



Geoff McWilliams points to the spot in Riverside Park, where the U.F.O. first appeared. Matthew Cadden looks on.

# UFOs over Hampshire

by BOB PRICE

**I**N the early hours of a cold, January morning this year, a large, triangular shaped U.F.O. was reported over the Millbrook area of Southampton. It wasn't the first unearthly craft to be seen in the skies of Hampshire — and it wasn't to be the last!

Two days later, three teenagers got the shock of their lives in another part of the City. Fourteen year old Geoff McWilliams, with friends Matthew Cadden and Simon Cade, were enjoying a quiet chat at Riverside Park when a strange sphere of light shot across the football pitch in front of them.

"It was about the size of a football," recalled Geoff, "manoeuvring in a triangular pattern about 30ft in the air."

The object suddenly veered towards the bench they were sitting on, forcing the three youngsters to run for their lives.

Youthful fantasy? Practical joke? Geoff's Mum and Dad think not. "They were white as sheets when they came in," his Mum remembered.

Shrug it off if you will, but on the same day, a lady in Milton Keynes reported a sphere of light shooting past her bedroom window at rooftop height. It was the size of a football and heading south-west — towards Southampton perhaps!

These two recent encounters served to fuel speculation that another 'wave' of sightings, such as Hampshire experienced in the early to mid-seventies, was about to begin. Then, as now, it started off quietly enough, with one or two 'lights in the sky' reports, but moved rapidly on to a startling

encounter that still causes controversy in U.F.O. circle whenever it's mentioned.

A Winchester woman, driving home with a friend, found herself confronted by a large, cigar shaped U.F.O. Her car was brought to a halt by what they both described as, "a cushioned, invisible barrier."

A humanoid figure descended from the U.F.O. and approached the frightened couple who quickly locked all the car doors. After walking around, peering through the windows, the figure, and U.F.O. mysteriously disappeared.

A week later, an exact re-enactment took place at the same spot, in Chilcomb Lane, but this time, complete with car, they found themselves inside the U.F.O. One of the crew attempted to communicate in broken English, urging them not to be alarmed. Shortly after, they lost consciousness, waking to find themselves parked near a river on the far side of Winchester, miles from Chilcomb Lane!

This case became known as the 'Winchester Mystery', and, not surprisingly, became the butt of 'Little Green Men' jibes. There was, however, a remarkable sequel to this episode. . .

Almost a year later, while driving a female companion to visit relatives, the same lady received another visitation from these strange visitors. Again, her car was brought to a stop, and while both women

were checking the engine, they noticed a large oval object on the ground nearby.

In a now, all-too-familiar pattern, a silver suited figure approached them and spoke in the same fragmented English as before, but again had difficulty making himself understood. Before returning to the U.F.O. he said something similar to, "You are now one of us."

Not all U.F.O. sightings remain unidentified and it's worth relating one classic sighting that proved to be only too solid. Let's look at the way it was reported initially.

A Police patrol car, returning through the New Forest late one night, suddenly lost all power as its astonished crew watched a huge glowing U.F.O. streak low over Picket Plain and land silently in the depths of the landscape. Over eighty 999 calls were made to Hampshire Police, making this one of the best multiple-witness sightings of all.

For days after, it was acclaimed as a genuine U.F.O. experience, but all was revealed on a local T.V. show when an eminent astronomer showed how they'd tracked this U.F.O. half across the world. It was part of a huge meteorite that failed to burn out in the earth's atmosphere!

But what of the police car's engine failure — a well known symptom of close U.F.O. contact? P.C. John Forder reveals all.

"It stopped all right, but only because I was so stunned at what I was seeing, that I stalled the engine." So what about its silent descent into the forest? Wrong