

Tales of the unexpected on UFO hotline

By Peter Dunn

THE AETHERIUS Society, whose members believe in flying saucers, has had 50 reports of sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects, only three days after installing a UFO hot line.

The calls are being monitored at the society's European headquarters, a converted shop in the Fulham Road, west London.

"Most people, when they have a sighting, get fobbed off," Dr John Holder, a committee member, said. "Some of our callers had their sightings 30 years ago and they've just wanted to get it off their chest. People have said they're fed up with the Royal Air Force calling them fools and idiots."

The hot line is to celebrate what Aetherians believe is vindication of their efforts to persuade the world that UFOs mean business.

The society has obtained a copy of a 200-page report from the Federal Aviation Authority describing "the astounding UFO sightings" by a Japanese pilot over Alaska on 17 November last year.

Dr Holder, 36, a biochemist turned unit trust adviser, says he has seen more than 100 UFOs. One of the best, when he was at Hull University, was "as big as the moon".

"Another was at Putney about three years ago, in the middle of a sunny day. Sir George King, founder-president of the society, was with me. It flew from Putney High Street towards Fulham football ground. Sir George looked at it and said 'That one's from outside the solar system'."

The Aetherians take their name from

one of several extra-terrestrial voices that have been in touch with Sir George. "He is an Englishman although the title is not given by the Queen," Dr Holder said. "It is given by several orders of chivalry, like the Knights of Malta.

"In 1954, after 10 years of practising yoga, he was contacted by a voice in his room in Maida Vale. 'Prepare yourself', the voice said. 'You're becoming the voice of interplanetary parliament'.

"Since 1955 there have been more than 600 communications through Sir George. The aim of the society is to propagate the contents of these messages. The voices in the recordings are in English because Sir George is English. They come from Venus, Mars, the two main ones, and Jupiter and Saturn.

"We believe the extra-terrestrial trans-

mission in the 1950s inspired the Ban the Bomb movement. That message was passed on to all MPs at the time. Feedback was, as usual, zero," Dr Holder said.

The society believes there is a government cover-up of UFOs. They discovered a department inside the Ministry of Defence, run by a Mrs Titchmarsh, to keep the wraps on sightings.

Inquiries by *The Independent* show that Mrs Titchmarsh, a clerical officer dealing with calls from the public saying they have seen a flying saucer, has been replaced by a Mr Ross.

"In the old days," Dr Holder insists, "they actually put D-notices on sightings and photographs". It had happened to a member working for *The Sun*, who had a picture of a sighting over the first Hyde Park pop festival.