

Pete Overton

The BEN — the paper that really CARES about Bolton

# The hills are alive —



● Steve Balon, high on Belmont Moors, searching for local traces of 'close encounters'. Picture by MARTIN BIRCHALL.

THE BRIGHT lights of the city pale into insignificance compared to the lights over Belmont Moor.

The BEN and local Ufologist Steve Balon have been inundated with calls about the strange lights.

Steve says that over the past two weeks alone he has had more than a dozen calls from people in the Horwich and Belmont areas.

With 20 years in Ufology behind him, Steve said: "It all started off with Mrs Dorothy Lomax from Dunsar spotting a bright light from her kitchen window. I went up there to speak to her and found it was not astronomical.

"I checked with air traffic control in Manchester and the Met. Office in Stockport and it was still unexplained.

"This started an avalanche of calls concentrated in Horwich and Belmont. They are different people who have witnessed something strange in different locations in Bolton."

Steve also mentioned a woman's sighting of a "brilliant white sphere" which appeared to land in hills near to the Turton and Entwistle reservoir.

Steve commented: "The sphere was whizzing backwards and forwards over the moors at a very high speed. It stopped in mid air and started to fall slowly to the ground and then disappeared behind a hill."

At 9.15pm on Monday, Jan 11, another woman spotted an oval-shaped, bright light "lighting up the whole sky" while she was driving near to Doffcocker Lodge. She said that the object went down at a steep angle towards the lodge.

Steve said: "Over the past five years I have had about 100 calls about the Belmont area. When you think that many people are embarrassed or afraid to admit seeing UFOs the number of sightings could be in the thousands.

"There is a concentration of sightings in Belmont and Horwich

# with UFOs

## 'The Moors are the ideal place to touchdown'

By ALAN WRIGHT

around the reservoirs. One theory is that they could be taking on water.

"The area is also the ideal place for these things to come down because it is very very isolated, especially with this type of weather when the areas are cold and inhospitable."

Steve also has a number of rather confusing theories about "lines of navigation" on the moors around Bolton and such scientific ideas are coming to the forefront of UFO investigations.

Steve is also one of the many Ufologists who are certain that there is a cover up by the major Governments. He is also sure that Governments have made contact with UFOs.

Steve said: "The Ministry of Defence say that these things do not exist but why is the all the hullabaloo and hushing things up? Why do they want photographic evidence which never appears again?"

He asks the question: "Why is there a special department at the MoD in Chippenham set up for top secret research into the subject? I have tried to contact them on a number of occasions but they just hang up without saying a word."

Steve said: "The more information we get the more chance we have of finding out about UFOs. I am sure they are trying to contact us."

He is a member of the Direct Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena and can be contacted by writing to 10, Woodlands Avenue, Pennington, Leigh.

## FLYING SAUCERS, BALLS OF FIRE!

PREVIOUS local sightings of UFOs include:

Sept 17, 1954: Farnworth couple Mr and Mrs James Clayton of Lupin Avenue see a "flying saucer" racing backwards and forwards along the horizon at Holcombe Brook.

Sept 2, 1957: Headline "Yellow Ball of Fire seen in Rivington Night Sky".

Aug 25, 1967: Myths that there were flying saucers over Winter Hill were in fact the reflections of headlights from vehicles ferrying staff to and from the television masts.

Oct 27, 1967: Two policemen chased a mysterious cigar-shaped object which hovered over Bacup police station.

Apr 29, 1969: Dogs in the area began howling and whining when UFO 'landed' on golf links in the Plodder Lane area of Farnworth.

Aug 26, 1969: BEN intro: "Watched by a terrified woman and her 14-years-old daughter, a mysterious flying object hovered for 10 seconds over the rooftops of Bolton and then vanished in a flash of light."

Mar 26, 1976: Schoolboys took a picture of a UFO in Leigh. Sep 24, 1976: Bolton couple William and Edith Eastham describe how a "flying saucer" hovered over fields near their home.

Sept 17, 1978: Linda Barlow and Susan Mahub had a close encounter at Linda's house in Padbury Way, Bolton.

Jan 6, 1986: A couple claim to have been chased at 50 mph near Belmont.

Nov 30, 1987: Green lights in the sky over Bolton explained as reflections from a laser light show at a new shopping complex in Walton-le-Dale, near Preston.

### Disguise for stolen bike

A motor-cyclist hardly recognised his own machine after it was stolen by teenager David Marsden.

Magistrates at Bury heard that in an attempt to disguise the 125cc machine, 17-year-old Marsden had swapped parts with another bike he helped to steal.

Marsden, of Fairfield Drive, Bury, admitted stealing the £750 motor-cycle on and a £600 machine the following day. He was put on probation for two years, but there was no order for compensation against him.

### Lusaka talks

Foreign ministers from eight Commonwealth states will meet in Lusaka on February 1 and 2 to discuss sanctions against South Africa and ways to help its black African neighbours, Foreign Ministry sources said in Lusaka

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