

THE BIMONTHLY
JOURNAL OF
CROP CIRCLES
AND BEYOND

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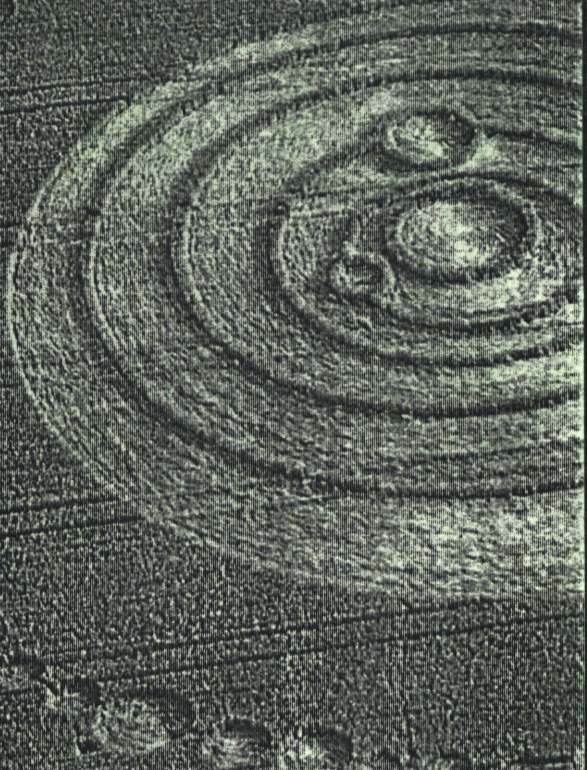
First
Formations
of 1999!

Gurus
On Video

USA
Marsh
Patterns

Stone Circles
As Eclipse
Predictors

REASSESSING THE
SOLAR SYSTEM GLYPH



Some like to understand what they believe in. Others like to believe in what they understand" STANISLAUS J LEC

Our friend Michael Glickman features quite a bit in this issue. First of all, we at SC wish to extend our thanks to him for running the US subscriptions base for the last couple of years or so. We now have a dollar account here in England and subsequently all subscriptions, UK, overseas and US, will be run from our usual subs/mailling base (see Di and Jason's address at the foot of this page), streamlining our systems and enabling us to accept dollar cheques directly. In other words, US subscribers can continue to send cheques in dollars but they should be sent straight over here to England, not to Michael.

Glickman fans shouldn't worry however. He continues to be our regular columnist and resident Devil's advocate, championing minorities and speaking the unspeakable, alternately delighting, upsetting or annoying depending on your sensibilities. There's been a recent debate on the Internet about whether Michael speaks for himself or for SC as a whole when he makes pronouncements, so let's settle this here. Michael's views are his own and do NOT represent the corporate view of SC - this applies to all our contributors; see the disclaimer in the adjoining column. So why then do we continue to print his material as a regular feature, some have asked? Well, back in 1995, when we invited Michael aboard, it was with the deliberate aim of creating provocation and discussion, a kind of antithesis to the tabloid press 'Voice of Reason'-type features. If you like, Michael is the voice of unreason, supporting unfashionable concepts like the authenticity of the Oliver's Castle video (which, yes, he continues to do this issue). If you ever feel roused or ruffled by his column, that's exactly what you're supposed to feel. You - as with the SC team - are free to agree or disagree with the views expressed. For all those on the Web claiming Glickers is washed-up, the almighty backlash he creates is testament to the need for such heresy to be aired. It keeps everyone on their toes.

You can't seem to get away from the Oliver's Castle ghost. After speaking at an event in Amsterdam recently, I was flicking through the Dutch TV channels in my hotel when I came across a marvellous 'yoof' programme entitled *The DJ's*, in which all there is to see is braindead teenagers bopping along unenthusiastically to re-mixes of pop records while cameras swoop across the crowd at wacky angles. Astonishing. Even more astonishing however, were the wall murals decorating the studio, depicting... the Oliver's Castle snowflake formation! Hey, like, really amazing.

Going back to heresy, some SC readers may have been entertained by the recent 'review' of my book *Vital Signs* in *Fortean Times* recently, in which alleged 'circle maker' Rob Irving works himself up into a lather about we blind and self-deluding circle enthusiasts. Leaving aside the fact that the article not only managed to be misleading and offensive but also libellous (I am very badly misquoted), we're faced once again with the spectacle of a leading news-stand journal having to devote a whole page to attacking and debunking a phenomenon for which the media insists there is no serious interest any longer and which has no supporters. A whole page, mind. It's nice to know such dis-interest in crop circles persists!

ANDY THOMAS

SC

THE BIMONTHLY JOURNAL OF CROP CIRCLES AND BEYOND

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Front cover: Longwood Warren, Hampshire, 1995. Photograph by STEVE ALEXANDER

Just before our print deadline, the first reports of the new season's formations arrived in a flurry, a week or so earlier than in previous years. Space is short, so we summarise as follows...

In fact, the very first event of the year seems to have taken place in... Peru! At Linder, near Arequipa, near the border of Chile, three circles joined by paths were found in wheat on 8th March. The next report then took us to Betlehem Hagalili at Jezreel Valley, Israel, where a dumbbell design of two connected anticlockwise 9m circles in wheat was discovered on 20th March. A separate 11m circle lay 800m away. Site of two formations the previous year, curiously, this valley is the biblically prophesied site of the battle of Armageddon...

The first official English formation to be openly reported was the pictogram discovered in oilseed rape on 11th April at Newton St Loe, near Bath, Somerset, site of circles in 1998. It is clearly visible from the A4 road. A throwback to the patterns of the early 90's, a large circle of about 140' connects by a short path to a smaller one with three emanating 'keys' which in turn connects by a path to a slightly larger ringed circle with one key. Neat and impressive, some have wondered if its appearance was connected with a power cut which afflicted Bath the same night. However, at least two formations seem to have arrived previously to this; one very small pattern in rape (design unknown) at Ogbourne St George just north of Marlborough Golf Course, Wiltshire, was first reported on 10th April and a series of circles and crescents in one rape field were apparently spotted even earlier under the white horse at Milk Hill, Wiltshire. Also on 11th April, the same day as Newton St Loe, a spec-

tacular glyph was found in rape at Istead Rise, near Gravesend, Kent. The large necklace of 12 overlapping rings in a loop of around 60m is very neat design-wise, although local researchers were less impressed with the lay of the crop inside. This continues a trend of complex formations in Kent which began a couple of years ago.

The very latest news we have is of a very clean-looking large circle and ring in rape at Bishops Cannings, Wiltshire, spotted on 16th April west of the A361, a 300' old-style rape pictogram at Over Wallop (!), Hampshire on 19th April, and a crescent in rape at Everleigh, Wiltshire the same date. Aerial reconnaissance failed to locate a reported formation at Danebury, Hampshire. Don't forget, anyone on the Internet impatient for the latest can access Crop Circle Connector by calling up <http://www.cropcircleconnector.com>. (Thanks to Connector, Steve Alexander, Karen Douglas, Francine Blake & Andrew King.)

OBITUARY: As we go to print, the very sad news has reached us of the death of Jean Brown. Jean was one of the stalwarts of the Cornwall Centre for Crop Circle Studies group and a long-time supporter of SC. Tragically, while on an African tour following up her enthusiasm for the drumming skills of that continent, she contracted typhoid and passed away, aged just 50, before she was able to return home. Jean had long been an active surveyor of West Country crop circles and an organiser of croppie meetings and events (including last year's Liskeard conference). Always good company, easy-going and level-headed, she will be missed hugely by her family, friends and colleagues and we extend our deepest sympathy. AT

The Longwood Warren formation of 26th June 1995

seems to be what is known to astronomers as an 'Heliocentric View' of part of our solar system. The Sun is in the centre and Mercury, Venus and Mars are shown in their respective eccentric orbits. The orbit of Earth is also shown - but planet Earth itself is missing. The 'Asteroid' label given to the outer ring of the Longwood Warren design is really a misnomer. The Asteroid Belt occurs in the vast space between Mars and Jupiter and the myriad bodies it contains could not be defined sensibly by a single orbital 'necklace'. The great outer ring in fact coincides with the orbit of Jupiter but it is adorned with variously

sized and spaced 'beads'.

What are we supposed to make of it? Well, one question immediately springs to mind: where is the Earth? And there are other questions. Is it just another astonishing work of art or is it again a true astronomical diagram as were the previous year's 'galaxy' designs, predicting some significant future celestial event (see SC 81 & 82)? Is it intended to display its makers' knowledge and skill and at the same time test our own? Is it meaningful at all? I think I can demonstrate convincingly where the Earth is to be placed in this design and answer yes to all the other questions as follows...

- NEWS -

THEY'RE BACK...

Just as we go to print, the first reports of this year's crop formations are beginning to filter in. Next issue, as ever, we'll make a major round up of the season as it progresses, but in the meantime ANDY THOMAS reports what we have so far...

- FEATURES -

THE COSMIC PROTRACTOR

Earth is no longer missing... The famous 'Earth is Missing' or solar system chart formation of 1995 has inspired much and varied speculation as to what it might mean. Now JACK SULLIVAN, who recently cracked the 'galaxy' pattern codes, turns his eye to this astonishing glyph and reassesses some of the misleading assumptions made about it, revealing a convincing key to its enduring puzzle...

The design is presented to us almost as though we are student astronomers sitting an examination in the subject, and if this were the case we may have been presented with an exam paper which would read something like this:

Presuming you do not have access to aerial photos and are constrained to take our measurements at ground level using sighting poles, tape measures and stringing lines:-

- 1) Create an accurate sketch of the whole diagram and determine its components.
- 2) Determine, without the use of theodolite or other similar instrument and within a tolerance of five degrees, the angular relationship between the bodies shown close to the Sun.
- 3) Use these angular measurements, together with astronomical tables and charts, to discover the date represented by the overall design.
- 4) Name and locate the missing planetary object in your design sketch.
- 5) Name and describe the astronomical event revealed by your completed findings.

This supposed formal examination question seems to be a very tall order for our students. Amazingly, the design has all the information necessary to enable the complete answer to be found within the rules set out.

In order to answer these questions I, of course, was able to take short cuts. I had a very good aerial photograph by Steve Alexander published in the book *Vital Signs* by Andy Thomas and the invaluable aid of the astronomical CD Rom computer program *Red Shift* 3 which removed any need for charts and books of tables. So how did I go about the task?

My immediate job (Question 2) was to find the angular relationship between the three planets Mars, Mercury and Venus. This was easily accomplished; I simply traced their positions relative to the Sun and each other directly from the photograph onto transparent plastic film. Obviously our supposed students, limited to ground level measurements, could not do this. However, for them the field design arrived complete with its own protractor!! This is in the form of the great beaded outer ring of this formation, which appears to coincide with what would be the orbit of Jupiter and shows evidence of concise meaningful construction. The 64 beads of various size and spacing provide a means of measuring the angular relationship accurately enough to enable the problem to be solved.

At first glance the chain of apparently random sized dots and spaces appears accidental. A second close look made me think that perhaps the groupings of the smaller dots between the intervals of the larger dots was a numerical coded message or a reference to Jupiter's moons' positions. I explored all of these possibilities and failed to find any significance.

Taking a third, even closer, look at the photograph, I noticed that the dots on the western portion of the orbit

are of greater diameter and have wider spacings generally than the eastern side. This indicates that the dot sizes and spacings have been corrected to compensate for eccentricity. Why should this be so?

Counting the total number of the dots of all sizes reveals that the ring has 64 of them. This is significant I think. We commonly use circular protractors which have divisions of 360 degrees but protractors with divisions based on 64 were also quite common in marine and military compasses. French theodolites and other surveying instruments use divisions of 640 milliems.

At the time I was considering these possibilities, I had already made my angular plastic film template, which had proved to be accurate, directly from Steve Alexander's photo, and I checked this against angular dimensions obtained by counting the ring dots between intersection points. The results are very close and within a tolerance of about 5 degrees - see the three broken intersection lines in Figure 2. This proved to my satisfaction that the average spacing between dots is intended to amount to one sixty-fourth of a true circle, which converts to 5.625 degrees per division. This is remarkable accuracy given the constraints of inscribing such detail in a corn crop on an gigantic eccentric circle! If using this field 'protractor' had been the only method available of measuring the angles between the three inner planets, as I imposed upon my mythical students, the solution to the problem could still have been obtained.

To set about answering Question 3 then, ie. discover the represented date, I set up *Red Shift* to show the central Sun and the three formation planets in their respective orbits at the date the field design arrived. I found first that there was no correlation on the 26th June 1995 with my transparency template of the planet positions, unless - as researcher Jazz Rasool did a few years back - one looks at the ecliptic plain from 'below', where the planets are in the positions shown. Traditionally, though, solar system diagrams are viewed from 'above'.

Ignoring the Rasool findings, I then activated the program to show the angular positions at intervals of one Earth day from the traditional viewpoint and did a search backwards and forwards through time trying to find a match to my template.

I found 32 correlations between the dates 3rd June 1962 and 5th December 2030. They occur at fairly regular intervals, based on multiples of around 300 days. I checked each of them for any date-related significant astronomical event, such as, for instance, the Shoemaker Levy 9 comet collision with Jupiter and the appearance of the Hale Bopp comet (correlations for which have been suggested) but to no good. I then postulated that the 'beads' in the great outer ring of the diagram were in fact positions of Jupiter and some of its moons at times coincident with the positions on my template but this proved to be a time consuming red herring too. So far I had failed miserably to answer Question 3.

It was then that I took another close look at Steve Alex-

ander's photograph but this time remembering an axiom from earlier days as an engineering draughtsman. This is to the effect that on an engineering working drawing there are no superfluous details. Every line or mark has a meaning. So what had I missed earlier?

I had not taken into account the relationship of the planet positions to the major and minor axes of the eccentric orbits, particularly the major axis of the Jupiter orbit and the position of Mars!

With a fresh eye, and beginning again at 26th June 1995, I ran the program forward, this time including the orbit of Jupiter on the computer screen to give me the correct orientation of its eccentricity. I hit my first total correlation almost immediately. On 16th January 1998, the screen shows the true field diagram arrangement (without the protractor beads of course). This is the answer to Question 3. There are 32 angular 'template matches' for the Venus, Mars and Mercury field arrangement between the years 1961 and 2031. No other of the 32 alignments found gave this true position for all elements.

The answer to Question 4 now became immediately available. Obviously the missing object is the planet Earth, but where to locate it in the shown empty orbit?

With the true arrangement still on the computer screen, I added the Earth into the scene. It appeared precisely at the position of 'Inferior Conjunction' with Venus, the position of closest approach. I now had the complete answers to Questions 4 and 5. The astronomically significant event is the Venus-Earth Inferior Conjunction (see Figure 3). The total field arrangement, taking the eccentric orbits and the conjunction into account, is unique and appears only on 16th January 1998.

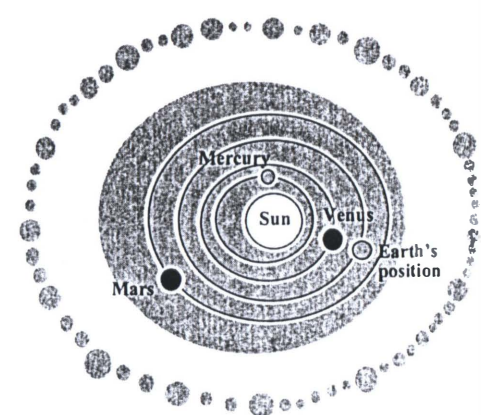
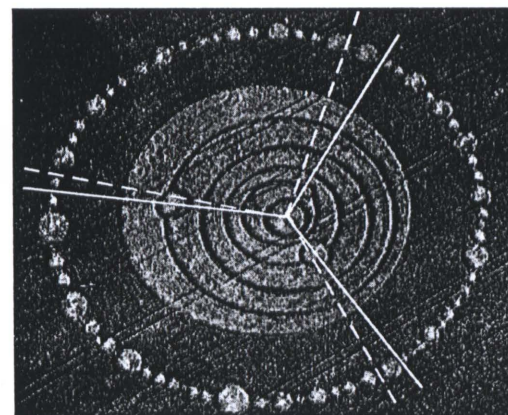
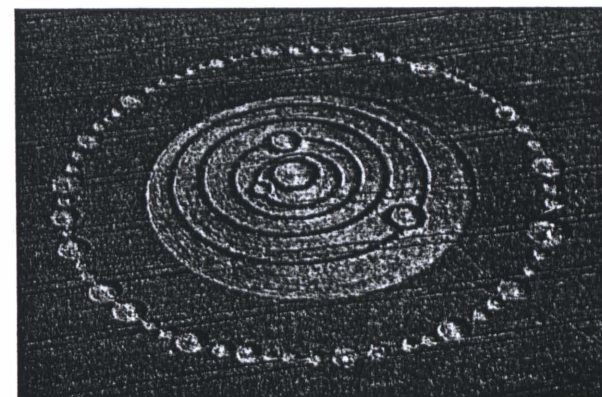
Unfortunately we failed the examination! We should have responded by adding the Earth in its correct position into the field design while it still existed. Who knows what may have happened next? The 16th January 1998 came and went and we may have missed its significance. Lets hope they haven't given up on us... yet!

Inferior Conjunctions of Venus and Earth occur at approximately 18 month intervals. Between the years 1980 and 2010 there are 20 of them. One other only - the 6th of April 2004 - coincides with the positional 'template match' for the Venus-Mars-Mercury arrangement in the original field diagram. But the other essential features of the latter are not matched. The date of 16th January 1998 remains as the unique complete answer... JS

RIGHT: Figure 1. The Longwood Warren formation, Hampshire, 26th July 1995. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

BELOW LEFT: Figure 2. The cosmic protractor (see text for explanation). Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

BELOW RIGHT: Figure 3. The solution to the puzzle, showing Earth's position inserted (see text). Diagram: JACK SULLIVAN



In the world of cult TV fandom, there's a class of video release which eschews the slick but hollow PR jobs of most 'official' merchandise in favour of home-made but far more informative presentations made by fans for the fans. Hence, for virtually any production team member who ever worked on the like of *The Prisoner*, *Star Trek* or *Doctor Who*, from directors to tea boys, there is an interview somewhere available to hardcore followers.

The first of Chris Everard's proposed series of videos looking at all aspects of the crop circle phenomenon, *The Crop Circle Enigma: A Discussion with Stanley Messenger & Michael Glickman*, seems to fit this category fairly well. Until now, Peter

Sorensen's *Humanity's Wake-Up Call* seasonal reports and video diaries (which have been going for some years) have been the closest thing to this classification. Chris' stated objective is to throw out all the flash editing and sexy TV techniques of the 90's and concentrate instead on the subjects themselves. This video and the *Crop Circle Update* follow-ups to come, intended for release over the next three seasons, will portray many of the leading lights in the crop circle world, allowing time for them to reveal themselves and their thoughts on the phenomenon free from the usual soundbite cutting, intercut with latest circle footage. It's a brave move to go for frugality in a world used to effects and wacky camera angles and your interest in this video will depend very much on a) whether you like your footage raw or glossed, and b) whether you have a personal affinity with the two personalities featured. The footage certainly is raw, a single static shot of Stanley and Michael in an hour-long conversation with each other by a fireplace, and the sound quality is that of room ambience instead of close-miking. Only an introduction montage of aerial stills makes a nod to graphic playfulness. For those happy to persevere with the back-to-basics approach, a fascination with the two subjects is essential.

In the heady days before the decline of Delgado and Andrews, there was an accepted need for guru-figures in the world of crop circle research. Back then, only a few were in possession of enough knowledge of what was going on in the fields to have a valid opinion and the *hoi-polloi* were happy to pledge their allegiance of

faith in the few at the top. Since the seeming kamikaze leap from grace of many of our cerealogical forefathers into scepticism and personal ego battles, and the sudden acquisition of general circle knowledge for the lay-person through the many books, journals and web sites made available since, there's been a growing

reaction against crop-pie guruism.

Stanley Messenger and Michael Glickman are certainly seen as two of the 'grand old men' of circle research, philosophers who survived the disease of volte-face debunking and the hoax scandals of the early 90's and retained their belief in a genuine phenomenon. Consequently, they are loved, respected and held in high esteem by many

but at the same time resented by others who seem jealous at this enduring deference, accusing them of 'guruism'.

At the end of the day, it's what a person radiates around them that will attract or repel. There's little evidence to show that either Stanley or Michael deliberately encourage a climate of religious veneration towards them. Stanley, a small but spry white-haired figure in his *eighties*, has cultivated respect from his heartfelt outpourings at many conferences over the years, unrehearsed and deeply touching. It isn't guruism that Stanley engenders - it's real love from his audience. You can feel it. The two should never be mistaken and those who mix them up need to double-check their own personal levels of cynicism before accusing others of shortcomings. As for Michael, he remains one of the colourful characters of cerealogy, well aware that his fiery temperament and stubborn refusal to consider any hoaxing claim as valid without 100% proof makes him as many enemies as friends. Do true gurus spend twenty precious minutes of a presentation berating their audience for gullibility, as Michael did at last year's Glastonbury Symposium? Probably not. It seems strange to resent someone for being respected by others. Knocking people for their beliefs is one thing but characterising them as charlatans when they are simply being themselves is quite another.

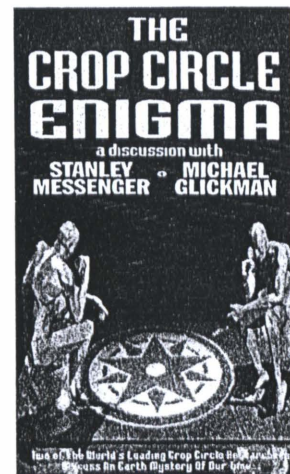
So here are Stanley and Michael, on camera, and indeed revealed pretty much as themselves, chatting amiably about crop circles, new paradigms of global consciousness, the state of belief envelopes amongst

croppies, dimensional shifts, that kind of thing. If you love them for what they are, as many seem to, then you'll be happy to spend this hour with them over a cup of tea sometime. If you don't, then this tape is not for you. (Incidentally, given the cover - see right - some have expressed concern/hope that the subjects might be nude throughout. Don't worry, they remain fully-clothed...)

It will be very easy for cynics to knock this effort on its aesthetics, and true to form some surely will. As for Chris Everard's plans, he should be applauded for trying to give the movers and shakers of cerealogy an unedited voice in a world of *CountryFile*-type scepticism and selectiveness. Chris is currently setting up *The Enigma Channel* web site where all of his forthcoming material will be downloadable from the Net and some may access his project through that medium. Like *Prisoner* fan productions, such tapes may never reach the millions at the fingertips of the mass-media

but somewhere along the line they'll achieve something, even if it's only as a fascinating record for the far future of a curious bunch of people interested in something marvellous at the turn of a forgotten century. **AT**

The Crop Circle Enigma, 66mins, PAL or NTSC (on request), £14.99 / \$25 (includes p&p). Available from: 163 Churchbury Road, London, SE9 5JB, cheques payable to 'C Everard'.



A couple of years back these photographs were taken by Tom Lockhart, a retired Air Force Pilot of Aero Vista, as he flew back from the Grand

Canyon to Sedona. Tom was in "absolute awe" as he looked down at what appeared to be a small lake or marsh on a mountain-top and saw these amazingly well-defined symbols. The lines which make them appear to be water-filled channels.

When Tom convinced his partner, Steve Sacco, a former Nuclear Physicist, to fly over the site with him, Steve could only stare in silence. He said that it was one thing to see a picture of the symbols but a completely different experience to actually fly over them. They could see no sign of heavy equip-

ment and no tracks leading into or out of the bog. Has anyone any ideas of what they are?

After showing the photographs at a Southern Circular Research meeting, it was pointed out that one of the symbols is the astrological sign for Aries whilst others appear to be stylised versions of the symbol for woman, a pound sign and the number 16 (or 91 depending on which way up you are!). The current theory is that this is an alien lonely hearts advert "Young (or old) Aries lady seeks rich...". Her name appears to begin with 'd'. On the other hand it could be from a man named, say, Doug - "Lonely old man seeks rich, young Aries woman to...". **BR**

- REPORTS - MARSH GLYPHS

An intriguing report which got buried in our archives recently resurfaced and deserves an airing, having received little attention elsewhere. **BARRY REYNOLDS** reports on the strange marsh patterns of Arizona...

Photos: TOM LOCKHART



Zan Overall, one of SC's US subscribers, recently had correspondence regarding crop circles with the director, whose name we can't print here, of an important American astronomical and educational observatory. His reply to Zan is worth reading because, whilst not entirely unreasoned, it sums up very well the general attitude of many scientists towards the phenomenon...

Zan began by sending the director a package of photographs, information and many structured arguments against the man-made explanation for the crop circles (long familiar to SC readers). He enclosed a note outside the package which read as follows:

- CORRESPONDENCE -

A SCIENTIST WRITES...

Knowing that hard scientists generally hold crop circles in contempt, ZAN OVERALL decided to tackle one on the subject by writing to him. Surprisingly, a reply was actually forthcoming - well, of sorts anyway...

Dear Dr (X): When you were on Doug McIntire's radio show we spoke on the air about crop circle formations. I believe the

evidence shows they are a true mystery produced in an unconventional manner by some unknown intelligence or intelligences. As I recall your position, you invoked some natural explanation and/or hoaxes.

...I promised I would send you photographs of formations from this year and last year... I have placed them in a sealed package. The package has some questions on it for you to ask yourself and answer before you examine the images. The questions hopefully will help you put aside any preconceptions you have on the subject and allow you to judge the evidence with a clear and open mind. Please don't be offended.

The questions (perhaps rather leadingly) read:

1) Pending a careful examination of the evidence, can you consider the proposition that the crop circle formations are produced by a completely unconventional and mysterious unknown agency as one of the possible explanations, on an equal footing with the hoax explanation and any other conventional explanation? If the above-mentioned proposition is one that you could not seriously entertain, even hypothetically, this whole exercise is pointless and I ask you to pitch this package in a wastebasket.

2) If you come to be impressed by these formations and the circumstances in which they are produced and cannot seriously imagine that they are produced by hoaxing, are you prepared to so state to the public and to your colleagues, knowing the damage such an action would do to your reputation and career? If you cannot readily and honestly answer "yes," then please discard this package unopened and live a comfortable life with my blessing.

Shortly after, a reply from Dr X was forthcoming:

Dear Mr Overall: Thank you for your letter and for the

accompanying materials. I have seen these images before as well as many others, for I have been collecting crop circle publications for several years (why, if sceptical? - Ed). The admonitions you attached to your sealed envelope are not really relevant to a scientific inquiry, for objective analysis recognises that preconceptions and bias are al-

most inevitable. We always view nature, which includes us, with assumptions, but we apply scientific analysis because we know how easy it is to misinterpret what we see. Scientific method and critical thought are useful tools that assist us in our attempts to understand when the patterns we sense in nature have meaning in physical law.

In deference to your request, however, I did answer your rhetorical questions before opening the envelope. I am writing to report that the images do not move me. Far more complex enterprises than elaborate crop circles have been successfully undertaken by resourceful individuals. As I said on the air, I never underestimate the average Caltech undergraduate. I regret to report that neither your commentary nor the pictures persuade me we seeing something uncanny in crop circles. I don't even regard the circles of recent years as hoaxes. To me, they are contrived public art.

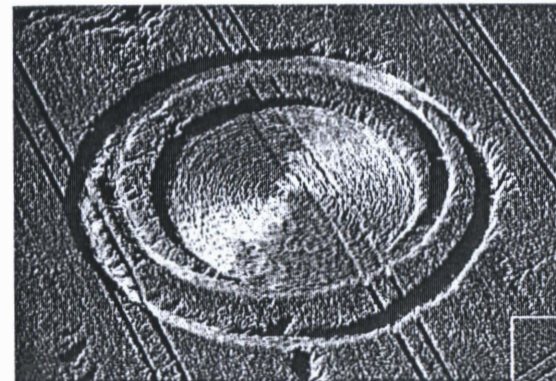
Contrived public art... oh dear. Zan was inspired to make a final reply:

Dear Dr X: Thank you for your prompt and courteous reply... Your reply, while prompt, was disappointing. I presented a number of arguments for an unconventional explanation for crop circle formations. You replied with an almost religious statement of faith in the powers of "undergraduates." You didn't address any of my arguments. I wonder if you even pondered them.

I'm reminded of the man who hears of a holy man in the Himalayas who knows the secret of life. At great cost, sacrifice and effort, the man makes his way to the holy man's cave high in the Himalayas and asks him for the secret of life. The holy man replies mellifluously: "My son, life is a fountain." The suppliant loses it. He shouts: "I sell my business! My wife leaves me! I spend every cent I have to get here and learn the secret of life and you sit there and tell me 'life is a fountain'? That's ridiculous!" The holy man is shaken and asks piteously: "You mean life isn't a fountain?"

Maybe someday if you look honestly at enough crop formations you will ask: "You mean it isn't undergraduates?"

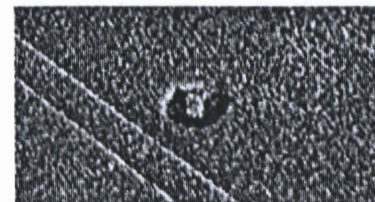
A further reply was not forthcoming.



ABOVE: Gander Down, Hampshire, 2nd August. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

RIGHT: Shepton Mallet, Somerset, 13th June. Not far from mystical Glastonbury, this is one of the few formations to have appeared in this area. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

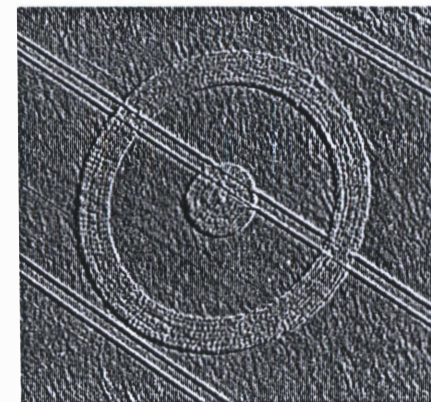
BELOW: West Overton, Wiltshire, 25th May. The tiniest formation ever recorded or just a stray grapeshot? Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER



RIGHT: West Overton, Wiltshire, 24th May. Bizarre or what? Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

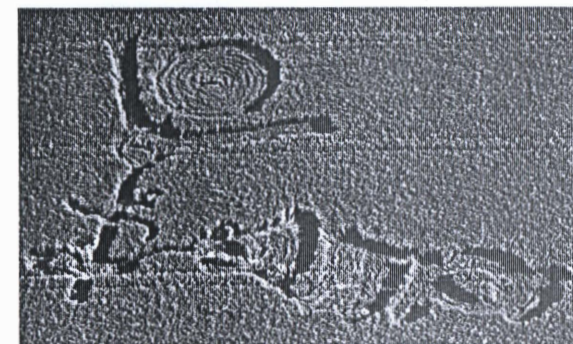
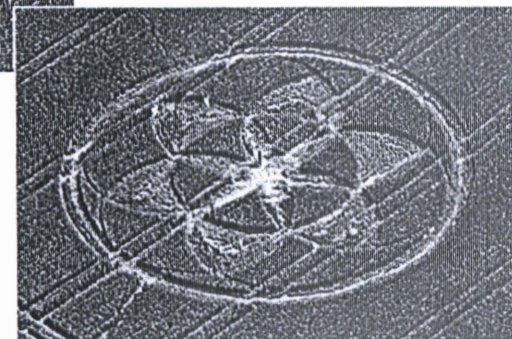
BELOW LEFT: Chiseldon, Wiltshire, 19th June. Photo: LUCY PRINGLE

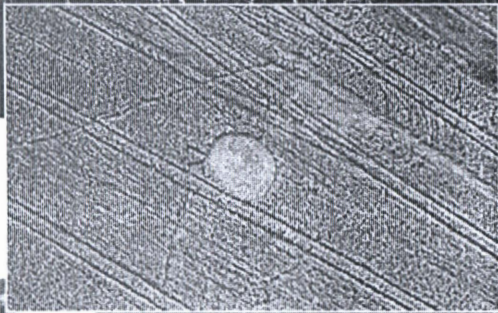
BELOW RIGHT: Newton St Loe, Somerset, 10th May. Note the proximity to power cables. Photo: LUCY PRINGLE



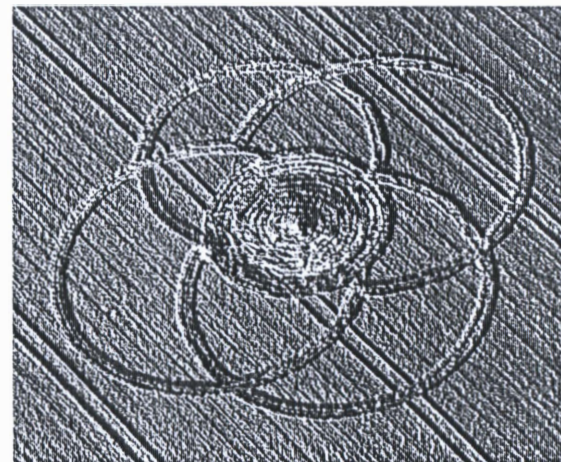
#8 '98 CIRCLES GALLERY

As the 1999 season begins, some final photos of the crop formations of 1998...





ABOVE & LEFT: Saldean, East Sussex, 2nd August. Not quite a single circle, two small 'horns' can also be seen in the aerial shot. This field has played host to two previous formations since 1995. Ground shot: **ANDY THOMAS** Aerial shot: **MICHAEL HUBBARD** **BELOW:** Horsebridge, near Hailsham, East Sussex, 17th August. Photo: **ANDY THOMAS**



#8 '98 CIRCLES GALLERY

The last airing of English crop formations from 1998.

Full colour original copies of Steve Alexander's & Lucy Pringle's pictures can be obtained from LUCY at: 5 Town Lane, Sheet, Petersfield, Hants, GU32 2AF, tel/fax: 01730 263454, e-mail: LucyPringle@compuserve.com, and from STEVE at: 27 St Francis Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 2UG, tel/fax: 01705 352867.

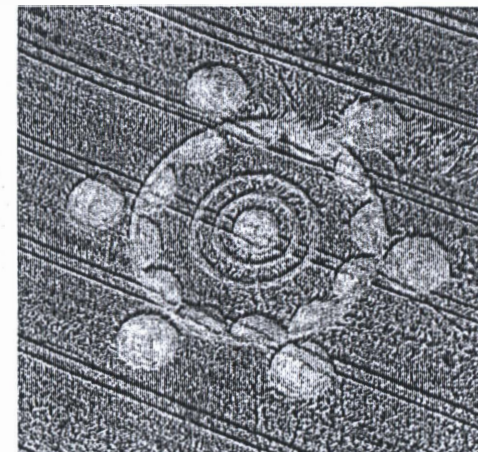


ABOVE: Chiseldon, Wiltshire, 19th June. One ring seems to be deliberately out of proportion. Photo: **STEVE ALEXANDER**

MIDDLE: Dodworth, Yorkshire, 28th July. A throwback to the classic 'thought bubble' motif. Photo: **P J BROOKMAN**

BELOW LEFT: Barnsley, Yorkshire, 28th July. Not far from the Dodworth formations, this was nicknamed 'the sunflower'. Photo: **P J BROOKMAN**

BELOW RIGHT: Dodworth, Yorkshire, 28th July. Photo: **P J BROOKMAN**

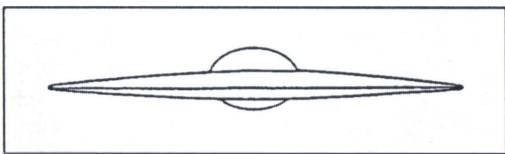


LETTERS

MULDER & SCULLY

Yes, the riddle of the mysterious 'flying saucers' (to use the original term) is now solved (! - Ed). The answer lies in the area that the crop circles have been leading us towards - that of symbols and pictograms. The key aspect of the 'flying saucer' enigma is its characteristic shape. The ufologist may be reluctant to give up his ideas of Extra-Terrestrial spaceships but the cerealogist has the advantage of a form of mental training in interpreting abstract shapes and forms, so, paradoxically, he (or she, of course) may well be better prepared to apprehend the solution, as presented here. Moreover, though the meaning of so many pictograms may remain unclear, that of the 'flying saucer' is crystal clear once this approach is adopted.

So, what is a 'flying saucer'? To answer this one simply needs to look at these two pictures (below) - the first is a drawing of a 'flying saucer' which conveniently 'crashed' (and hence could be *measured*) and became the subject of Frank Scully's *Behind the Flying Saucers* back in 1950. The second is an edge-on view of a spiral galaxy (NGC 4565) in Coma Berenices. Their essential similarity is undeniable.



The 'flying saucer' (I would prefer the term 'spinning disk') is thus NOT a spaceship at all, but, to use the cerealogical term, a *glyph* of an astronomical 'object', a spiral galaxy of shape 'sb' (ie. with small nucleus). But - and this is the real point - this is not just any galaxy, such as the one shown, but *our own* galaxy, the Milky Way. For this too is of 'sb' shape according to scientific research and therefore fits the otherwise odd shape of the classic 'flying saucer'. Not only that, the very dimensions listed by Scully (diameter 99' 9", etc.) have their corresponding equivalent in the galaxy's dimensions, expressed in light years instead of feet.

I am sure I do not need to expand further on the logical

consequences of this correlation. It is surely a simple matter for the cerealogist to see the meaning behind this hitherto disguised glyph. After all, one of the most important aspects of the crop circle phenomenon is that of the interpretation of a possible message from 'elsewhere'. What clearer expression of a signal from the stars of our immediate neighbourhood could there be than a picture of their location in the vastness of space?

David Mulder, St Paul's Cray, Kent

ESTHER RANTINGS

Thanks for your editorial note in the latest SC. I watched the Esther Rantzen show which included crop circles. You did well in the face of the usual cynical opposition! This was better than the normal media treatment of the subject. I think Esther did well in maintaining an open approach herself. I wasn't too impressed with Reg Presley's performance - but was much more with Brian Blessed's views on 'things paranormal'. I'd like to meet him one day.

As is usual with any media approach to such subjects, nothing new was said for those genuinely interested but it was refreshing to see a fairly open-minded discussion for a change - unlike that abortive *CountryFile* effort in January...

Roll on the 1999 season which should be starting soon.

Mike Rogers, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire

...As for the recent *Esther* show (shown in March, not April as predicted but I know television schedulers are unreliable creatures): it's a shame the more rational elements of the programme were not given more time over the very unhelpful outpourings of Reg Presley. It is nice to see enthusiasm but his unfocused ramblings about dowsing did neither this art nor the corn circles the justice they deserved. Also, his insistence on stating that "95%" of corn circles are hoaxed is damaging. Even the rather inarticulate hoaxer in the studio seemed to challenge his basis for this unfounded statistic, albeit from a different perspective than our own. Mr Presley is entitled to his viewpoint but the general public, I fear, switch off whatever openness to the circles they may retain as soon as they see that someone perceived - incorrectly - as an authority on the subject demonstrates such eccentricity and believes that nearly all are made by people.

John Rollinger, Ringmer, East Sussex

I caught the tail end of *Esther* last week. Well done for flying the flag, etc. These guys who claim to make circles - imagine admitting to crop damage on TV! - they grow ever more sadder. One thing is unarguable - that circles

have put in people's minds the idea of spiritual renaissance, which boils down to affecting the nasty real world in an unreligious, positive way. What disturbs me is that so many people want to knock the idea.

I have to admit to 'hoaxing' my own 'lawn circle'. It is 2m in diameter and was supposed to be inspired by the Boreham Wood vesica piscis. However, due to lack of suitable liquid fertilising agent, it resembled a fairy ring with a hangover! Strange world! Let's hope for an even stranger summer!

I followed up the Alfriston article in SC 82 (Sam Goodwin's *A Structured Landscape*). The whole area seems similar to Avebury in many ways. The Cuckmere and Kennett valleys both seem to be a reservoir for charged ground water. I hope to spend a day searching for the springs in Pewsey Vale, as described in Steve Page's excellent recent SCR lecture.

Roddy Turner, Lindfield, West Sussex

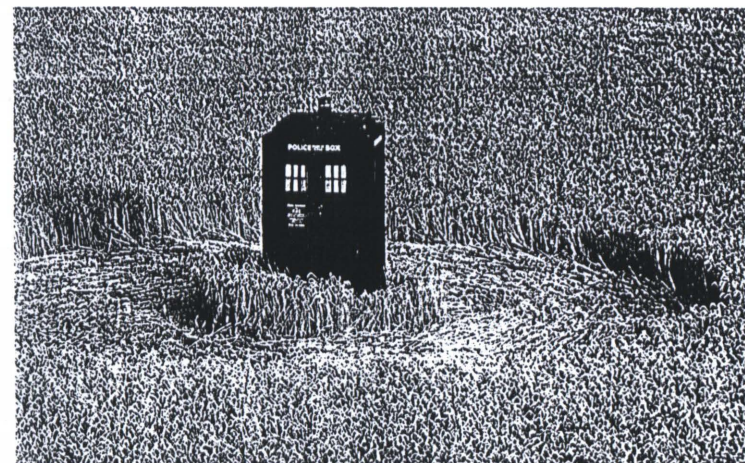
MULDER WHINE

Re: Danny Sotham's recent *A-Z of Cerealogy* and his contention that crop circles have barely featured in the *X Files*. But what about the photo of the East Kennett 27th July 1991 formation which graces the wall of Mulder's office? Does this not denote the subtle revelation of a conspiracy? Can such evidence be ignored? I think we should be told.

Darren Francis, London, SE14

WHO KNOWS

What a sad man Danny Sotham is. Little does he know about *Doctor Who*. Enclosed is a photocopy of a delightful poster photo of the TARDIS in a crop circle. It's called 'Harvest Time' and I've got one. Shouldn't it be



"No... Not the Mind Probe!"

"Amaze all your friends"?

On a more sensible subject, just where does Mr Glickman get all this Sacred Geometry from? Who says seven-fold represents spirit and revelation? What do all the others represent?

In the last edition of *Steamshovel Press* magazine (American), an article entitled 'Paranoiac Iconography' by Max Well gets very excited about symbols with 34 degrees appearing on US trucks and posters and a six-pointed star, which, when drawn on a dollar bill spells out the word MASON.

Sacred Geometry or just loony crap?

Dudley Young, Horsham, West Sussex

DANNY SOTHAM REPLIES: The point I was making about *The X Files* was that it was one of the few TV shows which *had* featured crop circles - okay, so I missed a reference. Calm down darlings.

As for *Doctor Who*, all I have to say is - "There's nothing you can do to stop the catharsis of spurious morality". Real fans will understand this reference. DS

MICHAEL GLICKMAN REPLIES: Dudley Young raises an important question and I am very grateful to him.

I realise that I am perhaps too close to my work and have not dealt sufficiently and clearly with the origins of the numerological characteristics of geometries. It is so large and important a topic, especially when related to the circles, that it would do it an injustice to deal with it briefly as a reply.

Therefore I propose to devote much of the next *Cornography* in the forthcoming issue to an exploration of the sources and meaning of number in geometry. I will be checking written references and also talking to others working in this field to get as comprehensive a response as possible. MG

All letters and comments regarding articles in SC - or anything else you wish to sound off about - should be sent to the editorial address on page 2. Don't forget, we also welcome longer articles and other contributions. Pieces should be submitted as typed or word-processed documents where possible, together with a disk with the same saved either as ASCII text or as a 'Word' document. Otherwise, readable handwriting, please. Submission does not guarantee inclusion, however! - Ed.

THE MAYA

In *Megaliths and Masterminds* (1) Peter Lancaster Brown reminds us that until 1585, when the Gregorian calendar was introduced to Europe, the year was calculated to be 365.25 days long. The Gregorian reform gave us a year of 365.2425 days which is now the world standard. The actual length of the sidereal year is 365.242198 days. The 'Maya' or Mayans, who Brown calls "a Stone-Age people", had no leap year or decimal point but adjusted for accumulated error using common multiples of three calendars - the Tzolkin 260-day count, the Haab 365-day solar count and the 584-day Venus cycle. As a result, their reckoning of the year worked out at 365.242129 days; considerably more accurate than our own calendar!

In the Dresden Codex, one of the few surviving Mayan documents (although probably a 12th century copy of an earlier original), we find not only a Venus calendar which tracks Venus for 384 years but also eclipse tables which show that the Mayans had discovered the 18.61-year cycle of the lunar nodes. This has important implications for the study of megalithic observatories such as Stonehenge, since, when astronomer Gerald Hawkins suggested in 1963 a method by which Stonehenge could have been used as an eclipse-predictor, archaeologists said that the tracking of lunar nodes and hence eclipse-prediction was beyond the capabilities of a Stone Age society. Three years later in 1966, Sir Fred Hoyle, one of the world's leading astronomers, refined Hawkins' eclipse-prediction method to a simpler and more accurate one, disposing of most of the objections to Hawkins' method though the archaeologists still could not accept the possibility. The Mayan eclipse-knowledge puts a new light on the matter, however. In the words of Brown; *"Were the astronomer-priests of Neolithic time the predecessors to the Druids of the Iron Age as Lockyer and others believed? It was Pliny, remember, who tells us that the Druids took twenty years to acquire their education and that it was considered unlawful to commit their knowledge to writing. Could then an astronomer-priesthood class, without writing and with only stones to use in counting numbers, develop a sky science and evolve a calendrical astronomy and an eclipse-prediction method like that of the Maya? The answer must be a guarded yes - although this does not*

prove that they did. But no longer is it possible for archaeologists to say that this was culturally impossible as once they maintained". (2)

STONEHENGE ALIGNMENTS

In order to predict eclipses, three cycles would have to have been accurately tracked; the solar cycle, the lunar cycle, and the regression cycle of the lunar nodes. So, do we find evidence at Stonehenge that these three cycles were being monitored? Most researchers now discount the Heelstone as a Midsummer Sunrise alignment due to the fact that the Sun's solstice position has moved along the horizon since the stones were erected. Some say that the alignment was between the Heelstone and its recently dis-

covered partner stone 97, but there are also other claimed solar alignments which could have been used. The four station stones form a rectangle, the short sides of which align to Midsummer Sunrise AND Midwinter Sunset according to some researchers, and the long sides align to northernmost moonset and southernmost moonrise. Aubrey Burl, the 'country's leading expert on stone circles', supported these alignments in his book (3) but recently stated on television that the only definite alignment at Stonehenge is through the central trilithon pair towards Midwinter Sunset. He was probably being cautious following the recent publication of John North's sceptical but well-researched book on Stonehenge. (4) North sees the trilithon-Midwinter Sunset alignment as the primary alignment at Stonehenge but also concedes that an alignment to the moonset at the minor southern lunar standstill was also designed into it. So, even by the most sceptical researchers, there is an acceptance that Stonehenge had a solar AND lunar tracking function. However, why would the builders of Stonehenge track the moonset at MINOR southern lunar standstill, unless they also tracked it to MAJOR standstills - to the northernmost and southernmost moonrises? In his booklet *The Astronomical Significance of Stonehenge*, C A Newham suggests that the causeway post holes marked the extremes of the northern midwinter moonrise, a cycle which takes 18.61 years to complete. There are six rows of these post holes, which implies that the cycle was tracked for $6 \times 18.61 =$ nearly 112 years (see Fig.1). This is the retrograde or regression of lunar

nodes cycle which was necessary for eclipse prediction. North suggests complex reasons why he disagrees with this but if Newham was right this could form the basis of an eclipse-prediction method. Even if Newham was wrong, the Mayan example shows that eclipses could have been predicted just by prolonged eclipse-tracking.

STONEHENGE AS ECLIPSE-PREDICTOR

It has been suggested that the 30 sarsens represent the 29.5-day lunar cycle (stone 11 is only half the size of the others). The lunar cycle could also have been tracked by the 'Y' and 'Z' holes over two months as there are 30 'Y' holes and 29 'Z' holes, or by the 59 bluestones. The sun could have been tracked by the Midwinter sunset if not other alignments and even if Newham was wrong the interval between two moonsets at the minor southern lunar standstill - an alignment accepted by the most sceptical writers - would still have been 18.61 years, indicating the regressing lunar node cycle. Thus, we have all the knowledge required to use Stonehenge as an eclipse-predictor. (In addition, we even have the actual 'eclipse year' itself encoded at Stonehenge. 223 lunar cycles = 19 'eclipse years' of 346.62 days where an eclipse year is the interval between successive passages of the Sun through the nodes of the Moon's orbit. 223 can be found at Stonehenge by adding 56 Aubrey holes, 30 'Y' holes, 29 'Z' holes, 30 sarsens, 59 bluestones and the 19 stones in the bluestone horseshoe. The 56 Aubrey holes may be directly connected to this cycle, since 55.75 is a quarter of 223.)

Hawkins' and Hoyle's eclipse-prediction methods use the 56 Aubrey holes with markers moving around the holes. Since Hoyle's method is simpler and more accurate let's concentrate on that one. First, a definition of the terms. In Hoyle's system, the Aubrey circle represented the ecliptic which is the apparent circle round the heavens along which the Sun and planets move. The regression of the lunar nodes is a cycle caused by the Moon's path being inclined at 5.25 degrees to the ecliptic. If the Moon rotated in the plane of the ecliptic there would be a solar eclipse at every New Moon and a lunar eclipse at every Full Moon (see Fig.2). Only when the Sun, Moon and Earth are aligned in the same plane will an eclipse occur. The lunar nodes are the points on the Moon's orbit which intersect with the ecliptic and since it is at an angle to it and rotating around the sun along with the Earth, the result is that the nodes slowly rotate in the opposite direction to the Moon's monthly rotation over 18.61 years. The Neolithic builders of Stonehenge would not have needed to know all this technical theory. They could have just tracked the movement of the Moon as suggested, to find an 18-19 year cycle which could have been handled more easily by counting two cycles of 19 years and one of 18 to make a 56 year 'cycle'. Alternatively, they could have come across the information by long-term eclipse recording, like the Maya. The eclipse computer would have functioned by moving four markers

around the Aubrey hole circle of 56 holes (see Fig.3). One would represent the Sun and another would represent the Moon and these would both travel in the same direction around the circle but at differing speeds, just as they do around the ecliptic. The Sun marker would move two Aubrey holes every 13 days and the Moon marker would move two Aubrey holes each day. The two nodal markers representing the Moon's nodes, or points of intersection with the ecliptic (directly opposite each other), would move in the opposite direction to the Sun and Moon markers at the rate of three holes each year. The lunar marker is checked and adjusted twice per month by aligning the Moon marker opposite the Sun marker at full moon, and with the Sun marker at new moon. The Sun marker is adjusted at solstices and equinoxes, to the relevant Aubrey hole at Northeast, Northwest, Southeast or Southwest. The ascending node marker (N in the diagram) is recalibrated once every nodal cycle of 18.61 years. This would be done at the point of most northerly moonrise, according to Hoyle, when the marker would be put on Aubrey hole 14 in the Southeast. The descending node marker would be kept directly opposite. This predictor could thus "continue to operate indefinitely without appreciable inaccuracy". (5) Peter Lancaster Brown considers it possible that the Maya had a similar node-stone concept in order to arrive at their results (the only source he quotes is S G Morley's *The Ancient Maya*, published in 1946 and 56). (6)

NINETEEN: AN ECLIPSE NUMBER

As we have seen, there are two cycles of nineteen years associated with eclipse-prediction; the 18.61 year retrograde lunar node cycle and the 223-lunation 'eclipse-year'. There is also a third 19 year cycle called the Metonic cycle after the Greek astronomer Meton who discovered in the fifth century BC that 235 lunar months are equal to 19 solar years after which the lunar phases will repeat on the same calendar date. In 1829 Godfrey Higgins suggested that the 19-stone horseshoe at Stonehenge was connected with this cycle. Seventy or so years later, Lockyer referred to a comment by Diodorus Siculus (100 BC) of a 'spherical temple' on the isle of Hyperborea (Britain) dedicated to Apollo the Sun god who visited the island every 19 years. This has been taken to infer a connection between Stonehenge and the Metonic cycle but when Newham and Hoyle found the 18.61-year retrograde lunar node cycle connection with Stonehenge, some commentators got the cycles confused, calling the nodal cycle the Metonic cycle. If, as some researchers suggest, Stonehenge was the prototype astronomical observatory (Avebury is claimed to be earlier, but NO alignments have been found, apart from one rising star) then is it possible that the eclipse-prediction methods devised there were later used in other parts of the country? I consulted Aubrey Burl's *A Guide to the Stone Circles of Britain, Ireland and Brittany* (7) and found that out of over 400 stone circles there are

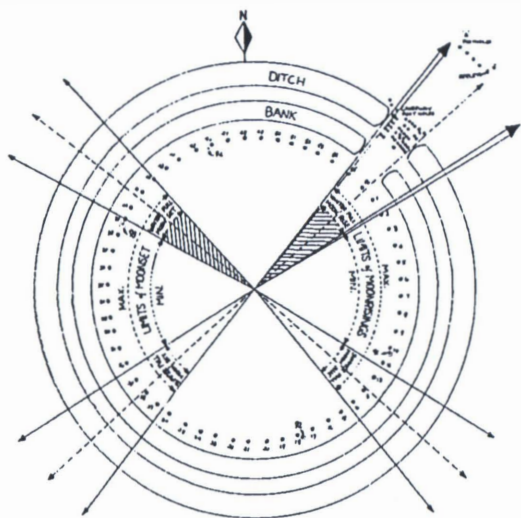


Fig 1: Moon alignments and Aubrey Holes at Stonehenge

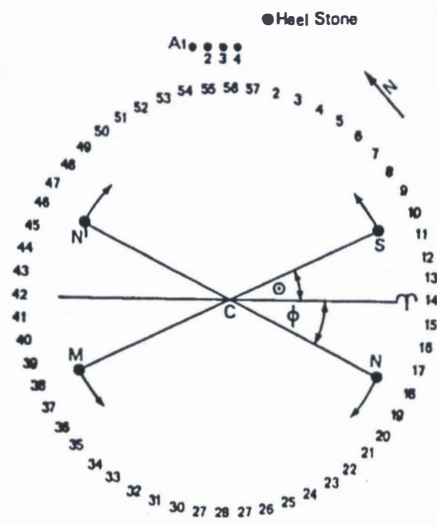


Fig 3: Fred Hoyle's Aubrey Hole eclipse-predictor

Picture Acknowledgements: Fig 1. The Astronomical Significance of Stonehenge; C.A. Newham; Leeds; 1972. Fig 2. Megaliths and Masterminds; Op. Cit. Fig 3. Ibid.

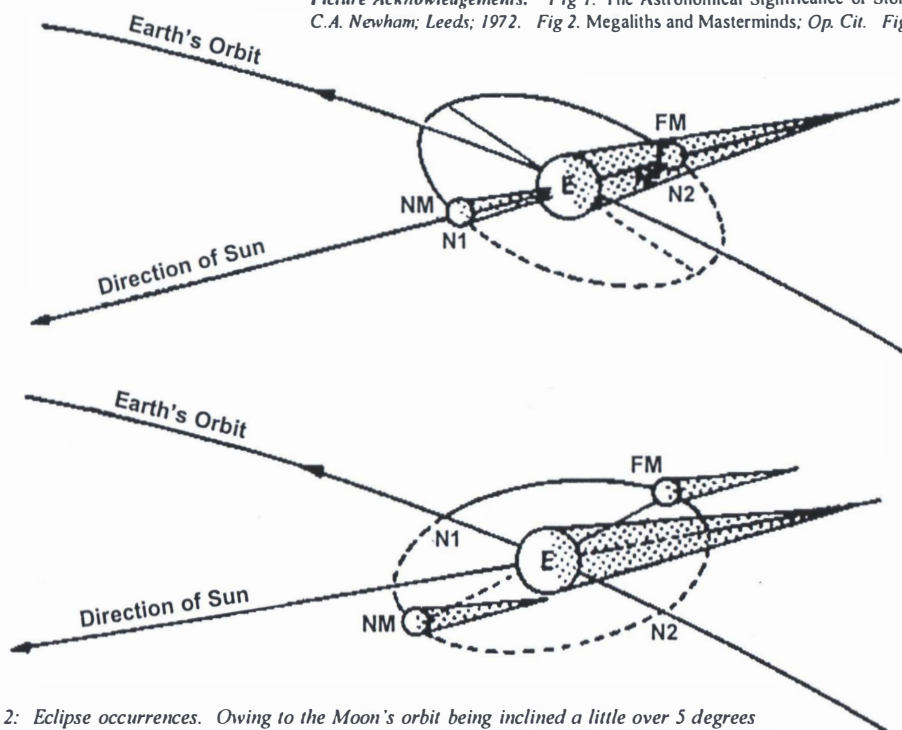


Fig 2: Eclipse occurrences. Owing to the Moon's orbit being inclined a little over 5 degrees to the ecliptic, eclipses can only occur at New Moon (NM) and Full Moon (FM) when the line of nodes (N1-N2) of the Moon's orbit coincides with the direction of the Sun (upper diagram).

NONE with a suspected original number of 56 stones or 56 pits except Stonehenge. However, there are NINE examples that originally consisted of 28 stones. After the principle had been discovered at Stonehenge, it may have been realised that exactly the same accuracy could be achieved with a circle of 28 stones. In such a system the Sun marker would be moved only ONE stone every 13 days; the Moon marker would be moved only ONE stone per day; and the nodal markers would be moved three stones every TWO years. Alternatively, the spaces between the stones could have been used along with the stones exactly like the Aubrey hole system. This would mean half the work in building the circle. However, since the 'eclipse number' nineteen is at Stonehenge and Brown mentions that "a number of circles in South-West England consist of 19 stones which may indeed be significant astronomically" (8), I checked Burl's guide again and found that apart from the Stonehenge horseshoe there are five 19-stone circles listed. When I started playing with the numbers, it seemed to make sense, since the Sun marker would have to be moved one stone every NINETEEN days, around the 19 stones! This would give a slightly less accurate year than the 56 and 28 stones or pits, at 361 days as opposed to 364 days. However, at the most, this would give a maximum error of just over one day if recalibration was performed at solstices and equinoxes, and, according to Brown, "the tolerance for eclipse prediction is about five degrees". (9) What is more, the lunar marker would track the lunar cycle MORE accurately, giving an uncalibrated 28.5 day cycle when the lunar marker was moved two stones every three days around the 19 stone circle. The nodal marker would be moved one stone per year - the one opposite would go between the stones. Accuracy could be improved if the spaces were used to form a 38-unit system.

CORNISH SITES

When I realised that THREE of the five 19-stone circles are all in Cornwall, I immediately thought of the coming total solar eclipse due over Cornwall in 1999. Could the Neolithic people possibly have predicted it, I wondered? What a ridiculous thought! Then I looked up 'eclipse' in Pears' Cyclopaedia and found that "the next will be seen only from near Land's End on August 11 1999". I checked the *Nothing But Circles* map of stone circles by Jan Hollier (10) and was amazed to find that ALL THREE of these 19-stoners are at Land's End!

It gets more incredible... In Brown's *Megaliths and Masterminds* I found that the traditional Welsh assembly (the Gorsedd) was held inside a circle of 19 stones and that these ceremonies are also held in Cornwall where "a common name for such circles is 'Nine Maidens' ('nine' being short for nineteen)". (11) I looked at the map again and found that four out of the five near Land's End were now found to be eclipse-connected (one of these is called Nine Maidens) and these four are all within eight miles of Land's End. They are: Boscawen-un, near St Buryan; The

Merry Maidens, near Lamorna (both intact); Tresegal East, near St Just; and the Nine Maidens, also called Boskednan, near Madron. The fifth one in the area, at 10 or 11 miles from Land's End, is near Zennor on Treen Common but Burl does not list it - I don't yet know how many stones it had, or has (it may turn out to be a simple hut circle). The next nearest circle is at Troon, about 22 miles from Land's End, but Burl still lists it as being at Land's End. It is called Wendron, or the Nine Maidens, so is also eclipse-related. If Zennor also turns out to be 19-related then ALL of the circles, six of them within a 22-mile radius of Land's End, are eclipse predictors. There are seven sites with 28-stone circles listed in Burl's guide, out of over 400 sites. Of the seven, FIVE are on Bodmin Moor in Cornwall. So, five of the remaining nine Cornish sites, all on Bodmin Moor, are also eclipse-related. The most Easterly of these is the Hurlers, boasting three circles, two of which probably had 28 stones each originally, according to Burl. Since this is the closest of these sites to Stonehenge, perhaps this was an intermediate site, where the two 28-stone circles combined to form a 56-stone format.

THE GREAT KING OF TERROR

It seems as if Cornwall generally, and Land's End in particular, is screaming 'Eclipse!' at us, and it has been discovered just in time to make use of the information. If this seems impossible, consider the following: According to Britt and Lee Elders, the Maya Priests predicted the July 11 1991 solar eclipse over Mexico City and they did this over 1200 years ago! In their videos about the event they say that the Maya AND the Aztecs made predictions associated with the 1991 event, that there would be "cosmic awareness through encounters with the masters of the stars and coming Earth changes". (12)

At the moment of the eclipse, there were 17 people recording the event at different locations - people who were unknown to each other all recorded the appearance of a UFO in the sky. The footage was shown on national TV and was one of the first hoax-proof, multiple witness sightings. But this was just the beginning! Over the following months, hundreds of UFOs were videotaped day and night by TV and private video cameras. In spring 1992, the 'second wave' started in the zona volcanica, or volcano zone, and when investigated the explorers discovered Mount Popocatepetl was awakening. The prophesied Earth changes had begun! Popocatepetl is now one of the most active volcanoes in the world; the surrounding area was evacuated in 1995. The sightings continued with the 'third wave' in January 1993, when several UFOs brought Mexico City to a standstill for SIX HOURS! In August 1994, the UFOs seemed to concentrate on the interception of aircraft. Britt and Lee Elders have said that the 1991 eclipse which triggered the events was called by the Maya 'the birth of the Sixth Sun', but this goes against all the work done by Maya specialists, who all agree that the Fifth Sun will not end until

2011 to 2013. Most recently, John Major Jenkins has sewn up the calendrical correlation problems and shown convincingly that the Fifth Sun will end on December 21 2012. (13)

This is all utterly incredible, but I have seen the video evidence. Over 90% of the population of some Mexican cities have now seen UFOs, whatever they are. (I personally feel it is unlikely that they are all extra-terrestrial spacecraft. In my favourite jargon, some are probably tectonically-induced electrochemical glow discharges manipulated by human subconscious minds, or by disincorporate intelligences ('planetary ectoplasm') (14) or plasma balls attracted down from the ionosphere by electromagnetic hotspots (15) or even simply 'Unified Field Organisms'.) The Elders couple seem to have confused the eclipse with the end of the Fifth Sun, when it is, as I have said elsewhere (16), probably part of a series of accelerating changes preceding the end of the Fifth Sun. It was the last full solar eclipse to occur over Mexico before the end of the Fifth Sun. Could the Neolithic Priesthood have foreseen something similar occurring on August 11 1999, when the last full solar eclipse before 2012 will occur over Britain?

450 years ago, Nostradamus made his most famous prophecy, which is the only one he put a date to, and which concerns the eclipse of 11 August 1999. Although it mentions the seventh month, the calendar has since been adjusted by 11 days, which brings the date from July 31 1999 to August 11. The first two lines of the quatrain (four-line verse) are usually translated something like this: "In the year 1999, seventh month, the great King of Terror will descend from the skies..."

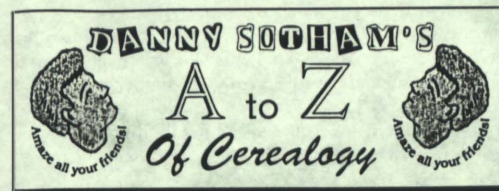
If we then compare this with a Mayan chronicle which describes an eclipse as '...the face of the Sun was eaten' and 'a monster plunged head down towards the Earth during darkness', we might begin to accept the possibility that, like the 1991 eclipse, the 1999 eclipse will herald some mind-stretching events. I hesitate to mention that some modern prophets have said this refers to one of the moons of Mars, Phobos (= 'fear'), which will be loosed from its orbit by the gravitational effects of the eclipse and the planets which will at that time be lining up into a conjunction called The Grand Cross. A week later, on the 18th, the planets will be opposite each other in the signs of the 'four beasts of the apocalypse'. Even these prophets don't seem to have noticed that Mars is actually mentioned in the original Old French rendition of the quatrain (last line). It is usually translated as 'war'. Don't let this worry you, though. Although Nostradamus was definitely predicting this eclipse, as he explained in a letter to Henri II of France, he saw it as an event heralding the arrival of 'the Third Antichrist', not an uncontrolled moon. That also sounds quite ominous (remember *The Omen?*) - but he was trying to fit his predictions into the agenda of the Book of Revelation, which was itself modelled on the Book of Daniel. Nostradamus foresaw the Earth Changes that are ahead, but these are just the

birth pangs of the Earth as she nears the end of her gestational cycle. As John Major Jenkins has pointed out, the Maya called it 'Creation Day'.

Paul Devereux has documented the connection between UFOs, stone circles and fault lines (17) and an eclipse would undoubtedly cause tectonic stress in the fault lines. In fact, Devereux tells of an incident in the 1940s when a man and his wife were waiting at Stonehenge the day before the solstice to film a PARTIAL eclipse of the sun. Shortly before the sun rose, partially eclipsed over the Heel Stone, there was a "clap of thunder and a ball of fire hit the track about ten yards ahead of the car, but left no mark on the road". (18)

Magnetic anomalies are quite common at stone circles, and several Cornish stone circles have registered radiation anomalies which are subject to variance. Outbursts of ultrasound have also been detected at some stone circles, especially at full and new moon. (19) Both low-dose radiation and ultrasound have been associated with healing and Cornwall has several dolmens and fogous (underground chambers), where people have experienced psychic episodes. These include time-dilation, visions, light phenomena and out-of-body experiences. Maybe the most advantageous position to be at the time of the eclipse is standing in one of the Land's End stone circles, or sitting in a fogou. This could possibly be where gravitational, electromagnetic or other energy effects will combine to give us an evolutionary kick in the chakras, helping us to cope with the imminent birth traumas. GS

- 1) *Megaliths and Masterminds*; Peter Lancaster Brown; Robert Hale; London; 1979.
- 2) Ibid. p. 231.
- 3) *A Guide to the Stone Circles of Britain, Ireland and Brittany*; Aubrey Burl; Yale University Press; New Haven and London; 1995.
- 4) *Stonehenge: Neolithic Man and the Cosmos*; John North; HarperCollins; London; 1996.
- 5) *Megaliths and Masterminds*; Op. Cit.; p.121.
- 6) *The Ancient Maya*; S.G. Morley; Stanford, California, 1946, 1947, 1956.
- 7) Aubrey Burl Op. Cit.
- 8) Peter Lancaster Brown Op. Cit. p. 38.
- 9) Ibid. p.121.
- 10) *Nothing But Circles*; Jan Hollier; ISBN 0 9515108 0 0.
- 11) Peter Lancaster Brown, Op. Cit. p.74.
- 12) Three videos by Britt and Lee Elders: *Messengers of Destiny*; *Masters of the Stars*; *Voyagers of the Sixth Sun*, available from Ark Soundwaves, P.O. Box 1395, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9FE.
- 13) *Maya Cosmogony 2012*; John Major Jenkins; Bear & Co.; Santa Fe, USA, 1998.
- 14) *Earth Lights*; Paul Devereux; Turnstone Press, 1982, and *Earth Lights Revelation*; Blandford Press; 1989.
- 15) *Is Plasma the Cause? The Physics of Crop Formations*; John A. Burke; MUFON UFO Journal; October 1998.
- 16) *UFO Reality*; Issue 11; Jan 1998.
- 17) *Earth Lights*; Op Cit. *Places of Power*; Paul Devereux; Blandford Press; 1990.
- 18) *Earth Lights*; Op Cit. p.231.
- 19) *Places of Power*; Op Cit. p.76-83.



EFFECTS, WEIRD: If you go down to the fields today, you're in for a big surprise... All those 'paranormal investigators' who fritter away their time looking for strange phenomena with cameras and tape recorders in old mansions which haven't seen a spook for years are simply looking in the wrong places. As we know, all they need do is rush down to a flattened swirl of crop somewhere and they'll get all the weird effects they could ever want, according to many. On the other hand, none of their equipment (oo-er missus) would actually work inside if some reports are to be believed so perhaps they'd be wasting their time after all. Allegedly, mobile phones are a good test of electronics-zapping, often failing to operate within a circle. Why this quality hasn't been put to good use is a mystery - next time the pocket of that annoying git next to you on the train starts bleeping, quickly whip out a swirl of circle-affected crop to pop under his/her feet and - hey, presto! - instant dead telephone and deliverance from belloyed guff about being "home in five minutes, darling". You'll be saving them from ear cancer or something anyway.

EJECTOR SEATS: One old chestnut mutated out of all proportion over the years is the yarn about the fighter jet pilot ejecting after being caught up in some weird circle-connected force. Versions range from a Harrier smashing headlong into the centre of a formation to the pilot's parachute getting tangled in a flying saucer. The real evidence? A pilot's body was once found near a field where circles had appeared, er, *two months earlier*. If crop circles down planes so easily, the whole of Wiltshire should by now be littered with the wreckage of everything from 707's to Concorde and those bloody little two-seaters that whine overhead like wasps when you're trying to get some decent kip... er, do some proper research in a formation. On the basis of such convincing circles-influencing-events evidence, most local newsworthy occurrences, from warehouse fires to old Mrs Jones from Marlborough winning the W.I. bramble jelly competition, could be attributable to crop formations. "My God, Holmes, the whole of human history was all a massive manipulation - by the crop circles!" (cue dramatic music, rumble of thunder, etc.). Still, as one famous circle researcher once remarked "you have to spice it up a bit".

END OF THE WORLD: Because of the appearance of solar system charts with Earth missing, that sort of thing, some believe the formations are a warning that the end for our planet is nigh. How nice of some higher intelligence to come gloating over the fact that our days are numbered. This is like patting the hand of a terminally-ill patient at the bedside and saying gleefully "Never mind matey, by this time next week you'll have kicked the bucket". Still, maybe aliens do enjoy sick humour as some believe the circles are made by the same chaps who also perform rectal probes and suck brains out of cows.

ENIGMA, THE CROP CIRCLE: Term used so often now that whoever first thought of it really should have slapped a copyright down. Also the name of an excellent 1990 book which stands today as quaint and incontrovertible evidence that a) certain researchers once believed the phenomenon wasn't mostly man-made, and that b) cropies very briefly lived in peace and harmony with each other.

ERECTIONS: Sorry about this one but we cannot hide the fact that at least two crop formations displaying male genitalia have arrived over the last few years, most notably near the prime-minister's home at Chequers, Buckinghamshire. Now there's a message if ever there was one... Only hardcore 'believers' defended it as genuine. Still, if ETs (qv) are responsible for the phenomenon, maybe these formations tie in with the stream of general abuse concerning our imminent demise (see END OF THE WORLD), the perpetration of cosmic bottom-probing jokes and hilarious bovine dismemberment.

EVENTS: For a phenomenon of which almost nothing is known for sure, there's a lot of people with a lot to say to a lot of people wishing to hear a lot about something of which almost nothing is known for sure. Thus, we pay lots of money to torture ourselves by forcing our posteriors onto excruciatingly uncomfortable seats in hot stuffy rooms listening to distant figures on badly-lit stages, muttering incoherently into unintelligible school PA systems, showing upside-down slides for hours and hours on end in the hope that we will learn something useful, while, as everyone knows, the real reason for attending circle conferences and events is for the crucial titbits of scandal and character-assassination in the stallrooms and cafes.

EXTRA TERRESTRIALS: Once these were called 'little green men'. When that became offensive to some, 'alien' was introduced. Now 'alien' has been branded by ET-lovers as, er, alienating. And so 'Extra Terrestrial' or 'ET' has become the currently acceptable term for these beings which many believe are responsible for the crop circles. Various sub-categories include 'Greys', 'Lizards' and 'Nordics'. Norwegians must be pleased to know they are considered to look like aliens. Sorry, little green men. Sorry, ETs... Evidence that these beings actually make crop circles is thin and contradictory but much sought by alien, sorry, ET believers. When a grey-type ET face appeared as a crop formation at Waden Hill a few years back, then, naturally it was greeted as... a hoax.

EYE-WITNESSES: There are around two dozen well-documented eye-witness accounts from people who claim, without evidence, to have seen crop circles forming out of nowhere. Of course, all these people are plainly psychotic liars while anyone who claims, without evidence, to have made a formation with a plank or garden roller is a paragon of virtue and truth.

EZEKIEL: Famous prophet of that famous bestseller *The Old Testament* (God Publications, 1500BC) often cited as evidence of ancient UFOs, and, in some interpretations, crop circles, what with all the "wheels within wheels" stuff he allegedly witnessed, along with beings with "four faces" and the rest. Evidence also exists that Moses drove a motorbike - "he cameth down the hill in Triumph" - and of biblical optical deformity - "How did you get like that?" "Well, one Isaiah than the other".



cornography

with Michael Glickman

In Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, the wicked queen is peeved because Snow White is more beautiful than she is. She hires a huntsman to kill Snow White in the forest and, the job purportedly done, he brings the evil queen a heart, claiming it belonged to the pretty girl. "Mirror, mirror on the wall. Who is the fairest of them all?" asks the vain and nasty queen, certain (after her monstrous deed) of the answer she will get.

To her anger, the mirror responds "Snow White's the fairest in the land. You hold a pig's heart in your hand".

"A pig's heart!" cries her majesty, who clearly did not take a degree in forensic pathology, "I've been tricked!"

The crop circle phenomenon has always shown an overwhelming concern for our free will. This elegant and generous marvel has never forced anything on us. For years I thought there were two simple choices. You could either commit yourself to the circles and be swept along with it, or you could choose to turn away.

I was wrong. There is a third, increasingly popular, option. Get involved with the circles and dismiss everything as noisily and stridently as possible. The loudest group we have is the Third Option Association.

The truth remains. We still have no idea what is happening. We are free to believe what we wish but can prove nothing. For those who find this all too scary, they can incorporate it into the conventional world of hoaxes, paranoia and government manipulation. Again, they can prove nothing. Their notions are as unprovable as ours. But how much easier, how much more reassuring, to support centuries of conventional wisdom. The Earth IS flat! Manned flight IS impossible! The Oliver's Castle video MUST be a fake!

After three years of the shabbiest, most superficial of campaigns against the Oliver's Castle video, weighty declarations surface on the Net stating that the matter will be finally and conclusively laid to rest. Where and when have we heard this before? Essentially, John Wabe, the shady character who either filmed or did not film the balls of light and either faked or did not fake the footage, has now produced a confession which, it is claimed, is to be shown

on Nippon TV in Japan.

I now discover that Nippon TV will NOT be broadcasting the 'confession'. They - unlike us - have actually viewed this confection and have decided that its provenance - and its quality - is so doubtful that it is not worth broadcasting. You need to remember that this is the third time we have been promised that this confession would be broadcast - as though in some way merely broadcasting it gives it a seal of truth. This is the third time we have been misled. The first two times brought no explanations, let alone apologies. We can safely predict there will be none this time.

In this latest flurry, it has been implied that anyone who still believes the video is real is a part of a conspiracy (an accusation made by Colin Andrews in a recent Net statement). In the old days, conspiracies worked to show crop circle events as false. Now we are to understand the conspirators are working to prove crop circle events as real! I believe - more than ever - that the video is the greatest gift the circles have ever offered us. The Inspector Clouseau-like behaviour of the debunkers and their pathetic failure after all this time to nail this 'hoax' tends to support my view. If I am shown hard evidence, as opposed to allusion, misleading promises, hollow declarations, innuendo, rumour and *ad hominem* argument that it is a fake, I restate that I will publicly declare that I was wrong.

Why do I believe it? First, it is so beautiful. If Wabe, or anyone, faked this he should be applauded as a prodigious artist. Who else had the imagination and the insight to know that the effects seen were how the formations were made? Why is this ignored? Are the debunkers all blind? Second, I have rarely seen a piece of footage which has so direct and moving an effect on the hearts of viewers. Third, an enormous number of special effects and computer analysts continue to applaud it while every technical criticism has been challenged. Fourth, we still have no idea - despite this 'confession' - what the motive for this huge enterprise might have been. Fifth, while the last three years have produced no hard evidence against the video, the time has been used obsessively to create false myths (the formation itself was hoaxed, the absent double-field on the video, wrong shadows in the wheat, etc.). All these have been disproved but strident repetition has given them life. Most importantly, the coincidences stretch probability to breaking point. Why did this supposed hoaxer invite other people from *The Barge* to join him on his watch if he was perpetrating a scam? There was no way he could know the formation was to arrive. Having found it and filmed it, we are to believe that he put a Hollywood-level special effects con into place within hours. Not only a Rembrandt for our time but also a Spielberg and a James Bond.

But for those who are reassured that this most important and moving offering is a fake, well, bless them. They are free - like me - to believe whatever they want. But there is no proof. Their evidence is disputed and questionable.

For my part, I am glad to be running towards the future with my arms open. Of course there is a risk that I will trip and fall flat on my face. Far better than leaning over backwards to avoid change, firmly grasping a pig's heart. **MG**