

Paul on the UFO trail

Series of strange sightings in area

By LANA BEST

Someone leaning out of a window smoking a cigarette, two ex-airforce personnel and a person standing in a driveway talking to a friend are among more than 30 Western Victoria residents who have reported seeing a UFO on 6th June about 5.35pm.

Described by most as being cone-shaped with a long white tail the sightings are what brought Victorian UFO Research Society investigation officer Paul Norman to Ararat on Monday as he traces a trail of startled and curious sky-watchers who at the time didn't realise many other people were observing a strange object.

Such was the accuracy of the reports which flooded first a meteorology facility near Sale and then the answering machine at the Society headquarters in Mooroona, that a distinct path has been mapped by Mr Norman.

Sightings were also reported at Warramboul, Coler and Geelong.

Now Mr Norman wants to know did anyone in the Ararat District spot something unusual in the sky on the same night.

He said anyone can call him on his mobile 0412 129 319, while he's travelling around.

"It seems that the object was viewed at its closest not far from Ararat and one person was even able to describe four sections of the UFO including sparks flying off the body," he said.

"Reports indicate it did not have a vapour trail, but rather a light trail which could be an energy beam of some kind.

"The light seemed to change colour and looked bright white through to yellow to orange depending on how close the viewer was."

"A section of the cone-shaped object showed sparking at intervals, and these are not fire sparks but more like static electricity or an electromagnetic effect.

"That is the phenom-



Victorian UFO Research Society investigation officer Paul Norman with the folder full of UFO sighting reports.



The path of a mysterious flying object.

enon which causes car ignitions to conk out and power lines to fail — an experience often connected with UFO sightings."

Mr Norman was quick to point out that he doesn't chase every light in the sky — in fact it takes a fairly big sighting to drag him away from his home in remote country Victoria.

From Benalla to Geelong to Halls Gap, the collation of information is casting the American-born gentleman all over the

countryside this week.

But it's something Mr Norman is used to.

For 45 years he's been investigating UFO sightings covering Norway, Sweden, the UK, China, Zimbabwe, North America and Australia.

At first it was part time but since retirement he's taken on the job on a full-time basis.

He estimates only 10 percent of reports cannot be explained by everyday aeronautical and atmospheric occurrences.

Even then further investigation can erode the unexplainable sightings down to just a few.

Surprisingly Mr Norman's background is more conducive to the ocean, not the sky, due to a Navy career which brought him from America to Australia in 1941.

Before joining up Mr Norman was on the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomenon in Tennessee.

"Australia looked like a great big country with not many people holding it down and the outback really appealed to me," he said.

"Ex-servicemen from America were invited to settle in Australia after the war and although it took a few years to get organized — that's what I decided to do."

But does he believe in UFOs — the type guided by extra-terrestrials?

"I can only say that I think someone, somewhere has technology beyond our own, and that sightings in New Zealand and midwestern USA before even the days of aeroplanes let alone space junk and satellites, are hard to account for.

"What explanation is there for recordings that Alexander the Great's army was panicked by flying shields?"

"Investigation of UFOs is a serious business and many people don't realise it's not always nonsense — of course many report-

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ings are but they're broken down easily."

Mr Norman said his most memorable and disturbing case study was investigating the disappearance of a pilot in 1953.

A pilot from Ken Row Airforce Base detected an unknown object on radar and then closed in to see a flying object which caused a lot of static — both the plane and the object were visible on radar for 20 seconds, then both disappeared.

Soon after Mr Norman was told another pilot had disappeared while flying over Bass Strait and he was amazed that the new report was a carbon copy of the one he was investigating.

The mystery disappearance of 20-year-old pilot Frederick Evalentich more than 20 years ago while flying his Cessna 182L aircraft to King Island off Tasmania has gone down in the history books as one of 20 strange aircraft disappearances around the world.

The pilot's last words on radio were "that strange aircraft is hovering on top of me again, and it is not an aircraft ..."

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