coastline.

WORDS TO KNOW

plaque:

A flat plate attached to a wall that usually offers information or shows what certain people have said. Plaques are usually made of metal or stone.

There is also something else rather unusual about the Roosevelt Memorial. While most presidential memorials were built to honor only the presidents themselves, the Roosevelt Memorial also honors FDR's wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the more famous First Ladies that our country has ever known. There are statues of her in the memorial as well, along with plaques that honor her, her work, and her relationship with her husband.

As time goes on, who knows which presidents will have presidential memorials and monuments made in their honor. Each president plays an important role in American history, and each presidential memorial in Washington, D.C. honors the words and works of these important Americans. The presidential memorials are truly sights to see.



Would you like to know more about the Roosevelt Memorial?
Then check out:
www.nps.gov/frde/index.htm.



• SADNESS IN STONE •

The memorials and monuments in Washington, D.C. don't just honor great American presidents. Some of the memorials play a more somber and serious role. Some of them were built to honor those Americans who served, fought, and died in some of America's wars. Near the presidential memorials are three military memorials that are particularly important, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, and the Korean War Veterans Memorial.

THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is perhaps one of the most famous war memorials in the world. Standing on the eastern end of the National Mall, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial includes a long, black, granite wall. Each end of the granite wall starts at ground level, and at the center of the wall, it is more than ten feet tall. At one end of the wall are bronze statues of three American soldiers. The granite that makes up the wall was pulled from a granite quarry in Bangalore, India.

This part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, known as "The Wall," was built to honor the Americans who fought and died in the Vietnam War, a war that took place in the 1960s and early 1970s. A tragic time in American history, almost 60,000 American soldiers died in Vietnam and the surrounding countries in Southeast Asia. Here is how The Wall honors those men and women: every single one of their names is carved into the face of the memorial. Imagine that: rows and rows of names, carved into a wall that is nearly 500 feet long. As you stand facing the wall, the names of these soldiers stretch out as far as the eye can see. Many people say that it is very sad and moving, yet breathtaking at the same time.



WORDS TO KNOW

quarry:

An open mine, usually a giant pit, from which stone is blasted or dug out.

At either end of the wall is a register. Visitors can look through the register to find the location of a name of a loved one who lost his or her life in Vietnam. Many visitors, after finding the name they are looking for, place a piece of paper over the name. Then they use a pencil to rub over the name. The pencil lead makes the name from The Wall appear on the paper. Thousands of Americans have visited The Wall to trace the names of loved ones. It is but one way to respect and honor the Americans who lost their lives in Vietnam.



Monumental fact! The Wall was designed so the names of soldiers could be added to it at later times. Since its dedication, 230 names have been added.

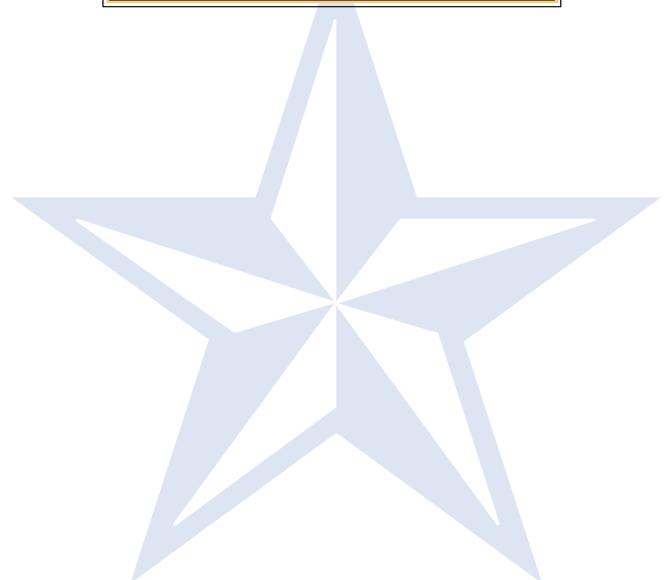
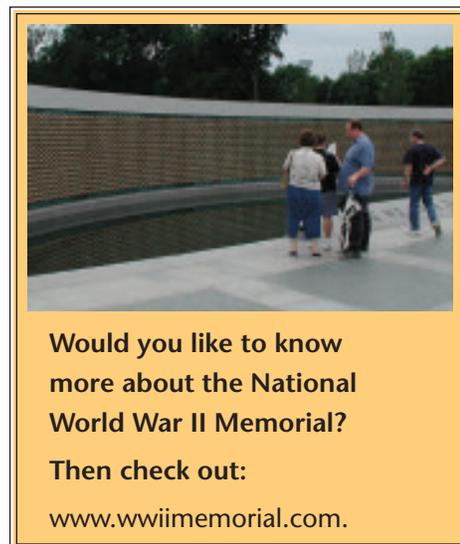
THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

The National World War II Memorial is one of the newest and most popular memorials in Washington, D.C. Located on the National Mall, the National World War II Memorial lies between the Washington Monument (to its east) and the Lincoln Memorial (to its west). The World War II Memorial opened to the public in May 2004. It is indeed a grand memorial.

Unlike the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which pays tribute to those who lost their lives in Vietnam, the National World War II Memorial was built to honor every single American who played a role in World War II. Not only does the memorial honor the more than 400,000 Americans who died in World War II, but it also honors the more than 16 million soldiers and officers who served in the war and came home to their families. The memorial also honors the untold millions of Americans who supported the efforts of World War II from home. Some were families who saw their loved ones go off to war; others were people who worked for the USO, the United Service Organization. The USO is an organization of civilians who help the American military in many ways. Among other things, the USO supplied nurses and doctors for injured soldiers and organized

resource drives to help Americans gather much-needed materials to send to the military. The National World War II Memorial also honors the American women who entered the work force during World War II to take the places of the millions of men who went off to fight the war.

The National World War II Memorial is flanked, or surrounded, on either side by a stone arch. During World War II, some American forces fought in Asia, while others fought in Europe. The two arches symbolize those two operations. Between the arches of the memorial is the Memorial Plaza. The plaza has two beautiful fountains that flow year round. Two American flags fly at either end of the plaza, and the seals, or official signs, of each American armed forces (the army, the air force, the navy, and the marines) adorn the bottom of each flagpole. There is also a wall covered with a field of 4,048 gold stars. These stars represent the more than 400,000 soldiers who died in World War II. The entire memorial is a fitting tribute to every American who helped the United States Armed Forces and their allies win World War II. It is truly everyone's memorial.



THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL

The Korean War Veterans Memorial is the third war memorial that was built in Washington, D.C. to honor the Americans who fought in important wars in the twentieth century. Although the Korean War Veterans Memorial is perhaps not as well known as the National World War II Memorial or the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it is no less important. In 1950, the United States Armed Forces joined with the United Nations to stop the nation of North Korea from invading South Korea. The three-year Korean War was successful. Tragically, however, more than 30,000 American soldiers lost their lives. The Korean War Veterans Memorial was built to honor those soldiers. But, like the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial was also built to honor all Americans who played a role in the war effort.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial consists of nineteen stainless steel statues of American soldiers. In various poses, these soldiers (each one more than seven feet tall) are shown climbing the slope of a small hill. The statues climbing the hill represent the difficult tasks the soldiers had to perform more than half a world

WORDS TO KNOW

veterans:

Those who have at one point served in the armed forces.



away. At the top of the hill are a granite pool and a wall. The shallow pool is called the Pool of Remembrance. Around it are the statistics of the American and United Nations soldiers who died or were captured or injured during the Korean War. The wall is a mural. The images of more than 2,000

soldiers and pieces of equipment are etched into it to honor those who fought in the war. Another low wall in the memorial displays the names of the countries that helped fight in Korea.

World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War were sad times in American history because so many thousands of Americans lost their lives (as did thousands of soldiers and civilians from other countries). But they were also

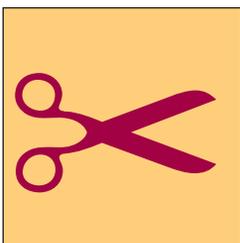
important times in our history. These wars helped define our nation and helped us understand ourselves as a people, and they must be remembered. The war memorials in Washington, D.C. help us remember. The war memorials ask us to face the past, understand what it means, and think about how it affects our present and our future.

• HOW IT WORKS •

THE PROCESS

Every president has the authority to declare that a memorial or monument should be built. After a president calls for a memorial, a lot of work needs to be done. First, the United States Congress has to officially decide on a location for the memorial. If it is a military memorial, Congress must work with the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), a committee selected by the president, to make this decision. Congress and the ABMC work together to make sure they select the right place. The National Mall, visited by thousands of tourists each year, is a good place to build a memorial.

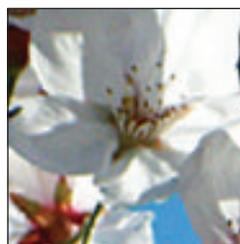
Then, a select group of historians, architects, and scholars come together to design the memorial. They work together to decide what symbols the memorial should have and what parts of history the memorial should represent. The architects who design memorials are often picked by holding contests. Contestants might be given certain criteria, or rules, to follow when making a design for their entry. Then a group of judges decides who has the best idea for



the memorial. The winners are not always famous architects. Maya Ying Lin, the designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, was only a twenty-year-old college student at the time. Sometimes, many people work together on the monument. The National World War II Memorial required a design architect, a sculpting architect, a landscape architect, and a team of lighting designers!

Sometimes the monument or memorial can take years to build. The Washington Monument, for example, took sixteen years to build, not including the break for the civil war. Eventually, the memorial is built, and there is usually a grand public ceremony. This is often referred to as a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The president of the United States is there to officially dedicate the memorial, and he usually does that with a moving speech. It may however, be a different president than the one who called for the memorial. For example, although President Clinton called for the FDR Memorial, it was President George W. Bush who officially dedicated it. It is at the dedication that the structure officially becomes a national monument or memorial.

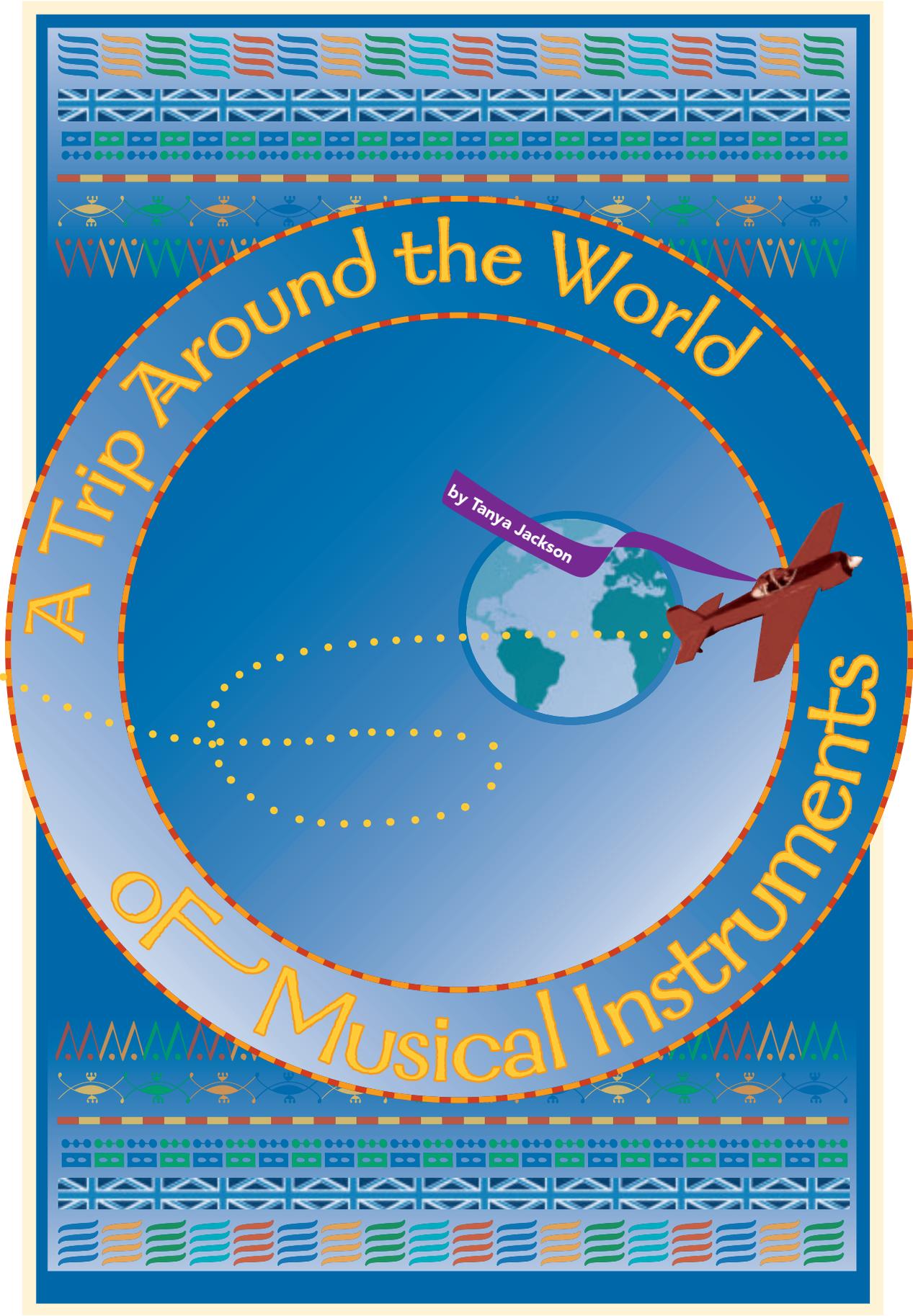
Would you like to know more about the ABMC?
Then check out:
www.abmc.gov.



WHO'S IN CHARGE?

The memorials and monuments in Washington, D.C. are maintained, controlled, staffed, and serviced by a dedicated group of citizens who are devoted to keeping the history and the beauty of the United States alive for all Americans. They are the men and women of the National Park Service. The National Park Service not only controls the memorials and monuments in Washington, D.C., they also control the national parks throughout the rest of the United States. Some national parks are man-made monuments, such as Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. Others are parts of nature, such as the Grand Canyon in Arizona. Other national parks are important places in history, such as the homes in which important people were born, or the buildings in which historical events took place. There are national parks in all fifty states, except Delaware. The National Park Service hires thousands of people to control these parks. Park rangers, police officers, tour guides, these are but a few of the people who work to keep the national parks, memorials, monuments, and historic places running. If you go to visit any of the national memorials and monuments in Washington, D.C., the employees of the National Park Service are there to help you. They can take you on tours, answer your questions, and help you understand the importance of these national monuments. Check them out for yourself! The memorials and monuments of Washington, D.C. are waiting for you.





INTRODUCTION: TAKEOFF

You may like rock and roll. It has electric guitars and loud drums. You might like rap music. It has electric turntables and microphones. You might like country music, with its fiddles and banjos. These are all popular types of music in the United States. Many Americans play these instruments.

But you may not have heard of some of the neat instruments from around the world. Have you heard of a taiko drum? That's a drum they play in Japan. Have you heard of a bodhran? That's a drum they play in Ireland. Have you heard of a sitar? It's an instrument they play in India. It's like a guitar.

There are interesting instruments played all over the world. In this book, you will learn about many of these instruments. You'll learn about instruments that come from Africa. Then you'll learn about instruments that come from Asian countries. Then you'll learn about instruments that come from Europe. You'll also learn about instruments that come from Australia.

So let's take a journey around the world, the world of fun musical instruments!



CHAPTER 1: AFRICAN DRUMS



Our first stop is in Africa. Many of the most interesting instruments in Africa are drums. For centuries, drums have played important roles in Africa. Drums are musical instruments. They are important religious symbols. They were also used as a means of communication. Let's explore some of these drums.

Djembes

The djembe is a drum from west Africa. It's pronounced JEM-bay. It's a tall drum. It's shaped like a goblet, or tall glass. It is hollow. The top of the drum is covered in goat hide. One plays the djembe with bare hands. The drum produces two sounds. If you hit the goat hide in the center, the drum makes a low, hollow sound. If you hit it near the rim, it makes a higher-pitched sound. So you can make different sounds with the djembe.

Many Africans believe the djembe contains three spirits. It contains the spirit of the tree. That's because the drum is made of wood. It also contains the spirit of the goat. That's because the top is a goat hide. It also



contains the spirit of the worker. That's because the worker worked hard to make the beautiful drum.

Djembes are popular in Africa. They've also become popular in the United States and Europe. Some people play them in drum circles. Drum circles are groups of drummers. They play all different types of drums. They play at street festivals. They play at fairs. They make wonderful music with African drums. You can hear a lot of the drums you'll learn about in this section in a drum circle. So let's learn about some more.

Do you know?

Drums are among the first musical instruments humans made to show emotion and keep rhythm.

Dununs

Dununs (DOO-noons) are other African percussion instruments. Dununs are generally short and fat, but they come in several different sizes to make lower or higher sounds. They are doubled headed, which means either side of the drum can be used to play. Dununs can have a strap that the player uses to wear the drum over his or her shoulder. The dunun can also be played on the ground or in a stand. Unlike the djembe, the dunun is played with a mallet, or stick. Dunun players might also hold a bell in one hand.



Dunun players usually play alongside djembe players. The instruments work together to make beautiful music. The djembe player creates the tempo, or speed of the song, and the dunun player follows along. Good dunun and djembe players know exactly what the other person is going to do. It's musical teamwork.

Words to Know

percussion instruments (n):

A group of instruments, such as bells and drums, which are struck in order to make noise.

Bongos

You may have heard of bongos (BONG-gohs). You may have even heard them played. Over hundreds of years, bongos have become very popular. Many think of bongos as a Latin American drum. Many Latin musicians play bongos in their music. Many enjoy listening to it. But bongos originally came from Africa. Bongos came to the Americas during the slave trade. The word *bongo* derives from, or comes from, the African word *bonko* (BON-ko). So the bongo is actually an African drum. Experts believe that the bongo came to Cuba first. African slaves were brought to Cuba. They worked on coffee and sugar farms there. That's how the bongo drum became known as a Latin American instrument.

Bongos are pairs of short, fat drums. Some drummers hold them in their laps as they play. Others hold them between their knees. A thick chunk of wood holds the two drums together. Today, metal might be used instead of wood. The body of the drums is made from wood, but similar drums with ceramic bases are used in the Middle East. Like the djembe, bongos have animal skins stretched across the top. One drum is slightly larger than the other. The larger drum makes a lower sound. The smaller drum makes a higher-pitched sound. Together, they make interesting combinations of sounds.



Do you know?

Like the djembe, the bongos were used in religious ceremonies in Africa.

Bougarabous

The final African drum we'll learn about is the bougarabou (boo-ga-RAH-boo). Bougarabous are tall sets of three or four different drums. Like the other drums we've read about, drummers play bougarabous with their hands. But these drummers also wear heavy, loose bracelets on their wrists. As these bracelets rattle, they add to the sound of the drums.

Since the bougarabous are sets of drums, they make varying sounds. One drum makes really high-pitched sounds, and another makes a really low sound. Others make sounds somewhere in between. Also, people usually dance and sing along with the bougarabou drummer.



Bougarabous, like the djembe, are all goblet-shaped. Unlike the djembe's goat skin, the head of the bougarabou is cow skin. And like the dunun player, the bougarabou follows the djembe drum.

In a drum circle, here's what you might see and hear. The djembe player leads the way. The dunun and bougarabou players follow along. You might also hear bongo players adding to the sound. These interesting African drums, whether played together or alone, are instruments that can make beautiful music.

But now, let's leave Africa. Let's head over to Asia, where we'll learn about Asian instruments.





CHAPTER 2: ASIAN INSTRUMENTS



Our first stop in Asia is India. Here we'll explore the world of raga (RAH-ga) music. The main instrument in this music is the sitar (si-TAHR). The sitar is a stringed instrument. That means it has strings. It's like a guitar or a banjo. Let's check it out.

SITARS

The sitar has a few basic parts. It has a hollow body at the bottom. It's shaped like a big onion. Then it has a long neck. The neck is made of wood. It's about two feet long. At the top, it has a head. The head has posts that hold the strings. There are eighteen or nineteen strings.

Here's how one plays the sitar. The player holds the body of the sitar in her lap. Then she plucks the strings with her fingers or a wire pick. The player wears it on her finger. It makes plucking easier. This picking makes the tones. With the other hand, she presses down on the other end of the strings.

That makes the notes change. Not all the strings are plucked! Some just vibrate when other strings are plucked to add different sounds to the notes. It may sound easy. But some people say the sitar is the hardest instrument in the world to play. It may be difficult to play, but it makes beautiful music. Sitar masters are important people in Indian culture.



Do you know?
Do you know what a gourd is? Pumpkins are a type of gourd. The body of the sitar is a gourd.



TABLAS

Let's stay in India for awhile. In chapter 1, we learned about African drums. Let's learn about an Indian drum, the tabla (TAH-blah). It's the most popular drum played in Indian music.

The tabla is actually a pair of drums, just like the bongos. But, the tablas are not connected like the bongos. One tabla is a small wooden drum, called the dayan (DAI-ann). It sits in front of the drummer, to the right. The other is a larger metal drum, called a bayan (BAI-ann). It sits to the left of the dayan. The tablas both sit on bundles of plant fiber. This helps give the drums a special sound.



Both drums are played with hands. There is a difference between the tablas and the African drums, though. African drummers play those drums with the palms of their hands. But tabla players in India use their fingers and thumbs, as well as their palms.

While the tablas have animal skins across the tops, like the other drums, they also have something unique. Each drum has a black circle painted on the head. This is made from a paste of rice and other ingredients. It is rubbed into the drum until it is dry and hard. This, like the bundle of plant fiber, adds to the special sound of the tabla drums. Some people think the tabla is the most important instrument in classical Indian music.



TAIKO DRUMS

Our next stop is Japan. There are a few fascinating instruments in Japanese music. The first we'll explore are taikos (TAI-kos). The word *taiko* is Japanese for "great drum." So all taikos are drums.

Taikos come in all shapes and sizes. The first we'll study is the nagado (NAH-guh-doe) taiko. They can be quite large. They are often as big as the drummer playing them. These drums have two heads, one on either end. So the drum lies on its side. And two people can play the drum. One plays one end, and another plays the opposite end. The bodies of these drums are usually made from wooden barrels.

Another type of taiko is the shime (shee-MAY). The shime taiko is smaller than the nagado. It also has two heads, although only one side may be used.

These taikos also have straps. People usually sling these drums over their shoulders. That way they can walk and play at the same time.

Japan has several drum festivals all over the country throughout the year. During these festivals, many drummers come together. They play all of their different taikos together. These festivals are similar to the drum circles we learned about earlier. People who hear these drum festivals say the music is very loud, yet very beautiful.



March to the Beat

In ancient Japan, drummers used shime taikos to help marching soldiers keep a steady pace.





SHAMISENS

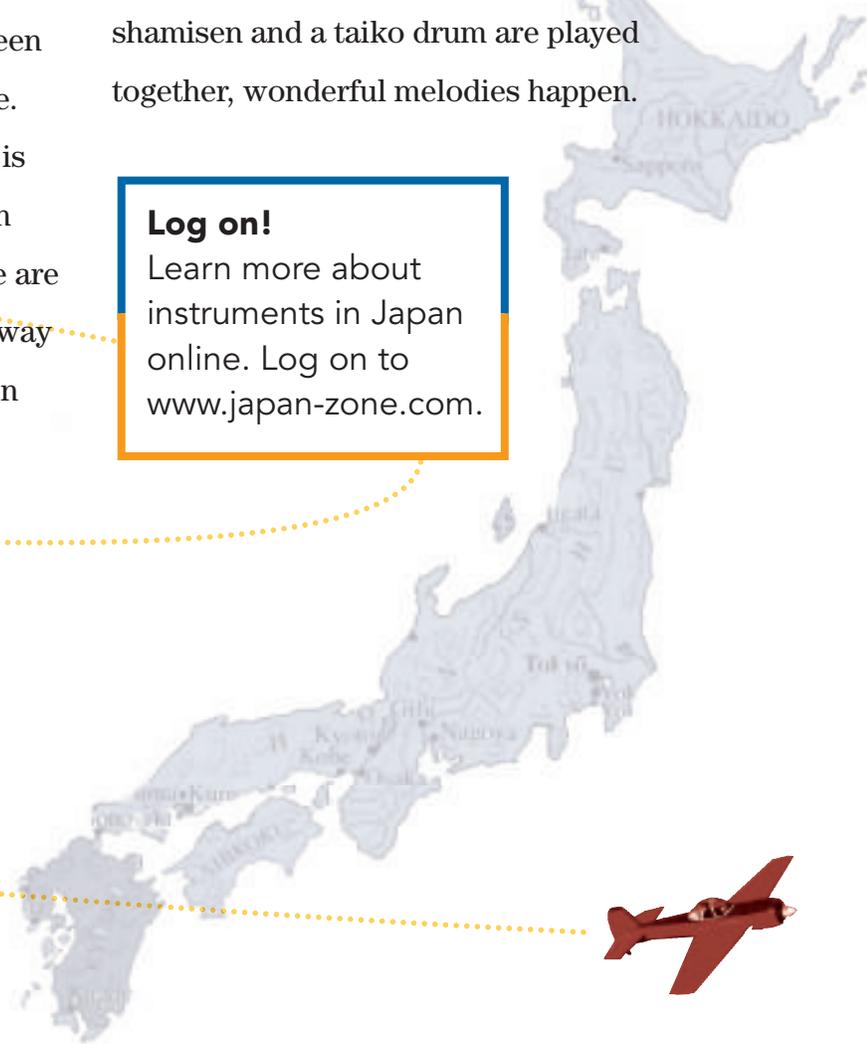
Before we leave Asia, let's study one more Japanese instrument. Let's study the shamisen. That's pronounced SHAM-ee-sen. The shamisen is another stringed instrument. It is similar to the sitar. It has a body, a head, a neck, and strings. It's played just like a sitar is played.

While the sitar has up to nineteen strings, the shamisen has only three. So it's easier to play. The shamisen is an ancient instrument that has been played for many, many years. There are a lot of rules that tell you the right way to play. Tradition says that shamisen

players should sit very still while they play. They shouldn't have any certain looks on their faces. Newer players don't agree with this rule. They play the shamisen the same way many Americans play their guitars. They dance around as they play. No matter how the shamisen is played, when the shamisen and a taiko drum are played together, wonderful melodies happen.

Log on!

Learn more about instruments in Japan online. Log on to www.japan-zone.com.





CHAPTER 3: INSTRUMENTS IN AUSTRALIA



We've learned a bit about African and Asian instruments.

Before we head west to Europe and the Americas, let's make a quick stop in Australia. There are sure to be some interesting instruments there.

Clapsticks

The native people of Australia are called Aboriginal people. They are a musical people, and simple clapsticks are their percussion instruments. Clapsticks accompany, or go with, the didgeridoo (DID-jer-e-doo), which we'll learn about soon. Clapsticks are simple, polished pieces of Australian hard wood. They are usually about a foot long. Most often they are painted with aboriginal symbols and *totems*, or

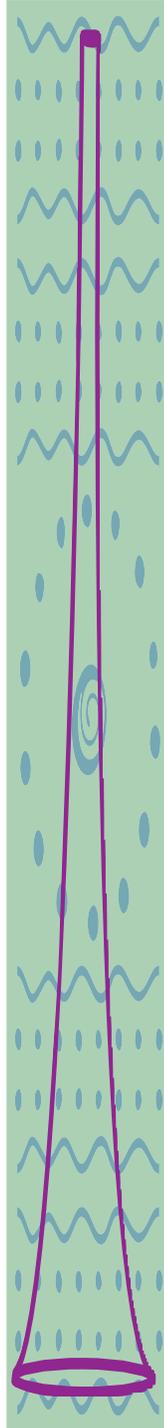
important pictures. Playing clapsticks is very simple. You hold one in each hand. You bang them together. This makes a clapping sound. You could try this right now with two pencils. But you can also change the sound of clapsticks. If you hold them tightly, they sound one way. If you let one rattle around in your loose fist, it echoes a bit more. That's how people make different sounds with the clapsticks. Good clapstick players can make music that's heard for miles!



Didgeridoos

The most important instrument to Australia is the didgeridoo. It is a wind instrument. Pipes, flutes, and clarinets are all wind instruments. The didgeridoo is the first wind instrument we've studied so far. Some experts believe the didgeridoo is the oldest wind instrument in the world. While that may not be true, there is one fact that nobody debates. No other instrument anywhere sounds like it.

Didgeridoos are long wooden pipes. They are usually made from the branches of trees. People hollow out a branch, so the branch itself is the whole pipe. Sometimes they are three feet long. Sometimes they are so long that people rest them on the ground as they play them! Sometimes people rest the pipes in holes in the ground. This helps the horn echo across the ground.



When a didgeridoo is played well, it makes a unique sound. The sound is a very low rumble, almost like a growl. But listen to this: you can hear a didgeridoo from twenty miles away! And that's not all. Good players can breathe in a special way. That lets them keep blowing one note for hours! Quite simply, there is nothing like the didgeridoo.

Old Music

Scientists have found 2,000-year-old wall paintings of people playing didgeridoos!



CHAPTER 4: INSTRUMENTS FROM EUROPE

We're ready to continue our trip around the world of musical instruments. While we're studying wind instruments like the didgeridoo, let's investigate some wind instruments played in Europe.

Tin Whistles

Tin whistles are fun little instruments. They're played all over Europe. But they're especially played in England, Ireland, and Scotland the most. They are short instruments made of tin. They make high-pitched sounds. They sound like birds, or teakettles, or maybe whistles that referees use. That's how they get their name. Tin whistles are played on street corners, in orchestras, and even to help soldiers march.

Tin whistles have a wooden or plastic tip at the top. That's the mouthpiece, and it's what the musician blows into. There are several holes along the tin pipe. Covering different

holes, and leaving others open, make different notes. Basically, any song can be played on a tin whistle. And, just about anyone can learn to play the tin whistle. That's probably why it's so popular.

Handy Tin Whistles

Tin whistles were first made in England in 1843, but they became extremely popular once they were brought to Ireland. Today, most Irish folk bands have at least one tin whistle player.





Bagpipes

Some say the didgeridoo is the “unofficial sound of Australia.” That may be true. If so, then the bagpipe is the unofficial sound of Scotland. You may have heard of bagpipes, or even heard them played. Like the didgeridoo, bagpipes are loud. Like the didgeridoo, bagpipes have a sound all their own.

Like the tin whistle and the didgeridoo, the bagpipe is a wind instrument. But it’s an unusual wind instrument. The wind comes from two places. First, there is a wood pipe that you blow into to make a sound. When that happens, you inflate a bag. You carry this bag at your hips. Other pipes shoot out from this bag. When you press down on the bag, more air comes out of the horns. That also makes a sound. And what a sound it is! Like the didgeridoo, the bagpipes can be heard from far distances. In fact,

bagpipes are so loud that they are usually played outside. If you played them inside, the blare would be too loud.

Bagpipes are played all the time. They’re played at weddings. They’re played at festivals and fairs. They’re played in parades. They’re played at funerals. They are also popular in America. Many people who came from Scotland brought their bagpipes with them. Many cities in the United States have Scottish neighborhoods. You might hear bagpipes in these neighborhoods. Remember, they’re very loud.

A good set of pipes can be very expensive. So people often pass them down to their children. They are important to most people from Scotland.



Bodhrans

We're about to depart from Europe, but let's make one more stop in Ireland before we go. There's an interesting drum that comes from Ireland. It's called the bodhran, pronounced BAW-rah-n. The bodhran is a traditional Irish drum, played in Irish folk music. Irish people have been playing it for centuries. They may have been used to scare enemies as warriors went into battle or as noisemakers during special celebrations.

Bodhrans come in different sizes, but they're all more or less the same. Each bodhran has the same structure. A bodhran maker takes a wooden circular frame. He stretches a piece of goat skin across the frame and tacks it down. He makes sure the skin is tight. It looks like a giant tambourine.

The bodhran player holds the drum upright on his lap. With a stick in one hand, he bangs one side of the goat skin. He holds his other hand against the other side of the skin. Moving his hand around varies the pitch of the drum.

It's actually quite simple.

Bodhrans are played everywhere in Ireland. They're also played all over the world, where folk music, especially Irish folk music, is popular.

Big and Small

Bodhrans range in size. Some are as small as twelve inches across. Others are longer than two feet across.



CHAPTER 5: INSTRUMENTS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

We have one more stop to make. Let's visit South America. Let's visit the Andes Mountains. That range runs down the west coast of South America. There's some wonderful music there. It's a great place to wrap up our world tour.

Bombos

Bombos (BOM-boze) are drums from the Andes. They're played in many places there. Bombos are made from hollow logs. The insides are sanded and smoothed. There are a few special things about the bombo. Unlike some other drums in this book, the head can be adjusted and changed during play. It can also be loosened. How? Well, there is a goat skin stretched across the top of the log. Leather straps hold it in place. If you loosen those leather straps, the skin becomes looser. Then, when struck, the skin makes a lower tone. The opposite occurs if you tighten the straps. This can

be done while you play the bombo. Here's something else that's unique. Usually, drum makers take the fur off the skin of the goat. Not so with the bombo. The fur is left on. This gives the bombo a special sound.

The bombo is played on many occasions. It's played for funerals and weddings. It's also played just for fun. Some say the bombo is special because it sounds like the beat of the human heart. It works well with the instruments we'll explore next.



Peruvian Cajons

The Peruvian cajon (per-OO-vee-un kah-HONE) is an interesting percussion instrument. But it's not really a drum. It doesn't have an animal skin stretched across the top. In fact, it's basically just a box. The box is made of hard wood panels, such as cedar or oak. There is a hole cut in one side. That's the back side. The opposite side is loosely attached to the others so it rattles. This rattling occurs when the player strikes the cajon with a stick. Sometimes, things such as bottle caps and wood chips are attached to the sides. When struck, these also add to the different sounds the cajon can make. People think the cajon was created to replace hand-clapping, which could never be as loud as the cajon can be.

People in Peru, where the cajon comes from, consider it to be an important national emblem of the country. As such, people say you can't play real Peruvian music without a Peruvian cajon. If you spend a day in the hillsides of the Peruvian Andes, you just might hear the rattle and banging of a Peruvian cajon. Then you'll know you're hearing real Peruvian music.





Charangos

We've only got one more instrument to investigate. That's the charango. That's pronounced chah-RANG-oh. Let's check it out before we finish our trip.

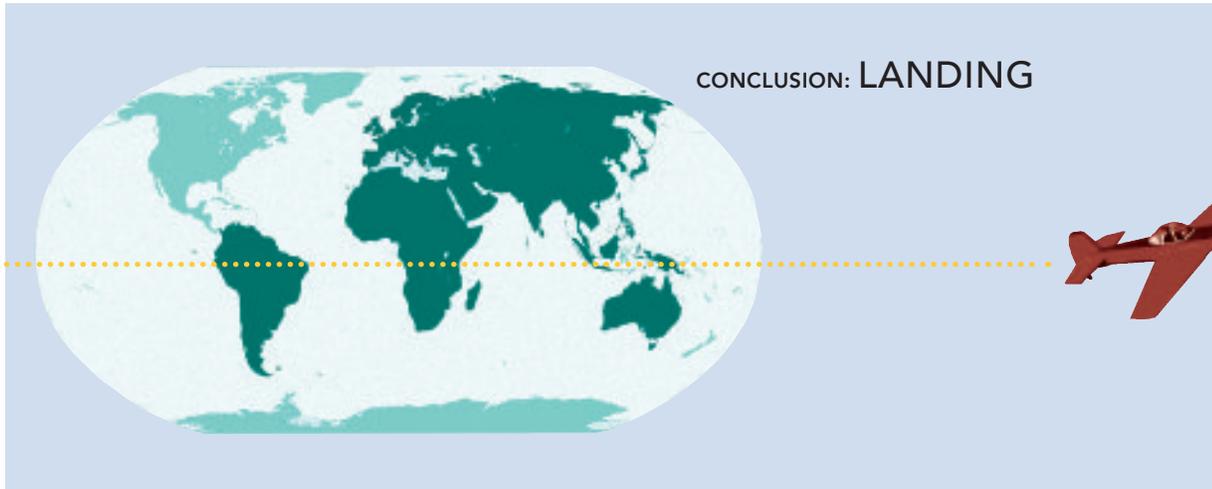
The charango is a stringed instrument, like a guitar. In fact, it looks like a little guitar. It has a small body. It has ten strings and a short neck. Like the guitar, the strings can be plucked or strummed.

The body of the charango is usually wood. But that was not always the case. Charangos



used to be made out of armadillo shells. Armadillos are little animals with hard shells that live in Central and South America. Early musicians learned that the shell's shape worked well as an instrument. Soon, people realized that wood held its shape over time better than animal shells. But some charangos still feature the shells of the little creatures. Like the cajon, people think the charango is important to music from the Andes. When you're down there, you're bound to hear it played.

Log on! You can hear what the charango sounds like online! Log on to www.ancient-future.com/guitar/charango.html.



That about does it for our trip around the world of musical instruments. We've visited Africa and learned about thumping, powerful drums. We heard about the amazing sitar players in India. We learned about the taiko drums in Japan, and the roles the different drums play. We visited Australia. There we learned about simple clapsticks and about the amazing didgeridoo. In Europe, we learned about the fun little tin whistle. We heard bagpipes in Scotland. The Irish played their bodhrans for us. In the mountains of South America, we learned about even more neat instruments.

There is a whole world of music out there. We only studied a little sliver of it. There are many more journeys to take. There are more instruments to learn about. You can learn about them online, at school, or at museums. You can learn how to play these interesting instruments. Some of these international instruments are becoming more and more popular. One day, you might hear them played in American rock and roll, or even in rap! Who knows? When that day comes, you won't even have to take a trip to learn about the music of the world. 

