



*THE MONTHLY
JOURNAL OF
CROP CIRCLES
AND BEYOND*

62

MARCH 1997

£1.00

**The First
Formations
Of 1997?**

**Surveys &
Reports From
The South Coast**

**Focus
On Sussex**

"Anyone who is practically acquainted with scientific work is aware that those who refuse to go beyond fact rarely get as far as fact" T H HUXLEY

There's a lot of excitement and speculation right now about the incoming comet Hale-Bopp - and a lot of twaddle. Nevertheless, there do seem to be a number of strange things about it, not least that it is the first comet ever to have made what appears to be course corrections as it entered the solar system at an exact right angle to the 'disk' of the orbiting planets. It appears to have an unusual amount of mass too - the orbits of Pluto and Neptune noticeably 'wobbled' as the comet passed by. Other, more controversial, information seems to show that it also has some kind of strange unnatural companion with it - allegedly. Our resident clairvoyant Paul Bura will be giving his own views on that next issue. Whatever, it will be one of the brightest comets we've seen this century and should be visible low in the sky under the constellation Cassiopeia (the big 'W') from about mid-March. Meanwhile, astro-physicist and crop circle researcher Jazz Rasool has come up with some pretty sound astronomical evidence that the Longwood Warren ('Earth Is Missing') crop formation of 1995 (see SC 53 cover), which appears to represent the Earth's inner solar system, is an exact snapshot of the position of the planets within the asteroid belt on the day the pattern formed (from the point of view of Earth, which is why we are not marked on the map). This was apparently a crucial entry date for comet Hale-Bopp...

We are hoping that Jazz Rasool will be joining the line-up for our forthcoming event *The Sussex Cereological Bonanza II* on April 26th. Tickets are now going fast - so if you want to be assured of a place, don't leave it any longer! There are limited numbers available. Don't be like those in 1995 who were begging for tickets at the last minute only to be turned away. You should have had a flyer last month and all the details were reproduced in that issue. Tickets are £15 and bookings should be made by contacting this address: SCB '97, 270 Chantonbury Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9HJ. Tel: 01444 233105. Cheques payable to SCR please.

One final thing - I'm still receiving mail at my old address from some SC readers. Please note that my address changed to the one at the top of the adjacent information column (see right) as of last December... The comet must be affecting memory!

ANDY THOMAS

SC

THE MONTHLY
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Editor: ANDY THOMAS
13 Downsview Cottages
Cooksbridge, Lewes
East Sussex
BN8 4TA
England
Tel: 01273 474711

SC E-Mail Address:
101476.1452@compuserve.com
SC: Edited and produced by ANDY THOMAS with
assistance from Barry Reynolds and Kaye Thomas.
Articles, letters and contributions to the editorial
address please.

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Front Cover: Warningcamp Hill, West Sussex, August 1996. Photograph by Michael Hubbard.

When is a crop circle not a crop circle? This is a question being asked about an event which has occurred down on the westernmost tip of the English coast in Cornwall. Two concentric rings have been discovered in grazing grass which would appear to be the earliest circle events of a new year ever recorded. Whether or not they can be classified as crop formations in the accepted sense is open to debate, but their appearance is exciting some enthusiasts as the first hint of the new circle season. Others aren't sure if this isn't some other phenomenon altogether.

On 31st January 1997 at Sennen Cove, a well-known tourist beach village adjacent to the now amusement park-scarred beauty spot of Land's End, a large blackened ring appeared in grass on a small farmstead owned by a local coach driver. The ring measured 37' in diameter. Rather than flattened or swept in one direction, the short grass appeared almost dead and rusty brown, as if it had been burnt in some way. Interestingly, however, weeds which were growing in amongst the same grass were unaffected by the deadening. A little pathway seemed to flick off the ring, making it look not unlike a 'Q'.

The owner of the field keeps horses there, and on the night before the ring arrived, the horses became distressed and wouldn't enter. He had to find another field for them.

A week later, on 7th February, another ring appeared, this time inside the original one. This was smaller and measured 27'8". The rings themselves were only about 8" wide and though faint (see photo!) were very precise. *West Country Television* got wind of the story and arrived with their cameras soon after the second ring was discovered. The story was broadcast on a number of news bulletins. These reports mentioned balls of light

having been seen in the area, but the farmer denies knowledge of this. Shortly after, in a conspiratorial twist which should get 'men in black' enthusiasts going, the farmstead was allegedly visited by people who have been described as 'Ministry of Defence' officials...

The owner claims he has never sprayed weedkiller on the field and didn't think that anyone else had to create the rings, particularly as weeds themselves were the only plants not affected by the deadening. The Cornwall CCCS survey team noted a large area of dead grass elsewhere in the field, which seemed to display similar effects to the rings. A large natural sarsen of granite lay nearby. The dowsers amongst the group asserted that two earth energy lines appeared to cross in the middle of the rings and some

felt that the presence of the stone may have triggered some kind of natural energy effect.

Others, however, felt that the markings might simply be types of 'fairy ring', where fungal growths create circular patches in grass. Most fairy rings though are generally only a few feet across.

A similar ring was found nearby at The Lizard about seven years ago, but this report is also reminiscent of the thin rings in soil which appeared near Avebury, Wiltshire, in February 1994. The exact site of one of those rings gave birth to the first of the 'galaxy' formations later that summer... Cornish researchers will presumably be watching the Sennen area carefully from here on.

As we go to print, rumours are circulating that another grass ring has been found eight miles north east of Sennen Cove at Zennor, although this might be a misreporting of the events recorded here... AT

Thanks to Simon Lackford, Richard Smith & Dave Gillham of CUFORG. Photo: DAVE GILLHAM

- NEWS -

LAND'S END... SEASON'S BEGINNING?

Do two strange 'burnt' grass rings discovered near Land's End, Cornwall herald an early start to the 1997 crop circle season..? ANDY THOMAS grabs a cream tea and reports.



Each year, SC, being based in the English counties of East and West Sussex, reports all the crop formations on its own doorstep in detail. Why, you may ask, as SC covers crop circles from around the globe? Throughout the summer, we report all the latest formations as we hear about them, and bring you photographs of as many of them as we can over the months. But it's impossible to include detailed surveys of the national formations on a regular basis, due to space restrictions, and often these are available from other sources. The Sussex formations are the ones of which the SC team (under

the name Southern Circular Research [SCR], affiliated to the Centre for Crop Circle Studies and BLT Research) have the most personal knowledge. Thus, due to our work out in our local fields we report these to you in detail as an example of the circle activity that occurs in one region of England alone, an area which has seen the most prolific circle activity of all counties over the years besides Wiltshire and Hampshire. Here, in one issue, we present a round-up of the formations which appeared in Sussex in 1996 with reports and diagrams where available. Anyone who wishes to know the history of crop formations in Sussex from all previous years, should consult the book *Fields Of Mystery: The Crop Circle Phenomenon In Sussex* (S B Publications 1996, ISBN 1-85770-096-1).

1996 was a strange year for Sussex crop patterns. After 1995, which was probably the best season yet in terms of the complexity of the designs and the duration of events (from May to July), last summer was far more subdued. There were just ten events, the majority of configurations were simple and most of our formations appeared within a two week period at the end of July, beginning of August. Curiously - but perhaps not so curiously for what has often been noted as an interactive phenomenon - this seemed to reflect a lack of activity from us as the local investigation team. The previous three

years we had been engaged in various communication experiments (see past SCs and the forthcoming book *Quest For Contact*) and scientific sampling/testing missions. In 1996, much of this work had either come to a natural conclusion (the appearance of the Felbridge formation in 1995 in response to the meditation on Wolstonbury Hill marked the apogee of our communication work) or had gone on the backburner for a number of reasons. It was unfortunate (or deliberate?) that in the two weeks when most of our formations arrived, at least three or four of our most prominent and

active members were, for varying reasons, unavailable to witness them, leaving much of the surveying to three people. But maybe this in itself was part of the overall lesson the crop circles seem to be giving us. As always, the only thing to be expected with the circles is the unexpected and 1997 will probably be completely different again. Nevertheless, the crop formations that did appear, contained, as ever, surprises and delights as the following reports show.

All these reports have been prepared by Barry Reynolds from information supplied by (alphabetically) Debbie Pardoe, Martin Noakes, Barry Reynolds, Andy Thomas and Nigel Tomsett. Main reporters are generally noted and those who conducted the actual surveys are listed, although uncredited additional information may also have been added by other members of the team. This is thus a joint effort from Southern Circular Research, CCCS Sussex, BLT Research (USA) and SC.

Note that some of the diagrams show tractor tramlines. This year we have not included tables giving detailed measurements and dimensions. Full copies of the Sussex 1996 report, which does give this information, are obtainable for £5.00 inclusive of postage and packing (cheques payable to B J Reynolds) from: **CCCS Sussex, 44 Meadow Lane, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9JA.**

- REPORTS - THE SUSSEX CROP FORMATIONS OF 1996

The home area of the SC team is Sussex, and each year we round up all the formations which appear in the counties of East and West Sussex as an example of the concentrated crop circle activity which can occur in one area. ANDY THOMAS sums up last year in retrospect, followed by surveys prepared by the Sussex team and compiled by BARRY REYNOLDS...

BACKGROUND: An area of irregular shapes and squiggly lines was seen in early July. Although at first they appeared to be lodging, closer inspection revealed that this was unlikely, especially as some of the shapes seemed to be specific symbols, if roughly so, as revealed by Michael Hubbard's aerial photographs. Approximately a quarter of a mile south of Petworth on

the A285 they were less than two miles from Sussex 1996/03.

Keith Parker entered the lower, rougher parts of the shapes and discovered that the crop had been laid down in swathes which certainly suggested something more than standard wind damage. The upper parts of the long line of shapes were certainly not crop damage and appeared almost runic in places.

REF: Sussex 1996/01
DATE APPEARED: Early July 1996
DESCRIPTION: Irregular shapes and squiggly lines
CROP: Oats
SWIRL: Irregular
LOCATION: Petworth, West Sussex
OS MAP: 197
GRID REF: SU 975 205 approx
SURVEYED BY: Keith Parker

REF: Sussex 1996/02
DATE APPEARED: 27 July 1996
DESCRIPTION: Large circle with two small circular satellites and a heart-shaped grapeshot.
CROP: Wheat
SWIRL: All anticlockwise
LOCATION: Beacon Hill, Ovingdean, East Sussex
OS MAP: 198
GRID REF: TQ 362 028
SURVEYED BY: Nigel Tomsett & Debbie Pardoe

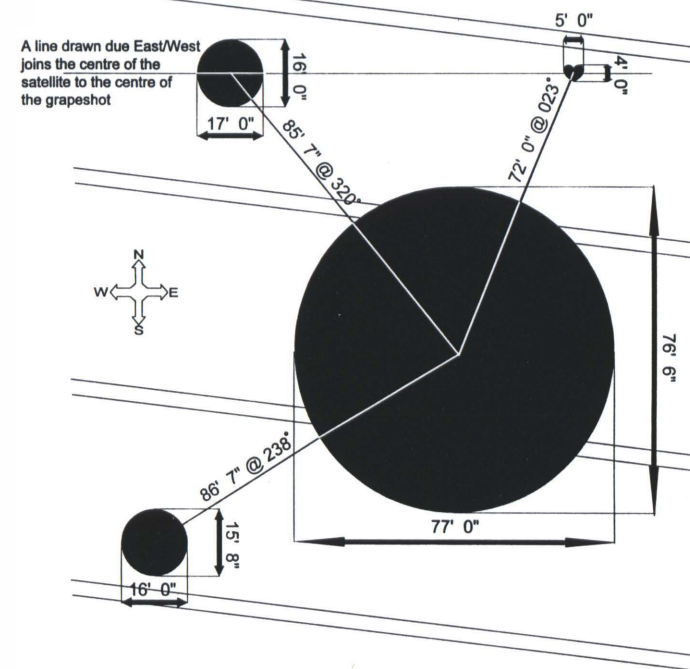
BACKGROUND: This formation appeared directly behind the multi-storey St Dunstons' home for the blind (the residents, perhaps unsurprisingly, didn't see anything...) only 650 yards (600m) from the sea. The field was on a fairly steep slope on the side of Beacon Hill offering good views from the minor road to Ovingdean off the A259 coast road. Beacon Hill was a site where fires were lit in Napoleonic times. The large

circle was 59' from a footpath which ran north/south to the east.

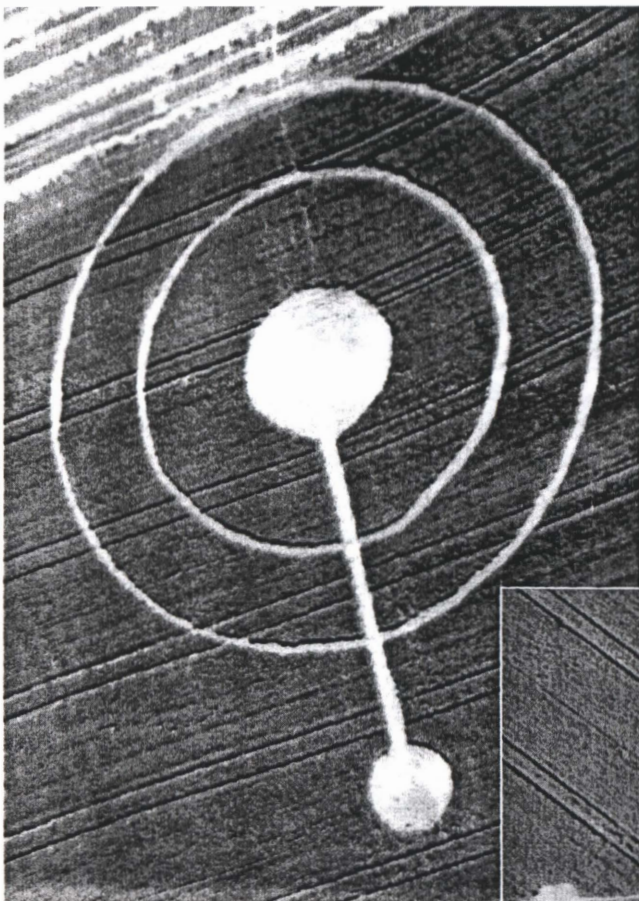
The lay of the main circle was fairly complex with many bent nodes apparent UNDER the lay of the crop, ie. definitely not caused by phototropism, where plants grow back up to the light. Clumps of crop had been ripped from the ground with soil intact but were still part of the lay. The lay of the two smaller circles was tightly swirled and

exquisite. A very small 'heart-shaped' grapeshot lay to the north east. Being so visible from the road, visitors soon streamed into the circles and unsightly pathways were carved from the main circle to the satellites, which were not there originally.

Local residents reported neither hearing or seeing anything the night that the formation appeared even though their houses were only 500 yards away. However, a contact within Sussex Police later revealed that they had many reports of strange glowing lights over Ovingdean the night the formation appeared. Local press and radio reported the event with enthusiasm, with Andy Thomas performing what must have been the world's first live radio interview from within a



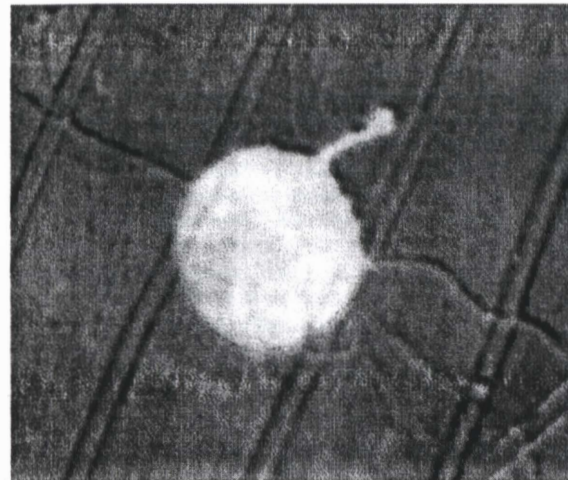
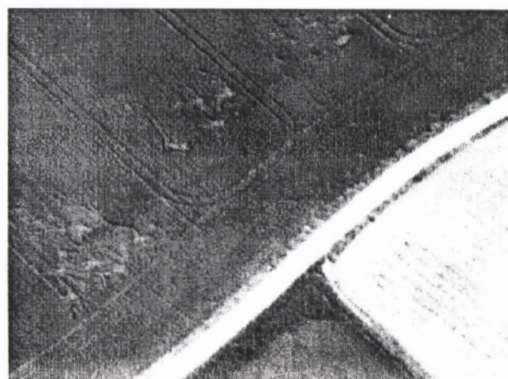
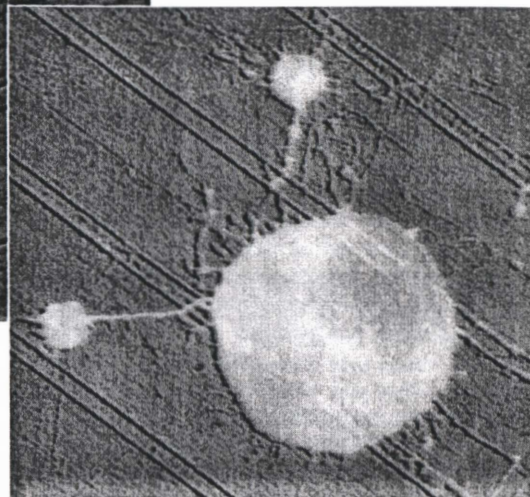
"Who could ever be fond of the back of beyond..."



TOP: *The elaborate dumbbell at Warningcamp Hill, Blakehurst, West Sussex. Incredibly, this was the most complex design of all the Sussex formations from 1996.*

MIDDLE: *Beacon Hill, Ovingdean, East Sussex. By the time this photo was taken the circles were looking very sad indeed. The paths joining the small circles to the large one were made by visitors and were not part of the design.*

BELOW: *Messy but elaborate squiggles at Petworth, West Sussex. Bizarre runes, clever winds or kiddies at play?*

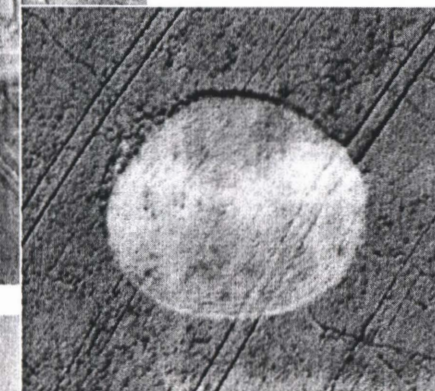
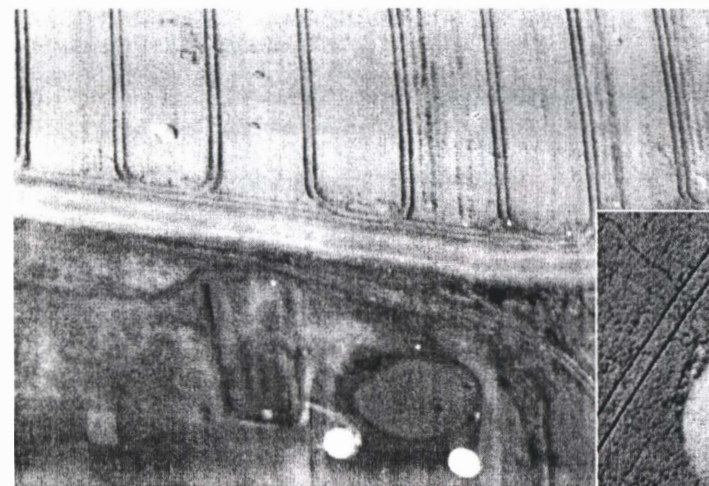


CIRCLES '96 PHOTO- SPREAD #8: SUSSEX

A selection of aerial shots of the East and West Sussex formations of last year, as described in detail elsewhere this issue. All photographs by MICHAEL HUBBARD with the exception of the Roedean picture which is by MARTIN NOAKES (indeed, Martin's photo is the only pictorial evidence that exists of these tiny shapes).

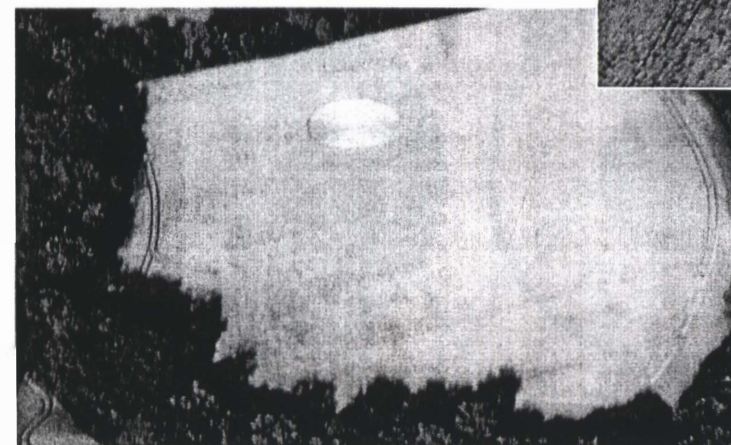
TOP: *The dumbbell at Salt-dean, East Sussex, taken a few weeks after forming.*

MIDDLE LEFT: *Roedean, Nr Rottingdean, East Sussex. The formations are just visible to the left. Note the circle-like golf bunkers below.*



ABOVE: *Single circle/oval at Mannings Heath, Nr Horsham, West Sussex, in close-up.*

LEFT: *Long-shot of the Mannings Heath formation, showing just how isolated the field was. Had Michael Hubbard not flown over it, this circle would probably have been missed.*



(Continued from page 5) crop formation on BBC Southern Counties Radio.

A local legend states that the three Bronze Age tumuli, which lie just over the ridge of Beacon Hill, are the resting place of a Saxon king and his two sons. Two of the tumuli lie side by side like twin barrows with the third, larger barrow, 500' further to the north in much the same configuration as the formation itself. A straight line joins the centre of Hollingbury hill fort with the formation and the centre of Whitehawk, the only Neolithic causeway enclosure with four concentric earthworks.

The geometry involved in this formation is immediately obvious as the smaller circles are one-fifth of the size of the large circle. This ratio of 5:1 has been noted before in the early quintuplet arrangements. The quintuplet which appeared on Matterley Farm, Gander Down in 1985 had

the same ratio. It was suddenly apparent that the Ovingdean formation looked remarkably similar to these early quintuplets but with two of the satellites missing. If these missing satellites are added where they may have been intended then they would have fallen on tramlines. In his 1991 book, *Circles From The Sky - A New Topic In Atmospheric Research*, Dr Terence Meaden mentions 'incomplete quintuplets'. "Sometimes the quintuplet pattern is incomplete. One of the satellites may be missing. At other times it is there but ill-formed because it grew in the presence of the zones of weakness created by tramlines." Figure 12 of the book shows a photograph of "a regular quintuplet, North Wiltshire, June 1989, in which the fourth satellite never achieved its full potential owing to its position exactly on the tractor tramlines." Was the Ovingdean formation an 'ill-formed' quintuplet? (Original report: Debbie Pardoe and Nigel Tomsett)

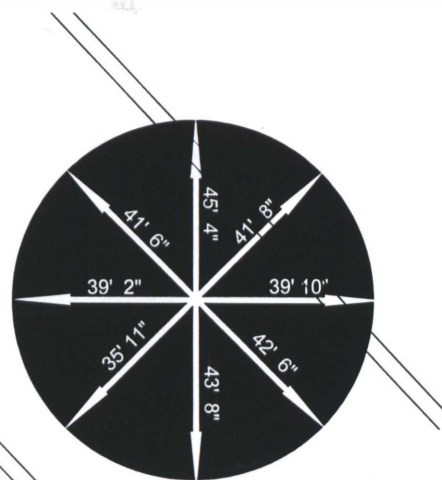
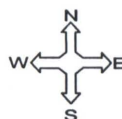
BACKGROUND: Spotted off the A272 just outside Petworth by Martin Noakes less than two miles from Sussex 1996/01, this formation consisted of just a key-shape (not unlike an 'F') and was in a field bordered by cottages and a footpath. Keith Parker also saw the pattern, but wasn't able to enter it. The field was harvested before a survey was possible, so no further information is available.



Approximate diagram.

REF: Sussex 1996/03
DATE SPOTTED: 1st August 1996
DESCRIPTION: Rectangular 'key' shape
CROP: Wheat
SWIRL: Unknown
LOCATION: Tillington, Petworth, West Sussex
OS MAP: 197
GRID REF: SU 955 217 approx

REF: Sussex 1996/04
DATE SPOTTED: 31 July 1996
DESCRIPTION: Single ovular circle
CROP: Riband wheat
SWIRL: Anticlockwise
LOCATION: Mannings Heath, Horsham, West Sussex
OS MAP: 198
GRID REF: Withheld by request of farmer
SURVEYED BY: Nigel Tomsett, Debbie Pardoe & Andy Thomas



All measurements from the centre

BACKGROUND: The field in which this circle appeared was very isolated and completely surrounded by trees making it completely 'invisible' from the surrounding area. If it were not for Mike Hubbard spotting it from his microlight on one of his regular circle-hunting excursions it is unlikely that this formation would ever have been reported.

Getting to the formation required a long walk through several fields and without the farmer's help the survey team probably wouldn't have found it from the ground. The circle, or more correctly 'oval', itself was very nicely formed and layered with significantly swollen nodes. There was a standing 'curtain' along one set of tramlines that passed through the circle and in places grass and camomile were included in the lay. Several isolated stems of wheat remained upright as did a solitary stem of dock. There was a beautiful, isolated feel to this simple formation. A conversation with the farmer's daughter and son-in-law told of a strange UFO sighting during the Christmas of

1994. It was late at night and they heard a noise as their bedroom lit up with a bright light. When they looked out of the window they saw an intensely bright ball of light moving towards their bungalow. Their first thought was to check on the children who were fast asleep and they hurried back to their bedroom in time to witness this light, which reminded them of a very bright car headlight, pass over the roof and disappear into the night. There are no roads at all behind their bungalow, only fields, and up until now they had assumed it to be freak ball-lightning. With the arrival of the circle, they are now not so sure. (Original report: Debbie Pardoe & Nigel Tomsett)

BACKGROUND: These five areas of indeterminate shape did not appear to be lodging but were more likely non-geometric crop formations as have been recorded and verified by Dr W C Leven-good several times before. They appeared around the 31st July in a field not far from Arlington reservoir in an area which has seen crop formations in the past. A standing centre with an impressive clockwise swirl around it

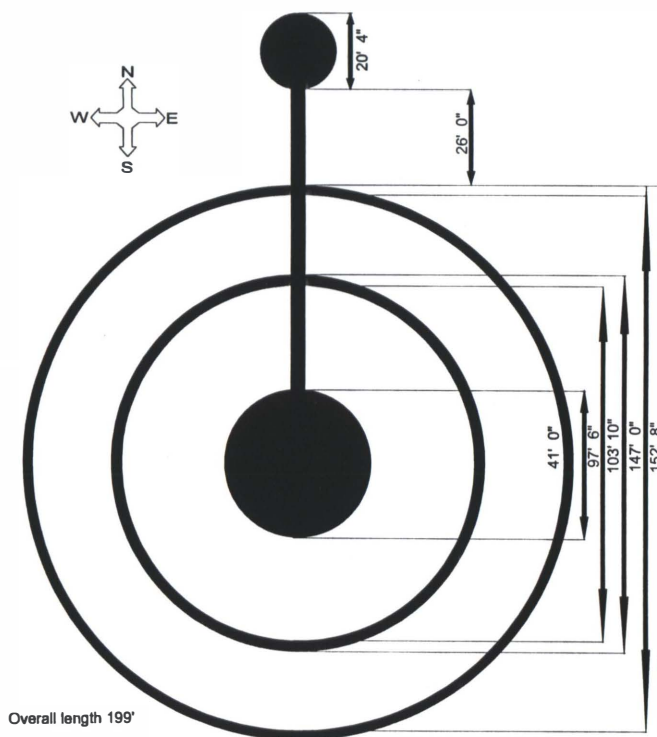
marked the central block which was approximately 95' by 32'. Power cables crossed the field nearby. According to David Tilt, the dowser who discovered them, the shapes marked the crossing point of two major earth energy lines. Interference from the adjacent pylons may have helped create the shapes.

The site of a massive ancient henge lies nearby. (Original report: Andy Thomas)

REF: Sussex 1996/05
DATE SPOTTED: 31 July 1996
DESCRIPTION: Five non-geometric areas of flattened crop
CROP: Wheat
SWIRL: Clockwise in places but largely irregular
LOCATION: Arlington, East Sussex
OS MAP: 199
GRID REF: TV 545 075
SURVEYED BY: Andy Thomas

REF: Sussex 1996/06
DATE SPOTTED: 4 August 1996
DESCRIPTION: Dumbbell with one circle ringed twice
CROP: Barley
SWIRL: See below>
LOCATION: Warningcamp Hill, Blakehurst, West Sussex
OS MAP: 197
GRID REF: TQ 044 077
SURVEYED BY: Nigel Tomsett, Debbie Pardoe & Andy Thomas

A traditional Sussex dumbbell of a similar type to that which appeared about six years ago in the Patcham/Pyecombe area, this formed in barley and consisted of a circle 20' in diameter with an anti-clockwise swirl which was connected to a larger clockwise circle with a diameter of approximately 40'. The connecting shaft lay along a compass bearing of exactly due north and was 4' wide and 82' in length. The crop flowed along the shaft from south to north, ie. from the larger circle to the smaller circle. The larger



Overall length 199'

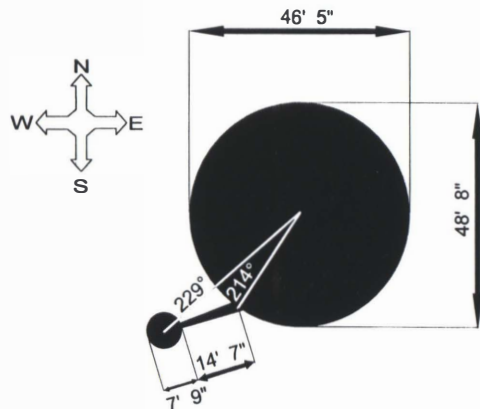
circle had two rings around it, both approximately 3' wide. The outer ring was 152' across from east to west at its outer edge and was laid clockwise while the inner ring was approximately 127' across at its outer edge and was laid anticlockwise.

The swirled barley had a twisted effect somewhat like a corn dolly and the whole formation had a most pleasing feeling being set in what must be one of the most scenic spots in Sussex. The formation was approached by means of a footpath which led up a hill from a narrow road. The first glimpse of it from the top was quite stunning since it was placed in such a favourable spot for the sightseer and photographer alike, being on the other side of a valley on a steep slope.

This formation appeared on the front of the *West Sussex Gazette* with a quote from the farmer saying how messy the formation was (untrue) and how it was obviously knocked up by drunks as it happened "after the pubs had closed" - a meaningless assertion, given that nearly all formations appear overnight after the pubs close..! The farmer was reluctant to let the survey team in, but did so - only to park his landrover a few hundred yards away to observe and scrutinise them suspiciously with binoculars as they worked.

The area is surrounded by some of the oldest places in Sussex - Neolithic flint mines and several ley lines extend from the formation. A line drawn from here to 1995's formation beneath Cissbury Ring (TQ 155 087, Sussex

95/10) passes straight through the centre of the flint mines on Church Hill (TQ 1120830); a second line drawn from the dumbbell to Harrow Hill, passes through the centre of an old earthwork at a place called Lower Barpham (TQ 071093); a third line to the mines on Blackpatch Hill (TQ 094089), which were found to contain a number of burials by cremation and inhumation, passes through another ancient settlement and several Bronze Age tumuli (TQ 084093); yet another line drawn through a tumulus called The Burgh just north of Warningcamp Hill (TQ 049112) reaches an old earthwork and an area rich in Bronze Age tumuli along the South Downs Way east of Amberley (TQ 0511125). With an estimated date of 3300 BCE (or earlier) the Church Hill mines, along with other flint mines on nearby Blackpatch Hill and Cissbury Ring, flourished until well into the Bronze Age and, being a hive of industry for over 2000 years, the area is also rich in traces of old settlements and 'tool factories' where flints were knapped and shaped into axes. Evidence of such settlements and industrial areas have been discovered around Harrow Hill less than 3 miles away to the north east of Warningcamp Hill. Our Neolithic ancestors worked a large group of over 100 flint mines on Harrow Hill which are situated around a small Iron Age enclosure (TQ 081 100). The position of the Warningcamp Hill formation, just east of historic Arundel and surrounded by ancient sites is typical of many crop formations. (Original report: Debbie Pardoe & Nigel Tomsett)



All measurements and angles are from centre of swirl.

BACKGROUND: This small dumbbell appeared on the steep slope of Tenants Hill behind a housing estate. It was in exactly the same position as 1995's stick-man formation (Sussex 95/07) and likewise was the seventh Sussex formation of the season. Its arrival on the same spot adds to the theory that that year's circle was genuine. This can't be verified since due to the absurdity of the man-made additions it was assumed by many at the time to be an obvious joke and was not given much attention.

This year's dumbbell was small and sweet - a clockwise circle having an approximate diameter of 48' with the centre swirl very much off-centre. It was connected to a smaller circle of approximately 7'8" in diameter, by a curved shaft approximately 4' wide and 14'7" in length. Three of the radii in the large circle were identical measuring 27' 10" from the swirled centre to circumference points on the north-east, east and south-east edges. The radii gradually got smaller moving round towards the west

REF: Sussex 1996/07
DATE APPEARED: 7 August 1996
DESCRIPTION: Dumbbell with skewed pathway
CROP: Wheat
SWIRL: All clockwise
LOCATION: Saltdean, East Sussex
OS MAP: 198
GRID REF: TQ 388 027
SURVEYED BY: Nigel Tomsett, Debbie Pardoe, Gemma Pardoe & Andy Thomas

at which point the radius was only 18' 7", a difference here of 10' to the opposite radius on the east (centre to: north - 23'4", south - 25'4", north-west - 20'8", south-west - 21'5", west - 18'7"). The compass bearing of the centre of the shaft from the swirled centre was 214 and to the centre of the small circle, 229. The shaft was 4' wide across its centre and at the point where it left the larger circle but only 3' 7" where it entered the small circle. The crop flowed from the large circle to the small circle. The east point of the small circle was at the point where the left side of the shaft met the circle and its diameter east/west was 7' 9", and 7' 7" south/north.

One set of tramlines ran through the large circle and the 'curtain effect' was in evidence once again. The inner

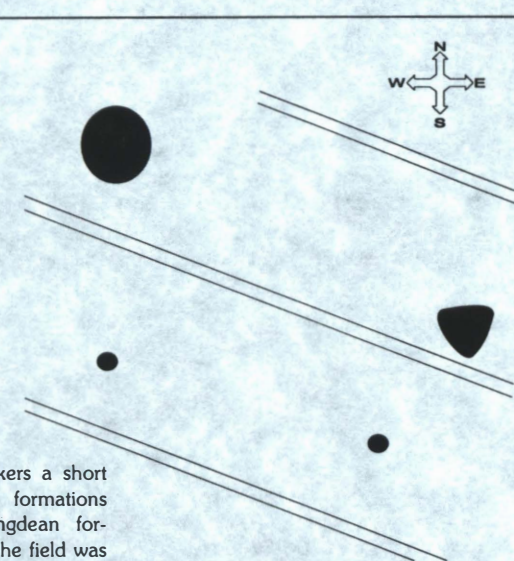
REF: Sussex 1996/08
DATE SPOTTED: 18 August 1996
DESCRIPTION: Circle, triangle & two grapeshot
CROP: Long-eared wheat
SWIRL: Uncertain
LOCATION: Roedean, Ovingdean, East Sussex
OS MAP: 198
GRID REF: TQ 345 037
SURVEYED BY: Nigel Tomsett, Debbie Pardoe & Andy Thomas (after harvest)

BACKGROUND: First seen by Martin Noakes from a light aircraft, these very small shapes (the largest measured little more than 6' across approximately) were in a field behind the famous Roedean girl's college and just above above a golf course. Curiously, a col-

lection of sand bunkers a short distance below the formations resembled the Ovingdean formation from July! The field was being harvested as Martin took his photos and the survey team entered a few days later, to examine what was left.

tramline was at a distance of 14'2" from the swirled centre, measured at a compass bearing of 310, and the outer tramline was at a distance of 19' 10", just touching the perimeter of the circle.

This formation lay on the same latitude as the Ovingdean formation (Sussex 96/02) which had appeared eleven days previously. The map reveals a previous formation on the same line - two circles, one larger than the other, that appeared at Rathfinny Farm on 10 July 1986 (TQ 495 027, Sussex 86/01). This formation lies at TQ 388 027, 1995's stick-man formation was given as 388 028, while the Ovingdean circles sat on TQ 362 028. (Original report: Debbie Pardoe & Nigel Tomsett)



REF: Sussex 1996/09
DATE SPOTTED: 10 August 1996
DESCRIPTION: Single circle
CROP: Unknown
SWIRL: Unknown
LOCATION: Alfriston, East Sussex
OS MAP: 199
GRID REF: Unknown

BACKGROUND: Reported by an SC reader but never substantiated or located despite searches. Alfriston has been home to several formations in years past.

BACKGROUND: This formation was discovered approximately two weeks before being reported so existed from at least around 25th August 1996.

The small car park from which the formation was visible is part of the South Downs Way, home to many formations in Sussex over the years. It was also only

REF: Sussex 1996/10
DATE SPOTTED: 7 Sep 1996
DESCRIPTION: Circle & pathway
CROP: Unknown
LOCATION: Amberley, West Sussex
OS MAP: 197
GRID REF: TQ 034 126 approx

three quarters of a mile from the two circles of 1994 (Sussex 94/11) and just over two miles from the dumbbell at Warningcamp Hill (Sussex 96/06).

cornography

with Michael Glickman

As soon as a number of whizzkid croppies were shown the Oliver's Castle video they declared, publicly and with confidence, that they would be able to duplicate it without much trouble.

Those who saw their copies were stunned by the professionalism and veracity. So successful were they that immediate offers came from Spielberg's Dreamworks asking them to head their electronic special effects division. The deal was about to be signed when George Lucas flew in with his private jet bearing a hugely superior counter-offer. These whizzkids, we understand, blew Steven out, accepted the Lucas deal and will be taking up their positions as Vice Presidents of Special Effects at Industrial Light and Magic in northern California within the next few days.

What is amazing, after these people's scoops, is the astonishing number of high-level video and computer professionals and academics who have been completely taken in and have testified to the veracity of the original Wheyleigh footage. Poor saps!

I get a few letters, some approving and some not, but, in the last month, I received a letter which verged on hate-mail. Of course, I would never dignify this junk with a reply, but I get an enormous amount of pleasure from the fact that this guy cannot spell, punctuate or make coherent sentences. Above all, he does not possess the tiniest vestige of humour.

To help such people, I must state that the previous section of this column is not true. It is ironic. I-R-O-N-I-C. Look it up.

The scene is an outer chamber of Limbo, reserved for those of deeply blotched Karma waiting to hear where they are to be sent in penance. A serious-looking intellectual sits pensively on a cloud, chin on hand in the position of Rodin's Thinker.

Carl Sagan (for it is he): How could I have been so stupid? I knew those CSICOP guys were flaky as soon as I set eyes on them. And then, that cheesy 'Amazing Randi'! My promising career in Science

ruined to end up doing PR with a vaudeville conjurer.

A short figure in a grubby raincoat with a back-to-front baseball cap shuffles into view. He stops in surprise at the sight of Sagan and he approaches nervously.

Dave Chorley (for it is he): Excuse me, sir, but weren't you Carl Sagan?

Sagan (animated): Jimmy! Jim Schnabel! Is it you? *Chorley sheepishly rotates his cap to reveal a bent paper clip on the brim.*

Chorley: I'm very honoured to meet you, sir, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for that nice chapter in your latest, er, last book.

Sagan: And who were you?

Chorley: I was Dave of the famous Doug and Dave team who made all the crop circles as you noted in your excellent book, sir.

Sagan: You've not been here very long have you?

Chorley: No, sir. Just arrived, as it happens.

Sagan: Well, when you've been here another aeon or two you'll understand how things work up here. No lies allowed. No exaggerations, distortions or economies with the truth. No fibs, falsehoods or deceptions. We all have access to truth here. I am afraid we can all see right through each other. I now know what I have to admit I suspected all along. You were a couple of old frauds.

Chorley (chastened): Ok, you're right. It wasn't my idea. I just went along for the ride. It was Doug who...

Sagan: But you liked the cash...

Chorley: And seeing as we're being truthful, so did you! And I have to tell you that the chapter on crop circles was pure garbage. We laughed 'til we wept.

Sagan (sighing): I know, I know. There is a certain irony in our being called here at about the same time. I wonder what it means?

Chorley (nervously, after a moment's silence): What happens next?

Sagan: Oh, they'll call you in to assess your case and then you're sent out here for a century or two to await their decision.

Chorley finds a cloud to sit on. Darkness falls.

(Later) IT IS THE DECISION OF THIS COURT:

Sagan C. will spend the next incarnation as Chairman of the CCCS.

Chorley D. will spend the next three incarnations as Editor of SC.