

## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20594

## STATEMENT OF WITNESS

The purpose of this statement is intended solely for use in determining the facts, conditions and circumstances, and the probable cause of the subject accident.

Date 12-22-931. Place of accident Alvord Desert, Oregon Date 10-10-93 Hour 7 AM ?2. Type of vehicle Airplane3. Identification of vehicle white/blue N5074V4. What is your name Dan Bidwell Age 425. Address [REDACTED] Albany, OR 973216. Occupation Insurance Agent By whom employed FARMERS INS. Group7. Where were you at the time of the accident EATING BREAKFAST AT WEST Side of Alvord Desert

8. Tell in your own words what you saw or heard before and at the time the accident occurred.

The Airplane was Northbound AT High Rate of Speed Approximately 100 Feet Above Ground, it then went INTO A Very Steep climb till it Couldn't go Any Higher, then it was only Approximately 500 To 1,000 Feet High, it leveled off momentarily then went nose down and CRASHED. A Lady who went To the Airplane Said the Pilot WAS Dead AND she WAS going To the Nearest RANCH To CALL the Sheriff AND FAA Authorities, I don't know who she WAS! I Left Shortly Afterwards.  
Hope This Helps.

[Signature]  
(Signature)

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## STATEMENT OF WITNESS

The purpose of this statement is intended solely for use in determining the facts, conditions and circumstances, and the probable cause of the subject accident.

- Date 12/28/29
1. Place of accident ALVORD DESERT Date Oct 10, 1993 Hour 10:00 A.M.
2. Type of vehicle VARGA 2150A
3. Identification of vehicle N5074V
4. What is your name DONALD H. SHUTZ Age 62
5. Address [REDACTED] Eagle, Idaho 83616
6. Occupation RETIRED By whom employed \_\_\_\_\_
7. Where were you at the time of the accident RUNWAY / CAMPING AREA - ALVORD DESERT  
FN-IN
8. Tell in your own words what you saw or heard before and at the time the accident occurred.

I had just set down to have my breakfast and watch the movie. Flying taking place at fly-in center. The Varga 2150A had made a couple of passes at approx. 300 to 400' alt. everything looked and sounded normal at an airspeed of approx 100 miles per hr.

The next pass of the Varga was about the same speed and alt. just past the "fly-in" area going north. The Varga started about a 45° climb. The plane just kept climbing until it stalled. The nose of the A/C fell thru to about level position at which time the left wing dropped straight down at the same time the nose went straight down and about the same time the A/C rolled about 45° to the left just about the same time it hit the ground. There was a big "bang" sound from the metal crunching together but no explosion or fire.

[REDACTED]  
(Signature)

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## STATEMENT OF WITNESS

The purpose of this statement is intended solely for use in determining the facts, conditions and circumstances, and the probable cause of the subject accident.

Date 12-30-931. Place of accident Alvord Desert Date Oct. 10, 1993 Hour \_\_\_\_\_2. Type of vehicle Varga 2150A3. Identification of vehicle N5074V4. What is your name Deborah J. Roberts Age 345. Address [REDACTED], Colton, OR 970176. Occupation Housewife By whom employed \_\_\_\_\_7. Where were you at the time of the accident Approx. 350 yards from Crash Site

8. Tell in your own words what you saw or heard before and at the time the accident occurred.

Aircraft was flying North at Approx. 35' over desert, directly in front of camping area, at a high rate of Speed (over 100 miles a hour). Aircraft then went straight up sharper than any aircraft I have seen including Aerobatic Shows. Aircraft went straight up approx. 250-300'. It sounded like he ran out of power, then nosed over going straight down, made  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn to left before impacting ground in nose down attitude.

I was standing approx. 350 yards from crash site. I had a clear and unobstructed view of aircraft from when he passed in front of Camp to impact and was watching through out his flight.

It appeared that no attempt was made to recover from nose down attitude. When engine loss power there was no coughing or missing, RPM dropped smoothly and was at idel during nose over. Others will disagree with this, the engine was not at full power on decent and impact.

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## STATEMENT OF WITNESS

The purpose of this statement is intended solely for use in determining the facts, conditions and circumstances, and the probable cause of the subject accident.

- Date Dec 23, 1993
1. Place of accident Alvord Dry lake Date Oct 10, 1993 Hour AM (9?)
  2. Type of vehicle Low Wing, Single Eng, Tricycle Landing gear
  3. Identification of vehicle VARGA N5074V
  4. What is your name Harold Dougal, CFI, SEL MEL Age 66
  5. Address [REDACTED] Boise, ID 83705
  6. Occupation Comm Pilot (Ret) By whom employed Self.
  7. Where were you at the time of the accident Alvord Desert Lake Oregon
  8. Tell in your own words what you saw or heard before and at the time the accident occurred.

*See Letter attached*



*Harold Dougal*  
(Signature)

CAPT. HAROLD DOUGAL, CFII, MEL, SEL  
[REDACTED] BOISE, ID 83705

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
Northwest Regional Office  
19518 Pacific Highway S., Suite 201  
Seattle, WA 98188

December 23, 1993

In regards to: REF: SEA-94-L-A015

Dear Mr. Mangum;

I am a pilot of renown. I have been published for my many years of flying in the intermountain west for over 47 years. I was Chief Pilot of the Bradley Mining Co., based at Boise at the Bradley Field west of town in the middle '50s. I was Chief Mountain Pilot for the Boise Air Service at Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, and was later General Manager for that company in 1980. The business was desolved and restructured in 1981 and I became Chief Pilot for Mackay Bar Corp. and continued flying air taxi and freight hauling until 1989. At that time, after 47 years of flying everything from 37 hp cubs to B-25 Bombers and Tri-motor Fords, I figured I'd had enough of the public and retired to play with my toys. Now I build and fly both Experimental and Ultra-Light aircraft in addition to teaching students and giving BFRs to my friends in the 2 clubs I belong to.

I have written a book entitled: "IDAHO MOUNTAIN PILOT" which is about to be published.

PBS Channel 4 in Boise did a feature film on me for my many years of Mountain Flying and a former State Historian mentioned me in his book: WINGS OVER IDAHO that he published in 1991, as a Respected Mountain Pilot.

Now, from the brief of my credentials, you can see that what I am about to tell you does not come from some ignorant bystander in the ring of the crowd.

I have given professional testimony on several occasions both in depositions and expert testimony in court.

On Sunday morning, October 10, 1993, I was standing by my camper talking to friends and passer-bys that were milling around the area. At this time there was a line of campers, moterhomes and tents strung along the west edge of the Alvord dry lake bed for several hundred feet and my rig was about in the middle of the line.

As we, my friends and I, were talking and looking in an easterly direction out across the lake bed and enjoying the bright sunshine that had come up on us that morning and which remained for the rest of the day, we noticed a plane at the southern end of the line of campers and planes, fire up, taxi

CAPT. HAROLD DOUGAL, CFII, MEL, SEL

BOISE, ID 83705

out from his parking area and turning left, lined up with the western edge of the lake bed about a hundred or maybe 2 hundred feet east of the line of the crowd of people and stopped to warm up and check his engine before take off.

One of my friends asked me what kind of a plane that was and I told him that it was a Varga Kachina which was called a Morrisy when it first came out. I also told him and the rest that I had flown that model and that I thought it was good small plane.

This one, N5074V, revved up and started his take off run heading in a northerly direction sort of paralleling the line of campers. He was off the ground, which is about 4,000' msl, when he came past us but he did not climb. He kept it level at just a few feet, (5' maybe) and attempted to get all of the flying speed he could.

I knew what he was going to do then and shouted to my friends to watch this guy because I said that he was going to make a fast pull up down the way.

At this time, most of the crowd was concerned about getting the breakfast that was being served and payed no attention to the Varga I found out later when trying to find other witnesses to the accident.

When the Varga got past the end of the line of campers and the crowd, he, the Varga, suddenly shot straight up with it's line of thrust being as perpendicular to the flat lake bed as he could make it and just held it there!

I shouted to my friends standing by to watch this guy and gasp at the same time realizing that if he didn't suddenly push the nose over and recover that it would be all over because he would certainly stall. He did not have enough altitude to recover from a complete stall but if he would shove the nose down to level flight he could possibly recover.

It seemed like the plane almost stopped in the vertical position before he actually pushed the nose down to level attitude to recover. I thought that if he held it another second that he would do a tail slide and that surely would be the end of the airshow.

Now in level flight and still heading in a northerly heading, I noticed that the plane began to settle. It maintained it's heading for just a moment and then dipping it's left wing slightly, it turned 90 degrees to the left caused, possibly by torque or "P" factor but I think because of improper use of the rudders allowing the torque or "P" factor to turn the plane to the left.

CAPT. HAROLD DOUGAL, CFII, MEL, SEL  
[REDACTED] BOISE, ID 83705

Now the Varga is heading in a Westerly direction with the wings level again but it will hit the mountain if he doesn't turn quickly.

I watched with grave concern that his air speed was very slow and the engine was still wide open. The Varga again began to settle quite rapidly and for a moment the wings stayed level but then the nose started to rise and then slowly at first began to bank to the left again and then with the roll rate increasing rapidly, the nose began to lower and I knew that from this point on he would never recover because the nose was pointed straight down in a vertical decent and spinning to the left.

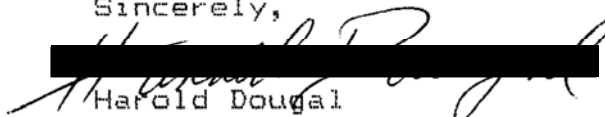
I counted the turns and in 3 turns, 1080 degrees the plane hit the ground.

A brilliant flash of light, like a huge strobe light so bright that it made me blink. The plane exploded in a cloud of dust and then the sound of the crash came like a bomb.

I could give you more details of what happened but it is not important. I later went over to the accident with one of my friends. All the others of the crowd had gone back and my friend and I were the only 2 at the crash sight. We looked over the wreck. The pilot was still sitting in the plane with no face. The only parts of the plane I saw that were worth salvaging was the horizontal stabilizer, elevator, and the rudder. These parts looked good all others were damaged. All the instruments were scattered out in front of the plane in a semicircle with spots of blood everywhere.

Mr. Mangum, if you would like to discuss any part of my letter, please feel free to contact me. You have my address and my phone number is: [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

  
[REDACTED]  
Harold Douglass

HMD/hmd