

JAN 1995

DOCUMENTARY / *Unravelling the mystery behind UFOs*

The phenomena that cannot be ignored



by GRAHAM KEAL
Television Editor

IT'S only a matter of time before Jeremy Beadle has a UFO-spotting section in *You've Been Framed*. Judging by the number of sightings on TV lately, spotting a UFO is as easy as falling in a swimming pool.

Horizon did a comprehensive programme on the people who believe they've been carried off by little grey men, and Michael Aspel's *Strange But True?* series gave extensive coverage to an alleged UFO landing near the US airbase at Woodbridge in 1980.

Network First: UFO (10.40pm, ITV) is an unapologetic defence of the dedicated UFO-chaser and includes an eyewitness account of the Woodbridge incident. Local resident Gerald Harris spotted the bizarre comings and goings from his home near the runway: "I stood here for ages watching it," he says. "They were dipping down behind the trees and coming back up and zig-zagging about."

According to the programme, a strict security clampdown followed and a string of unlikely explanations were put forward.

Other supposed sightings are mentioned only to be explained away —

such as a diamond shape in the sky filmed by three fishermen. The UFO turned out to be an internal reflection of the shutter mechanism in the camera lens.

Director Lawrence Moore doubtless includes such false alarms to add authority to the more convincing sightings. He himself has no doubts that UFOs exist, having seen one himself when he was a teenager.

He views the popularity of the camcorder as "a marvellous weapon" which people can utilise in the battle to gather more evidence: "I am hoping the programme will stimulate people to be on the look-out," he says.

Apart from being a respected documentary maker, Moore is a founder member of the British UFO Research Association and has wanted to make an authoritative UFO film for 15 years: "What angers me is a lot of scientists automatically pooh-poo the idea without carrying out any research. They stand on the sidelines and say UFO supporters must be idiots."