

# Tuesday People

## Trying to solve the great UFO mystery



UFO investigator, Denis Harriman, with a photo sniper ever at hand to record strange objects in the skies.

Salesman, Denis Harriman, has been watching the skies for signs of life from outer space for 20 years. He openly admits he would love to have a "close encounter of the third kind". But he has only twice come near and those were run-of-the-mill experiences, he says, with no attempt to hide his disappointment.

Not that such a low sighting rate would deter the 34-year-old self-employed businessman who sells hydraulic equipment for a living.

At his Derbyshire home, three high speed cars (one temporarily out of action) stand by to whisk him day and night to reports of unidentified flying objects, passed on to him by police and other sources, including newspapers. Hopeful of catching a glimpse of an alien craft, he has several long lens cameras, binoculars, metal detectors and pager counters at the ready to record and check out evidence of extra terrestrial activity.

As co-ordinator of the National UFO Investigation Society, his brief is to collect and investigate reports of unidentified sightings in the sky from all over the country, as well as abroad. With doctors and scientists among its ranks, the Society has the best of connections needed to probe the mysterious world of UFO's.

He concedes it sounds glamorous: "It's a bit like being a spy, especially with this photo sniper I've got. Sometimes people think I've got a gun because it's got a trigger on it for taking pictures."

Only last week in Burton two unexplained red trails were seen over the town. Denis Harriman was called to look into the case. What at first seemed like lightning, is now baffling the tall, wily investigator. Despite this, all reports to the Society are thoroughly vetted before they are officially recorded as UFO sightings. Witnesses have to be cross examined and given a lie detector test if necessary or sent to a hypnotist to

relive what they saw.

Astronomers, weathermen, air traffic controllers, aircraft firms, working on secret weapons, farmers, farmers' associations, electricity boards, forensic scientists, police all provide information on request to eliminate earthly explanations for the appearance of a strange object in the sky.

Denis Harriman's first brush with UFO's came in 1979 on Halloween at Rolls Royce's Hucknall factory, where he was on business. He was standing with a group of workers when they saw a long trail of white light appear above them.

"There were about seven of us there and we watched it as it started flashing red and bobbing up and down over this field for 30 minutes. Then another white light appeared and did the same thing. It was the first thing I saw myself which I couldn't explain."

He had to wait another six years before he got his second UFO sighting. This time he was probing the case of a Salford social worker who was

Society's Nottingham headquarters dozens of files contain reports which he confesses might seem beyond belief.

"We get reports which are fantastic, especially the close encounter stuff, but there are things which even the Government can't explain. If we get a report of a landing usually there is radiation left

ignition had turned itself on and they carried on with their journey.

"Our ends are to inform the public of what is happening and to try and explain some of the UFO's, to find out whether they are natural phenomenon or not. Ours is an honest approach. We do our best to cover all the possible explanations. Sometimes people are mistaken. Sometimes aircraft, seen at different angles, look like UFO's."

The standard type, spotted on dozens of occasions, is usually a disc 50ft in diameter with a dome with portholes and a ring of light underneath. They can travel from 0 to 1,000 miles an hour and are mostly spotted in rural areas, near power stations military bases and close to military manoeuvres, according to Denis Harriman.

He currently has 25 cases of strange sightings on his books. Last month reports started coming in of an egg-shaped object with a black east finish, 100ft long and 30ft wide which was banking at 90 degrees to the right and left again over a Rolls Royce factory at Salford.

"Since then ourselves and another UFO research organisation have had 30 witnesses to the same object, seen from Dovedale, over Shelton Lock, Alveston, Salford, Chadderton and Spendon in daylight and at night. It also flew over East Midlands Airport but they didn't pick it up on the

radar. It was last seen flying over Kagnorth by 30 witnesses. So that's a total of 80 witnesses."

The life of a UFO investigator can be dangerous. Odd lights, flickering in woods, can turn out to be poachers or black magic circles.

A couple of years ago NUFOS began receiving accounts of sheep being mutilated in Wales. Eventually investigators discovered a black magic circle was operating and retreated hastily.

The Society, however, recognises it has to be on its guard against cranks and other non-reputable UFO organisations. Time delayed photographs of the moon, boat tapes of alien machines landing on earth, and weird postcards from the Fiji Islands in garbled writing are just some of the kind of things which get sent to the group.

"People have tried to explain UFO's away as weather balls, hot air balloons, airships, aircraft, even Venus and the Moon. There have been cases of mistaken identity and that's a good thing. I'm glad the public is aware. But there have been inexplicable sightings and I keep an open mind. Curiosity is my motivation."

Denis Harriman, sightings co-ordinator of NUFOS, can be contacted by ringing Draycott 03317 4961.

## Sky spy Denis is poised for action

regularly seeing a strange white light at 10 O'clock in the evening. Separate eye-witness accounts of a similar light had also been recorded, travelling from Burton over Erwall towards Ashbourne, and on other occasions from Delper to Spendon, where it was seen near sewage works.

"It was moving steadily between five and ten miles per hour below the clouds and a pencil-thin beam of light shot out of it. The Burton Mail published reports of a similar cigar-shaped object going over Burton," explains Denis Harriman in matter-of-fact tones that defy incredulity.

At the National UFO Investigation

behind. We've had reports in this country of people having radiation effects after seeing a UFO. It's like a very intense sunburn, causing bumps in the skin."

One of the most spectacular UFO stories to surface in recent years happened in 1951 when American airforce men allegedly repaired an alien craft, operated by two three foot men after it had landed in a Suffolk forest.

More recently a couple, travelling from Mansfield to Sinks-on-Trent by car, went missing for three hours at night. They claimed they had woken up in Ashbourne in the early hours of the morning. The car's