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THE BIMONTHLY
JOURNAL OF
CROP CIRCLES
AND BEYOND

87 NOV / DEC
1999

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THE NEW
AVEBURY
AVENUE

CIRCLE
CALENDARS
2000

'GIZA: THE TRUTH'
REVIEWED

FURTHER
ASTRONOMICAL
FORMATIONS

'BEGINNER'S GUIDE...'
REVIEWED

CROP CIRCLES:
THE NAKED TRUTH

Fun & Frolics at the Summer Gatherings



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JOURNAL OF
CROP CIRCLES
AND BEYOND

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Front Cover: Live nudity at the Glastonbury
Symposium! Video Image: **RICHARD SALTER**

This issue finds us back on schedule - please note, however, **THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE LATE**. Or very late if the Millennium Bug has its way. What with Christmas and the New Year it is almost certain **SC 88** won't be out until mid to late January at the *earliest*, so please be patient. There will be a fine for the first person who asks what's happened to their latest issue before that time... If there is anything to the Y2K threats, of course, this may well be the last **SC** for a very long while, in which case the next issue will be along whenever civilisation recovers! In truth, it looks like the worst of the problems, if any occur, may be in some overseas countries. What troubles may arise here possibly won't be until several months into next year, as the knock-on effect begins to be felt, just in time to join whatever results from the big planetary alignment on 5th May 2000, no doubt. Doomsday? Probably not. Remember, we create our own reality, so why not choose a nice one?

Another interesting date coming up is 6/7th April 2000, as predicted in the 'galaxy' crop formations of 1994 according to astronomer Jack Sullivan in **SC 81**. Jack hasn't been idle since his last articles and we include some of his new findings this issue, with more impressive stuff to come. One promised piece we have had to postpone until the next outing is the round-up of overseas formations from 1999. There are still substantial reports coming in from Canada and elsewhere so we thought we'd hang on before running our listings too soon.

The media continues to use crop circles as advertising gimmicks whilst being cynical about the real thing. The latest slogan written as if it were an agriglyph can be seen in the new Cable & Wireless advertising campaign, with the words "WE DON'T PAY" (it's about rental-free telephone lines) superimposed into the centre of a real formation which appeared next to the 'eye' design at Alton Barnes in 1994 - disappointingly a geometrically crude and rumoured man-made one (maybe that's why they chose it?).

The circles almost got featured on BBC 2's *Clarkson* series on 31st October, in which our very own, and sparkling, Marcus Allen was grilled (surprisingly lightly) by confessed bigot Jeremy Clarkson on faked Moon landings, etc. A debate about crop circles was filmed as part of this interview but edited out - probably just as well... So, it simply remains to wish you all a very happy Millennium (or is it? See letter on page 18). It's been a good century, well apart from two World Wars and all the rest of it... But who could have dreamt that a few swirly patterns in cropfields would have caused such a fuss? Not me... but I'm glad they did and I bet a few of you are too.

ANDY THOMAS

Those who hold that **Avebury** is the geographical hub of the crop circle phenomenon and love it with or without its agriglyphs will be excited by recent news which a few may have missed although it has received some coverage in the media.

This summer saw the sensational discovery of buried stones at Avebury on the exact site speculated by historian William Stukeley in the 1700s to be the location of a removed eastern avenue, counterpart to the existing western one. Until now it was considered a somewhat over-fanciful Stukeley myth.

An archaeological dig (see photos) uncovered a series of large stones, matching those that stand today, deliberately laid and buried in shallow pits now covered by cornfields. Their positions, which must closely match where they once stood, mark out sections of what could only have been another stone avenue, leading to speculation that many of the rest of the stones are still there waiting to be uncovered.

This discovery has been described by scholars

as 'the archaeological find of the century' - they could well be right. The *Daily Telegraph* (not that we should particularly trust the press) quoted one source as saying there might be a further two avenues which would be sought by the same means in future.

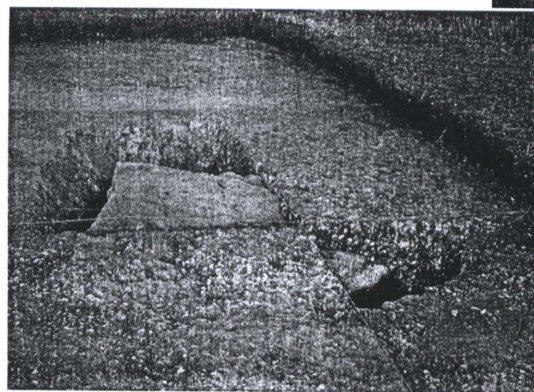
In case some of you are wondering if this isn't all some elaborate hoax, SCR contacts Nick Gilman and Thea Keeler actually came across the archaeological dig for themselves while viewing the last English formation of the year at Avebury (see last issue) and saw the actual stones before the story broke in the media

- see accompanying photographs.

Whatever, this exciting development is certain to focus more global attention onto Avebury leading to fears from some that the authorities might eventually shut off direct access to the stones and implement the kind of restricted view controls currently in place at the far less impressive but more publicised Stonehenge. Let's hope not. **AT**

- NEWS -
STONE ME
...So William Stukeley was right after all - there IS a second stone avenue at Avebury. Never mind crop circles, it's archaeological attention that's being turned to this extraordinary site now. **ANDY THOMAS** reports...

Two of the uncovered stones at the newly found eastern avenue of Avebury, Wiltshire.



Photos by **THEA KEELER & NICK GILMAN**



On 30th April 1999, the *Daily Telegraph* published an article entitled 'The May Night Sky' about astronomical events relevant to the coming month. Unfortunately the author, Adrian Berry, included one or two errors, since acknowledged, to do with the dates of the closest approach of Mars to Earth and its distance from us. He made reference also to the next closest approach of Mars, which will be in the year 2003, and it was while checking this future position using *Red Shift 3*, a proven very reliable astronomy computer programme, that I discovered what I call the 'Titchfield Thunderbolt'.

On the computer screen, set up to show a heliocentric view of the Solar System on 6th September 2003 from a distance of approximately 500 million miles away, there appeared a very rare arrangement of the four planets Mars, Earth, Mercury and Venus, virtually in near-perfect alignment across the solar system. Mars will indeed be very near its closest approach for 15 years, of 35.5 million miles, which will actually be some eight days earlier, on 28th August. However what struck me with great force, was that I had seen this arrangement before; on a photograph by Steve Alexander of the 20th June 1995 Titchfield crop formation (see photo). Andy Thomas had supplied me with this 'shot' as a candidate for investigation back in January this year!

Disregarding the outer circle of 'beads' in the photograph for the moment, the illustrations show the remarkable correlation between the computer printout of the astronomical position and the crop formation, even down to the angular offsets of the planets Mercury and Venus from the Sun's centre line. There is, you will notice, a small irregular bead close to Venus, almost like a moon except that Venus does not have a moon. I believe that this odd bead is there to serve as a kind of asterisk, prompting us to pay special attention to Venus in our analysis. As you will see later this planet has a significant part to play in the secondary message contained in this crop formation.

The primary 'message' is that the Titchfield

formation represents the actual astronomical event shown in the computer printout.

The secondary 'message' is that the outer circle of beads in the formation allows us to calculate the time period between the appearance of the

crop formation in 1995 and the actual event in 2003. This is possible because of the positional arrangement of the five 'Mars' bodies shown in the outer orbit. Four of them occupy the left hand side of the Mars orbit and one only in the right hand side. Each of these positions coincides with the date of an Earth-Venus Inferior Conjunction, (hence the significance of the 'asterisk' adjacent to Venus in the field formation).

There are five of these conjunctions, which occur at known time intervals thereby allowing a very accurate prediction of when the September 2003 event will occur.

The Synodic Significance

The final illustration shows the Titchfield 'Synodic Significance' for the Inferior Conjunction relationships and gives the full explanation of the secondary message.

The main message of the formation, ie. the September 2003 Multi-Conjunction, is omitted from this diagram so as to show clearly how the five Mars planet positions refer to five date related Earth-Venus Inferior Conjunctions which occur in the eight years between the appearance of the field formation and the actual year 2003 event.

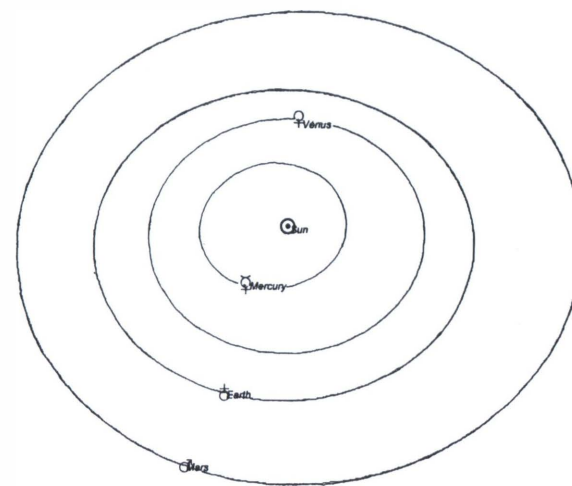
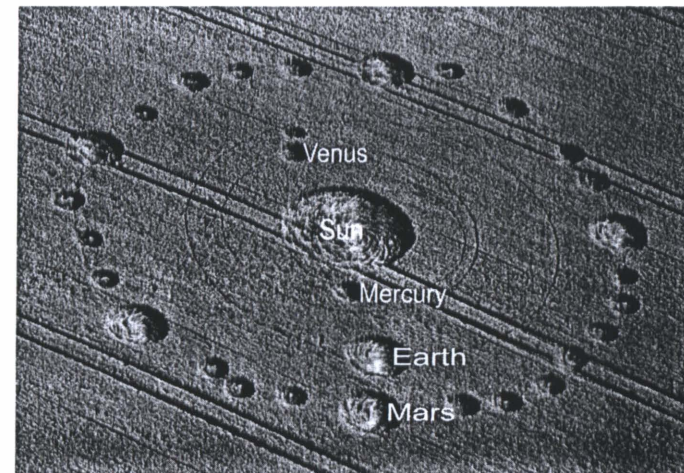
The Venus Mean Synodic Period between the Inferior Conjunctions is 584 days. Multiplying this figure by five and dividing by the Earth year of 365 days gives exactly 8 years. The exact period is 8.2 years. This difference is accounted for by the 358 days before the first Inferior Conjunction added to the 301 days following the last Inferior Conjunction before the event on 6th September 2003. This total of 659 days is 73 days longer than one Synodic period and 73 days is equal to 0.20 of 365, or one year... JS

Jack's previous fascinating articles appear in SC issues 81, 82 & 84. More Sullivan revelations next issue...

The... FEATURES - TITCHFIELD THUNDERBOLT

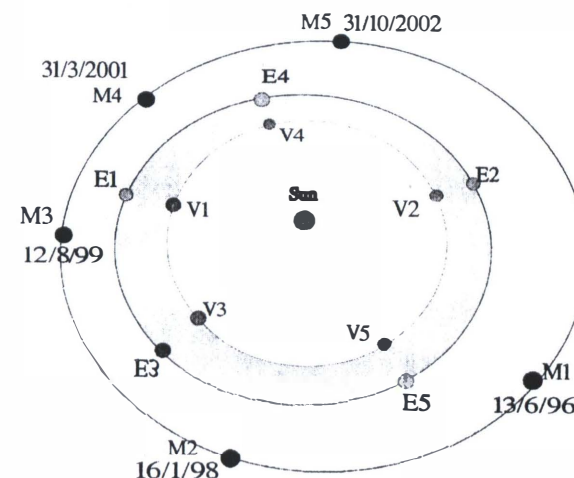
A year ago, astronomer JACK SULLIVAN amazed many with his revelations that certain crop formations were clearly identifiable astronomical conjunctions. Despite this amazement, no other source in the crop circle world has seen fit to report these potentially vital discoveries, which leaves us the task of revealing yet another fascinating correlation...

The Titchfield formation, Hampshire, 20th June 1995, one in a series of 'solar system' formations, showing denoted 'planets'. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER



'Red Shift 3' astronomical printout showing position of solar system on 6th September 2003, with Mars in Opposition and four planets in Conjunction.

Diagram showing the 'Synodic Significance' (see article). Diagram by JACK SULLIVAN



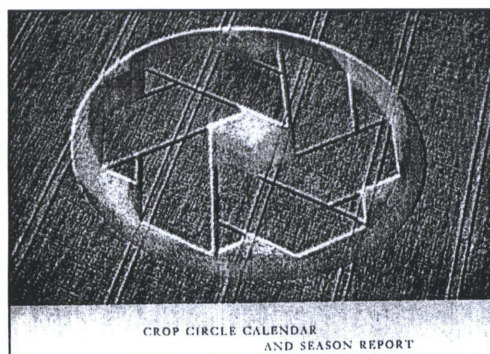
REVIEWS

CALENDARS 2000

Each year they come out of nowhere, numerous and mysterious... yes, that's right, the annual clutch of crop circle calendars have arrived to decorate our walls, inspire conversation and actually tell you the date if you look closely. ANDY THOMAS flicks through...

Crop Circle Calendar and Season Report 2000

Produced by Crop Circle Radius (Michael Glickman & Patricia Murray)



Main formations included: (All 1999) Milk Hill rape pictogram / Barbury Castle interlocking crescents / Liddington Castle emblem / Devil's Den mandala / Allington 'cube' / West Overton hexagons / Roundway 14-armed 'jackstone' / Hackpen Hill spinner / Cherhill mandala / Avebury triangle / East Kennett square mandala

Michael Glickman has long been involved in creating crop circle calendars and not surprisingly the experience shows in this well designed production, probably the best in terms of its layout this year. Facing each main photograph are the now obligatory 'quotes of wisdom', columns of date lines superimposed over large colour silhouettes of the formation opposite, additional smaller photos and explanatory text (the 'season report'). The captions are the most comprehensive of all the calendars available, the others having gone for minimal dialogue this year.

Those wishing to use the calendar practically may have more difficulty though, the smallness of each date entry not leaving much room to scribble notes.

A more eclectic mix of photographers than elsewhere (notably Frank Laumen and Patricia Murray as well as others) gives nice access to under-aided spectacular images of familiar formations, although in a couple of cases the small thumbnail photos seem better than the ones used for the main page (an aircraft wheel obscures two-thirds of one picture) and the patterns could have been cropped more centrally in a couple of places.

A point that has been levelled at other calendars over the years (including the WCCSG one below) raises its head here, in that the beautiful cover photo, in this case the Beckhampton 3D 'twisted ribbon' motif, one of the very best formations from this year, isn't also included inside, which means once the calendar is hung up on a wall it is never seen again and doesn't get a month to itself in which to radiate its glory. Discuss.

Overall, this is an attractive package with some heartfelt and inspiring written observations from a scribe **SC** readers will be more than familiar with.

Available from: (US) *Crop Circle Radius*, PO Box 2077, Santa Monica, CA 90406. Tel: (001) 310 358 6028. Price \$16.00 + \$4.00 p&p, cheques payable to 'C C Radius'. (UK) *Nexus Magazine*, 55 Queens Road, East Grinstead, RH19 1BG. Tel: 01342 322854. £10.00 + £1.50 p&p

Crop Circle Calendar 2000

Produced by Llewellyn Publications (USA)

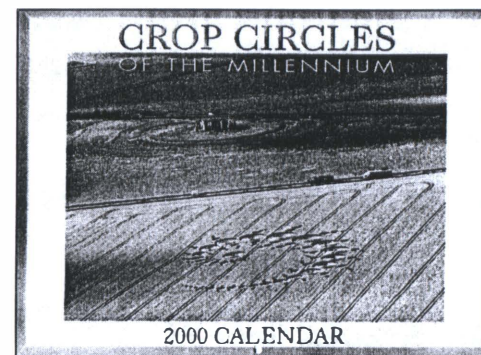
We were unable to obtain a copy of this in time to review it here, but it is apparently a follow up to Ron Russell's calendar for the same US publishers last year, this time with a more mixed participation from several photographers and researchers, although Ron still provides an introduction. Slightly larger than the other calendars this year (all of which are A5), photos are accompanied by quotes and observations from various parties, although the reported inclusion of contributions from alleged hoaxers will probably be enough to put many off by the sound of it.

Available from: *Llewellyn Publishers*, St Paul, MN 55164-0383 (USA) or *The Airlift Book Company*, 8 The Arena, Mollison Avenue, Enfield, Middlesex, EN3 7NJ (UK). UK tel: 0181 804

0400. Price £11.99 plus 10% p&p (UK) \$12.95 (USA).

Crop Circles of the Millennium

Produced by Lucy Pringle



Main formations included: 1996 Stonehenge fractal (cover & inside) / 1991 Mandelbrot Set / 1992 'charm bracelet' / 1993 Bythorn mandala / 1994 Avebury 'web' / 1994 Ashbury long pictogram / 1995 East Meon nested crescents / 1996 Alton Barnes 'DNA' / 1996 Cley Hill hexagon / 1996 Windmill Hill triple fractal / 1997 Milk Hill fractal star / 1998 Butser Hill 'brooch'

Rather than a review-of-the-year gallery, this, the first solo calendar venture from Lucy Pringle, dips back into the last decade to draw out some of the more notable formations, although a couple of choices are perhaps unexpected (and Windmill Hill is upside down). Prefaced with a brief explanation and history of the circles, the calendar covers every year from 1991 (some more than others - see list above), largely with Lucy's own photos although John Haddington and Andrew King also contribute to earlier years. (Shouldn't the titular 'Crop Circles of the Millennium' refer to next year's formations though?)

Attractive accompanying smaller photos of local buildings and landmarks suggest some kind of crossover appeal into a more mainstream middle-England market is being reached for here. Personally I could have done without a picture of Marlborough's Polly Tea Rooms and the small straw hut peculiarly superimposed on the back page but photos like the dewy spider's web are very nice.

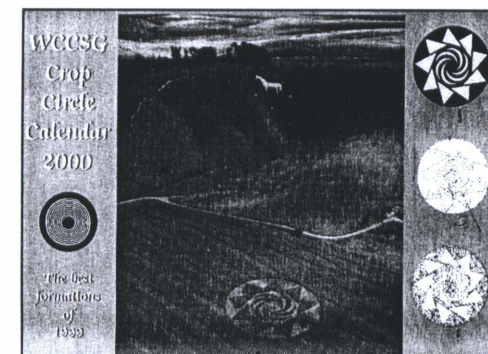
A basic calendar grid, augmented by little crop circle shadow diagrams, faces each main picture

(plus wisdom quotes, etc.) in the traditional way and the quality of the paper is that of nicely glossy card, like those laminated table-mats you get at seaside resorts. The colours are bold and bright, if a little grainy at times, and this professional-looking calendar should stand out nicely from any wall while providing a useful crash-course guide to the last 10 years of the phenomenon.

Available from: Lucy Pringle, 5 Town Lane, Sheet, Petersfield, Hants, GU32 2AF. Tel: 01730 263454 E-mail: LucyPringle@compuserve.com. Price £10.00 plus p&p: £1.50 (UK) £2.00 (Europe) £3.50 (rest of world). Cheques payable to 'Lucy Pringle'.

WCCSG Crop Circle Calendar 2000

Produced by the Wiltshire Crop Circle Study Group



Main formations included: (All 1999) Cherhill mandala (cover only) / Milk Hill rape pictograms / Hackpen Hill spinner / Allington 'cube' / Devil's Den mandala / Liddington Castle emblem / Barbury Castle interlocking crescents / Avebury triangle / West Kennett sharp fractal / Beckhampton 3D 'ribbon' / Bishops Cannings 'basket weave' / East Kennett square mandala / Roundway 14-armed 'jackstone'

Another quality item from the WCCSG, this doesn't quite come up to the high standard set by last year's effort (this is smaller and seems slightly less well designed) but boasts probably the clearest photographic images of all the calendars this year, with the exception of the disappointingly murky Milk Hill photo.

Printed on nice shiny paper, with requisite wisdom quotes and little thumbnail pictures, Andreas Muller's survey diagrams provide striking

and useful side-images to accompany the date grids. All but one of the photographs here are by Francine Blake, whose use of a 'medium-format' professional camera (the pictures from which can be blown up without loss of detail) is clearly paying off although some of the patterns themselves are perhaps cropped a little too tightly (and annoyingly, as with the Crop Circle Radius calendar above, the gorgeous Cherhill mandala on the cover isn't also featured inside). The one visual not by Francine though, no rudeness intended, is almost worth buying the calendar for alone - Ulrich Kox's striking portrait of the Bishops Cannings 'basket weave' formation (see photo on page 10), which readers may remember only existed for three hours before the farmer moved in to destroy it. As one of the very few photos ever taken of it, this reveals it in breathtaking detail, even if the weave effect itself is seen to be much less pronounced in some areas of the formation than in others.

A brief page of text begins the calendar but is

puzzlingly accompanied by photos taken in the East Field pictograms of 12th June this year (surprisingly not featured properly in any of the calendars this year) which are obviously frames which have produced abnormal misty effects on the film. As their anomalous quality is not signified until you have time to read the full introduction, newcomers unaware of the point of their inclusion may wonder why such poor photos have been included (a couple of them look suspiciously like moisture in the lens, actually). Another puzzle to those outside the croppie community may be the title of the calendar - the initials WCCSG are not explained anywhere until you reach the small print inside. But these are quibbles more than offset by the general high calibre of this production.

Available from: *The Wiltshire Crop Circle Study Group, PO Box 939, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 3TA. Price £8.50 plus p&p: £1.50 (UK) £3.00 (rest of world). Cheques payable to 'WCCSG'.*

Someone once said "Every action has an equal and opposite reaction" and so it is with crop circle books. This summer has seen the release of two new books, one by the well known researcher Lucy Pringle and one by the completely unknown, non-researcher Hugh Manistre. Lucy's book is the result of many years' hard work and contains dozens of colour photographs and quality drawings whereas Hugh's book is the result of attending a few conferences in the early 1990s (*if that - Ed*), contains no photographs and has a few tatty drawings which look as though they were done by a partially sighted budgerigar. Lucy's book will be more thoroughly reviewed next month so let's take a closer look at Hugh Manistre's *A Beginner's Guide to Crop Circles* (apparently one in a series of New Agey handbooks from Hodder & Stoughton). Before we go any further I should warn you that this book is complete garbage and fit only for use as a fly swat. If you value every minute of your life then skip this review completely and go on to the next article, believe me you will not be missing anything.

So, what makes this book so bad? Well it would appear that Hugh, who I am going to presume is American, spent some time during the early 1990s attending conferences and reading *The Cerealogist/Cereologist* magazine (take your spelling pick). He wrote his book, describing his newly

found second-hand knowledge, and then disappeared into some kind of time warp from which he has only recently emerged. Consequently there is virtually no information post-1992 (*what there is is pretty pointless and far too generous towards human circlemakers*). Chapter 3 *The Golden Age 1989-91* seems to give this away quite nicely.

The quality of the line drawings (remember, there are no photographs) really is the worst I have ever seen, with the Mandelbrot formation (p26) having to be seen to be believed and the classic Alton Barnes 1990 pictogram (p19) being so bad it must have been drawn from a description over the telephone. The 'full bibliography' shows just how little

research has been done, only covering books released up to 1993.

I intend wasting no more space on this little book. If you want to buy it then you must be mad. **BR**

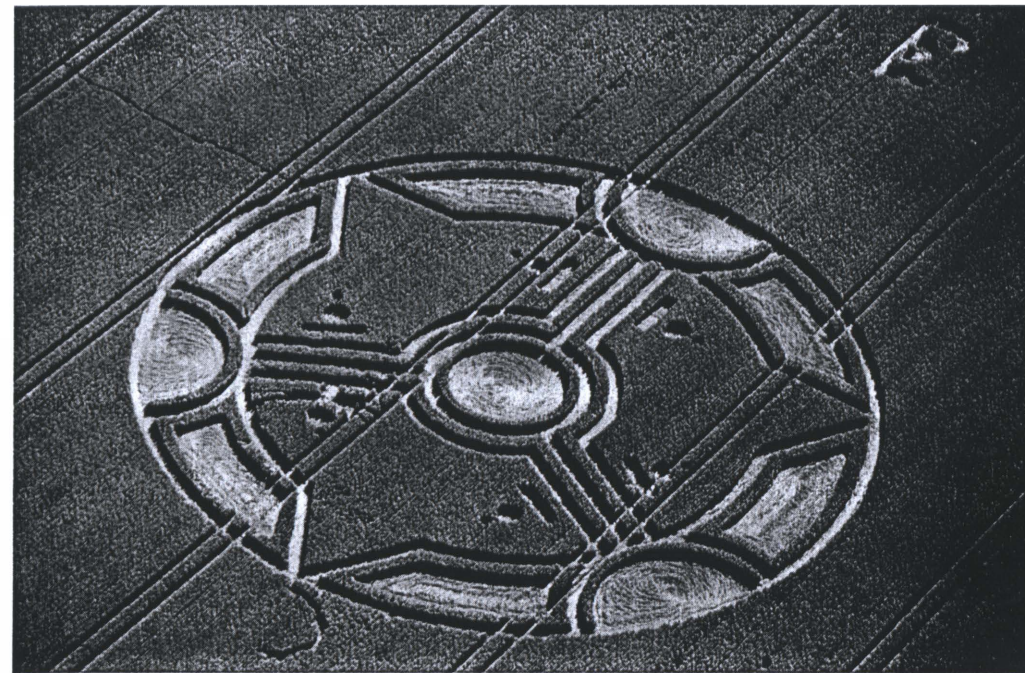
A Beginner's Guide to Crop Circles, by Hugh Manistre. Published by Hodder and Stoughton 1999, ISBN 0 340 74753 6, price £6.99. 92 pages, NO photographs and just a few scrappy line drawings.

Next issue we review more substantial tomes, namely Lucy Pringle's Crop Circles (see above) and Steve Alexander and Karen Douglas's Crop Circle Year Book 1999, a gallery of images and commentary from this year's season. Both are available now and can be obtained directly from Lucy and Steve, both of whose addresses appear on page 11.

REVIEWS

BACK TO BASICS

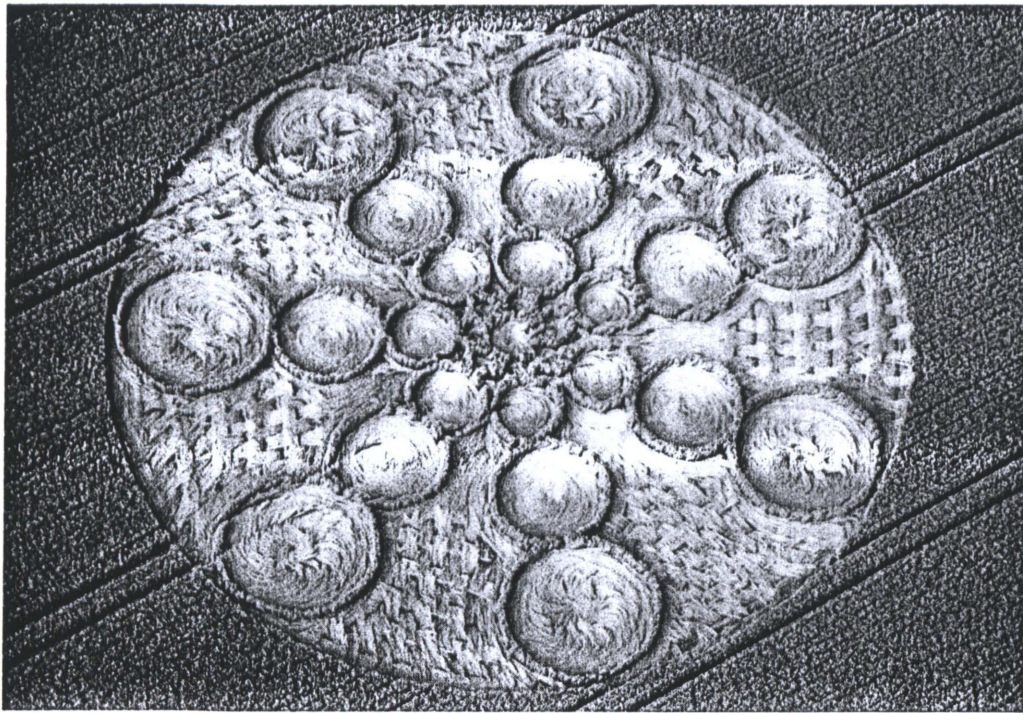
And here's a stocking filler book you may not wish to purchase after reading this review. Fancy a *Beginners Guide to Crop Circles*? Then don't buy this one says BARRY REYNOLDS...



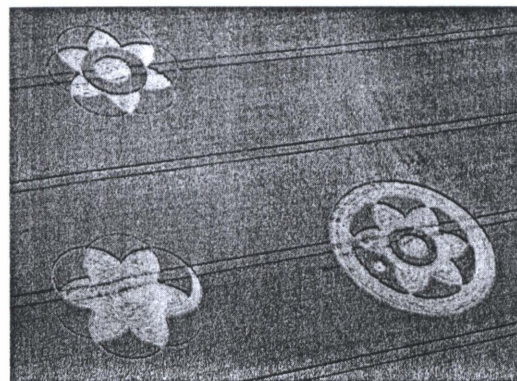
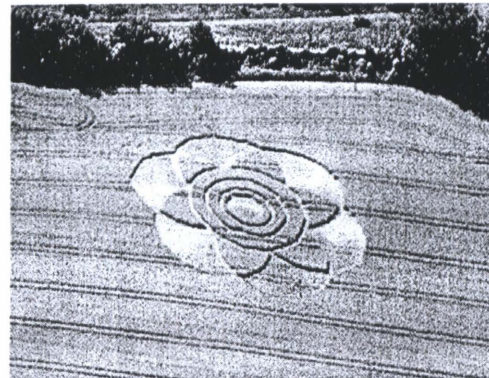
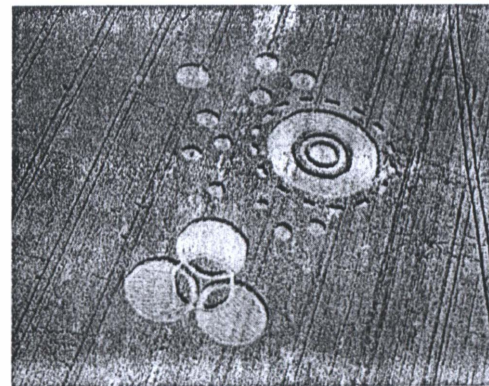
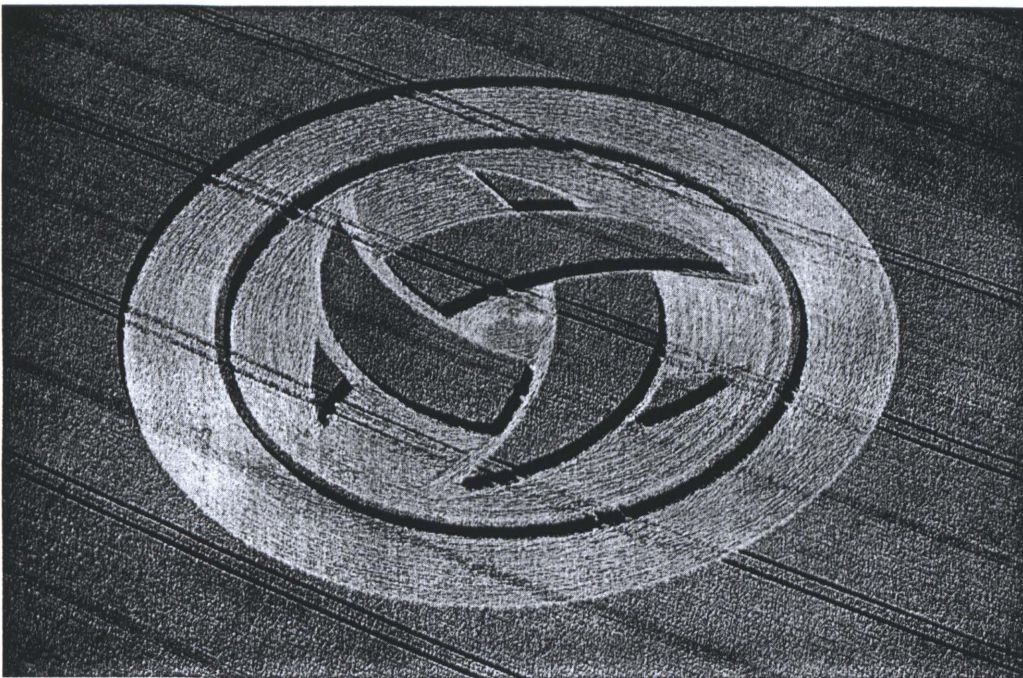
ABOVE: Liddington Castle, Wiltshire, 21st July (report: SC 86). If these things are all man-made, why are these guys wasting time working in fields for nothing when they could be earning a fortune making ornamental gardens. ? Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

BELOW: East Kennett, Wiltshire, 21st July (report: SC 86). The most elaborate in a series of similar 'dancing fractals' from this year, or 'DNA strands' as some have described them. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER





ABOVE: Bishops Cleeves, Wiltshire, 6th August. The astonishing 'basket' weave formation which existed for just three hours before being wilfully destroyed by the farmer (report: SC 86). This is one of the few images which was taken of it. Photo: **ULRICH KOX**
BELOW: Barbury Castle, Wiltshire, 23rd July (report: SC 86). A ball of light was videoed inside this. Photo: **STEVE ALEXANDER**



TOP LEFT: Upper Beeding, West Sussex, 25th July. The cloverleaf shape has been seen in this field before and the 16 boxes around the rings appeared in another formation exactly four years previously. Photo: **DAVID RUSSELL**

MIDDLE LEFT: Patching, West Sussex, 30th July. This recalls the Bythorn mandala of 1993. Photo: **DAVID RUSSELL**

LOWER LEFT: Micheldever, Hampshire, 12th July. This would make nice wallpaper... Photo: **LUCY PRINGLE**

RIGHT: Silbury Hill, Wiltshire, 24th July. Panoramic photo by **STEVE ALEXANDER**, overhead photo by **LUCY PRINGLE** (Reports for all the above: SC 86)

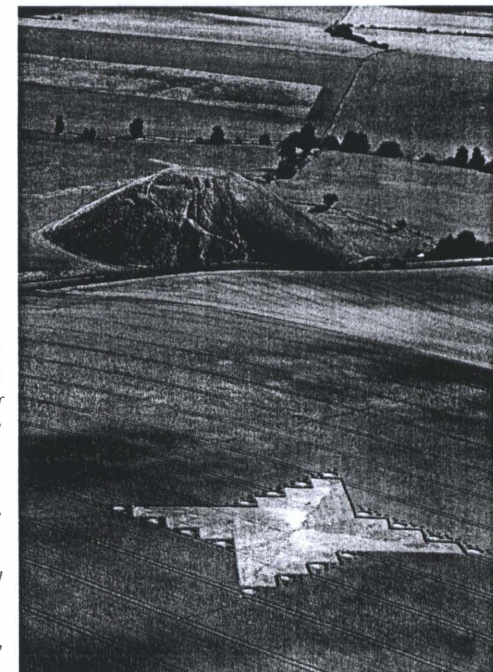
FORMATIONS

1 9 9 9
Gallery #3

Full colour original copies of Steve Alexander and Lucy Pringle's photos can be obtained from:

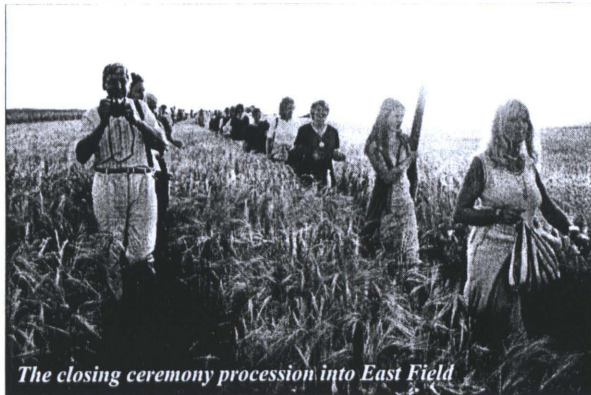
LUCY: 5 Town Lane, Sheet, Petersfield, Hants, GU32 2AF, tel/fax 01730 263454
 e-mail: LucyPringle@compuserve.com

STEVE: 27 St Francis Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 2UG, tel/fax 01705 352867





Alton Barnes Coronation Hall



The closing ceremony procession into East Field



Walking the serpent formation



(R to L) Roland Parageter, Michael G. Smith, & Patricia Murray at Glastonbury

AT THE CROP CIRCLE GATHERINGS 1999...

A series of images from this year's events (see report opposite). Photos by ANDY THOMAS (except video shot below, by RICHARD SALTER)



SC editor gets back to basics...



The 'Unusual Experiences' conference



Merchandising ahoy at Glastonbury

I'm sure I've noted a similarity between croppie gatherings and science fiction conventions before but I'll do so here again.

Both take place every year, have much the same guests and much the same attenders and one doesn't really learn a lot one didn't know from the year before but it's still jolly nice to be there. They are as much social events as they are educational, a time for bringing like-minded people together who are otherwise scattered around the country or, indeed, globe. The only difference is that at croppie gatherings people don't dress in silly costumes. Well, for the most part.

The lack of learning isn't based on any deficiency in the speakers, rather, it marks some kind of plateau we seem to have reached in crop circle research - we are constantly scrutinising fine details and re-examining and speculating on old evidence, but knowing what to do with that information or seeing how our understanding can be taken further forward in the absence of divine confirmation is more difficult. Were it not for the new formations which arrive every summer, crop circle research might have reached a cul-de-sac by now. The circles give us questions, not answers. This doesn't make listening to croppie material at conferences an unpleasant or unrewarding experience, in much the same way listening to Leonard Nimoy discuss for the umpteenth time how he characterised Mr Spock is hardly revealing but always heart-warming for Trekkers to hear again.

So does this mean croppie gatherings have outlived their usefulness? Hardly. The solution to the impasse seems to have been to mix cerealogical information with other connected schools of thought; thus nearly all circular conferences stray into other areas such as spiritual growth, alternative technologies, ancient Egypt, the hidden history of Mankind, that sort of thing, and to a lesser degree UFOs and conspiracies. It's interesting that these last two categories, given the perhaps more obvious connections, have been neglected in favour of much more soulful material but that's where the crop circles seem to have taken the majority. From that point of view it's only right that the focus

on the circles alone should have shifted outwards to a much wider agenda. And, maybe, if there is any intention at all to the crop glyphs, that is the whole idea.

And so, 1999 managed to sustain a remarkable five croppie gatherings (just), which will be skimmed through here to give the flavour, without burdening readers with the impossible task of recounting what individual speakers had to say. If you wanted to know that, you should have gone - or you can buy the videos.

The Wiltshire Crop Circle Celebration (17-18th July - now far too significant to remain titled a 'Fun Weekend') has, as predicted in these pages, now taken its place as a major centrepiece of the year for circle enthusiasts. Its burgeoning scale, represented by the increasing size and number of the outdoor marquees which extend the area of the Alton Barnes Coronation Hall each summer, together with its location at the heart of crop circle country, makes this two-day event an attractive proposition for seasoned croppies and curious tourists alike (it receives a lot of publicity through tourism channels). With stalls to browse and a large eating area where decent wholefood is served virtually all day, there's no obligation to attend every lecture (held in the hall) and always something to do or someone to talk to. Added (if modest) voice amplification in the lecture hall helped a lot this year and really, short of disastrous weather, which hasn't happened yet, this celebration can't go wrong. The enthusiasm of Francine Blake and colleagues from the Wiltshire Crop Circle Study Group who mount it ensure success.

Unusually, they didn't get a nice fresh formation to visit as part of their closing ceremony this year and they had to plump for the rather tired looking 'serpent' in the East Field in a rather over-ambitious, if quaint, attempt to have 120 people walk its back in a long line, having entered the field in a kind of procession. The snag with attempting something so structured on this physical scale was that without a rehearsal no-one in the crowd knew what they were supposed to be doing and the various Native American and Celtic chants being burred at one end simply couldn't be heard at the

- REPORTS - GATHERINGS 1999

We pay money, drive long distances, strain ears and eyes, risk aching posteriors and heat asphyxiation, but still the crop circle conferences draw devotees each year. Croppies are social animals and need to get together once in a while. ANDY THOMAS plunges in...

other. I'm afraid I was the first to crack when somebody a few paces along the line from me loudly broke wind at one particularly solemn moment, causing a ripple of stifled mirth which must have mystified those further away. The Wiltshire group are well known for their overtly spiritual take on the crop circles and here it is truly to the fore, perhaps perturbing some newer people on the fringes, who must wonder what this kind of thing is all about. Certainly, such an activity rather confirms the view of cynics that cropies are simply a pseudo-religious bunch of fanatics. But then, for all its tourist PR, this part of the Alton Barnes gathering is not really for outsiders. It is a ritual celebration for the dedicated. Without the closing ceremony, this wonderful weekend wouldn't seem quite the same. (Purely from a practical perspective, perhaps rather simpler rites next year though?)

Oddly, taking place as it does in the esoteric heartland of England, the Glastonbury Symposium (30th July - 1st August), has a more eclectic mix of speakers catering for a wider audience, rather than an overt bias toward the spiritual, although this is well catered for. This gathering is a good balance to the Wiltshire weekend and suitably different to justify sharing the same month. Without the advantage of being at the centre of crop circle territory, the Symposium has to aim itself at a more open market these days and serves its purpose very well. Despite its very high crop circle content, it's probably the best all-round 'new thinking' forum anywhere in England right now, without the overriding environmental agenda of, say, the 'Great Green Gathering', and in the right place to achieve its aims. The pictogram banners hanging from the ceiling proclaim the crop circles as its first focus and everything then moves outwards from there. Indeed, there's a great freedom of what it can move outwards to, illustrated neatly by a guerrilla attack opening and the live appearance of a stark naked man and woman during one particular presentation... (alright then, mine - there was a good purpose, honest.) The air of theatricality given by the room and the facilities (proper sound and lighting!) creates unique opportunities for good oration and lively performances.

There is simply a good feeling which radiates from the very walls of the Assembly Rooms venue and a great sense of the presence of the town itself outside, with all its holy wells, tors and beyond (not forgetting the souvenir junk shops). This is probably just as well given the intolerably high levels of heat in the room this year, on the hottest weekend of the summer. People rightly complained and this problem is

being rectified for the 2000 conference, the sauna days hopefully over. The Assembly Rooms are a vital venue in Glastonbury (many believe important earth energy lines cross there) yet the local council would close it if they could, suspicious of the type of events which take place there. It is their legislation that has ensured every window and ventilation passage is blocked up. Incredible to think that this town, of all places, is governed by such minds.

The Glastonbury Symposium is 10 years old next year - equal to Centre for Crop Circle Studies events but the longest running of all the crop circle conferences in terms of consistency and continuity. It has a reputation well deserved.

(Here I must declare an interest. I have since become involved with Sheila Martin and Karen Douglas in the running of this event and, with Karen, will MC it next year, while its founder Roland Pargeter adjourns to India for a while. As such, I suppose this will be my last report on the event - a more impartial reporter will have to comment next year. Long-time attenders needn't worry - the spark and atmosphere that makes the Symposium what it is will be continued, if with a few positive tweaks, like cool air, to take it into its next 10 years.)

This year's event from the aforementioned CCCS took place in Bristol (early September) this year and I was unable to attend. There has been a healthy scheduling of this now annual autumn event in different locations around the country, allowing a different regional audience and this year it was Somerset's turn, producing a pleasant, if modestly attended day. Unfortunately, word has it no-one thought to check the venue beforehand and it wasn't until the day that it was discovered there were no curtains to block the slide screen from the light nor facilities to even make a cup of tea. Catering is so important to the success of any event that gathers human beings together (which the Wiltshire weekend and Glastonbury, courtesy of the Assembly Rooms café, score highly on) that this seems an extraordinary oversight from an organisation planning a much larger gathering to celebrate its own tenth anniversary next year (see dates below). Lessons, no doubt, will have been learned by then.

Another event I didn't attend, nor could have, was the event run by the creators of *The Cereologist* (aka. Global Circles Research) on the same day as the Saturday of the much larger Wiltshire weekend (at Alton, Hampshire, rather than Alton Barnes, Wiltshire). Unless accidental (two years running?), this seems a puzzling scheduling clash which must surely

reduce its potential audience numbers.

The perhaps most unlikely triumph of the year though was the 'Unusual Experiences' conference held at Marlborough Sports Centre on 8th August. Organised by a group of individual researchers (ringleaders: Dianne Krishna and Chris Garner) rather than an organisation, this was devised as a chance to give a voice to the many people who have had, well, unusual experiences in and around crop circles. Though this idea was diluted slightly by the late promotion of fully scheduled 'name' speakers (a little nervousness on the part of the organisers?), the day did give some less familiar faces a chance to give ten minute accounts of their stories and the refreshing fast turnover of the itinerary did relieve the potential tedium that longer slots can sometimes bring. Though some had predicted low turnouts, they couldn't have been more wrong and the 175 or so who packed into the hall were rewarded with a light, unpressured day which managed to mix factions of cropies not often seen in the same halls together. That was the advantage of the event being organised by individuals rather than an official group - the borders of affiliations and old vendettas were blurred into pointlessness. The high attendance of those one might think conference fatigued (I saw some there who had

been to nearly every event this year - including our *SC Bonanza* back in April) was testament to the slightly different appeal of the day, which in its advertising literature promised a healthy absence of dogma with the slogan "*Leave your theories at the door*". Actually, not everyone did, but it didn't matter. A palpable hit, then. And yes, there was a café there.

Once again this summer's gatherings brought people together and seasoned friendships were renewed (particularly among those visiting from other countries). We lapped up the old stories and theories, in amongst the new material, with relish, and wore our virtual Starfleet costumes and *Dr Who* scarves with pride. See you there next year? **AT**

2000 Dates

A larger CCCS two-day conference is currently mooted to take place on 17-18th June at the Cricklade College Theatre, Andover.

The WCCSG Wiltshire Crop Circle Celebration Weekend will take place on 15-16th July at the Coronation Hall, Alton Barnes.

The Glastonbury Symposium will take place on 28-30th July at the Assembly Rooms, Glastonbury.

There have probably been more books written about this one historic site than any other location on the planet. And with good reason. Some are by authorities detailing the 'orthodox' view of the pyramids-as-tombs. Some are popular books which have made the history and details of Giza, the Great Pyramid in particular, known to a huge and fascinated audience around the world. These books have introduced the 'alternative' views of geometry, purpose and cannot-be-tombs-no-bodies-found hypothesis. The two camps have become increasingly polarised

throughout the past decade degenerating into wild accusations of cover-ups and conspiracies from one side and crackpot theories on the other. None of which are helpful.

What has been needed is a book prepared to look at both sides of the debate in an even-handed and knowledgeable manner. *Giza: The*

Truth is that book. The authors have an encyclopaedic knowledge and manifest love for their subject. They are also quite prepared to risk the wrath of the Egyptian authorities by personally

entering off-limits tunnels and chambers to determine the truth about claims of secret tunnelling activity in the Great Pyramid!

When a book title promises 'The Truth' about anything expectations can often be disappointed. Not with this book. It is exactly what is needed as we approach the Millennium. It details the history of the exploration of the Giza Plateau, starting

with the Greek and Arab accounts, but especially those of the past 200 years. The theories of construction are examined from all aspects as to who, how and when these remarkable structures were assembled. A particular study is made of accounts of the Hall of Records: the possibility of it being discovered, what it could

REVIEWS DIAMOND GIZA

Following last month's review of the 'alternative Egypt'-bashing *Stargate Conspiracy*, MARCUS ALLEN looks at a more balanced book on the whole Giza pyramids debate, *Giza: The Truth*, by Ian Lawton and Chris Ogilvie. *Herald*, which looks set to become the definitive word on the subject...

contain and if it exists at all. Finally, there is an unemotional overview of the politics which have come to dominate the pyramids for the past 10 years.

There are many excellent books by orthodox Egyptologists. These, however, tell only part of the story and studiously ignore any alternative theories. The alternative theories, in turn, tend to discount much of the context in which the whole Giza Plateau should be viewed. It is this context which is so important to a better understanding of what can and cannot be agreed upon, because without understanding, both sides will just continue to shout abuse from the sidelines and not get involved in debates to advance our knowledge of what is already agreed to be the single most important legacy of Mankind's recent past.

Rudolf Gantenbrink's exploration, in 1993, of the 'air shafts' leading from the Queen's Chamber was intended, initially, to be a bonus following his installation in the King's Chamber 'air shafts' of new ventilation fans. It is not widely appreciated that the northern Queen's Chamber 'air shaft' has never been fully explored: the serpentine route it followed was just too complex for his robot, *Upuaut*, to go beyond 40 feet without getting irretrievably stuck. But it was what Gantenbrink discovered 213' up the Queen's Chamber southern 'air shaft' which received world wide attention: a 'door' blocked further exploration. It was this interest which came to define the present situation. "Open the door" was the demand. "Unauthorised release of information" was the reply. Stalemate.

Into the vacuum stepped new authors whose ideas appealed to a wide public, with star positions and astronomy featuring heavily. TV programmes were made and seen by millions promoting alternative aspects of Giza which questioned the orthodox view. When the Sphinx and doubts over its age were added to the mix combined with the burgeoning power of the Internet to spread information, innuendo and rumour, seemingly in almost equal measure, something had to give.

What gave was the antagonistic view each side held of the other. As historical details recorded by dedicated explorers over the past 200 years came to be better appreciated, some of their work was rehabilitated, such as that of Col. Richard Vyse in 1838, who has been accused of daubing fraudulent quarry marks in the Great Pyramid to prove it was built by Cheops around 2550 BC. If Col. Vyse could be shown to have behaved in a dishonest manner then other theories would gain credence. By examining such details in the context of the whole Giza plateau the authors have enabled their readers

to take a more realistic and consequently more knowledgeable overview. In doing so the accusations against Col. Vyse can be shown to have been wrong. That this may upset some who have formed their beliefs based on ideas now shown to require more evidence to support them is part of the ongoing debate. It should not be seen as yet another attack on any group or person for that is neither the intent nor purpose of *Giza: The Truth*.

The question of the evidence presented at Giza implying the presence of an advanced lost civilisation is confronted head-on. The authors examine all the main points raised by the alternative researchers, which deserve, in their view, as much attention as those put forward by the orthodox field. This is one of the strengths of their book in that it really does take an even-handed look at every aspect of research in order to move the debate forward. Incidentally, in doing so they lay some effective ground rules which could usefully be adopted in other equally contentious areas such as Energy and Health.

Many questions raised do remain unanswered, specifically to do with the technologies evidently available for the creation of many artefacts made from material such as granite, when only copper, or possibly bronze tools were available. Yet the discovery of a piece of iron inside the structure of the Great Pyramid which had not been properly examined until recently opened up a whole new debate. Qualified engineers now entered the arena to bring their own expertise to bear on such evidence as high speed drills, lathes for turning bowls and the ability to create optically flat surfaces.

The one idea behind much of the exploration and politics at Giza over the past 30 years is that there exists somewhere on the Giza Plateau the fabled Hall of Records. This repository is alleged to contain information which will not only explain Mankind's history and how the human race came to be, but also knowledge which will help us in the future. History will accord the discoverer of such a location a place at the forefront of fame: reputations will be made, fortunes garnered and immortality guaranteed. With so much at stake is there any wonder that those who believe themselves to be close to such a discovery should wish to exclude others, spread false trails and generally confuse the issue until they can point triumphantly at the success of their own endeavours?

Behind all the excitement of new discoveries, and these continue to be made, such is the incredible wealth of treasures at Giza it is easy to lose sight of one important factor underlying all activity on the Plateau. The pyramids may be a World Heritage site of the greatest importance,

but they are in the care and control of the Egyptian authorities led by Dr Zahi Hawass. In all the fevered antagonisms of the past few years Dr Hawass has maintained his dignified position of neutrality and allowed all accredited researchers their time on the site. Ultimately he holds the best interests of Giza and its future above all else.

Lawton and Ogilvie-Herald have written a book which is greater than the sum of its parts. Each part is valid and a comprehensive summary of its subject: Exploration, Modern Methods and Politics. It is when all three are read as a whole that the true picture emerges and a singular perspective is seen. They have undercut the claims of cover-ups and conspiracies which have threatened to submerge so much that has gone before, some of which is now of even greater relevance in the light of continuing new discoveries. They have laid to rest many of the myths and rumours generated on the Internet by the simple expedient of going to the source of the story to get at the truth. A truth often at

variance with the stories subsequently flying around the Web.

Giza: The Truth was a book waiting to be written. That it reads easily, and in parts like a good detective story, is a tribute to the authors' skills. It should be required reading for everyone with even a passing interest in getting right up to date with the fascinating and ongoing story of that most majestic enigma - the Great Pyramid.

As an end-of-Millennium report about activities chronicled in *Giza: The Truth*, the Galactic Headmaster could well write, "Have learned much from the past. Shows great promise for the future." **MA**

GIZA: The Truth - The People, Politics and History Behind the World's Most Famous Archaeological Site by Ian Lawton & Chris Ogilvie-Herald, Virgin Publishing 1999, ISBN: 1 85227 821 8, hardback, 560 pages. Available through bookshops or from *Nexus Magazine* at £22.00 (inc. p+p) 55 Queens Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1BG. Tel: 01342 322854 Fax: 01342 324574 Email: nexus@ukoffice.u-net.com

Last year, as I was attempting to trace the evolution of the crop patterns and their relationship to human consciousness (see SC 72), the Circlemakers were indulging in a sort of design spree, inventiveness unlimited! Apparently sat-

isfied with the fractal approach of 1997, the 1998 patterns concentrated on the circular - but with incredibly advanced designs compared with those of the early years.

The five-fold geometry of the star at Beckhamp-ton (June 20th) extended itself to a ten in the petals and arcs surrounding it. A few weeks later, in the pristine pattern at Dadford, there appeared a double star, again making a ten-fold design. A ten appeared again the next day (5th July) near Danebury Hill, and within a few days another at Fareham. This also included a star-like design in the centre. Danebury was visited again on the 2nd August. Was it coincidental that the total number of circles in this glyph was seventeen? Seven-fold geometry was reintroduced in the beautifully crafted glyph at Tawsmead Copse (9th August). There was also a nine-fold symmetry last year, in the stunning design of crescents and outer arcs that

appeared near The Sanctuary.

To recapitulate on the number symbolism: five represents the human microcosm; six, equilibrium and harmony; seven, the Universe; and nine, completion and fulfilment. Ten is the

number of the cosmos, and signifies a return to unity. Thus, the glyphs of 1998 would appear to summarise the complete evolution of consciousness.

This year, we have been presented once again with the whole process. Indeed, we could almost believe that there was no seasonal gap between last year's glyphs and those of 1999.

There were more beautiful patterns using five, six and nine-fold geometry, at Avebury Trusloe, the Devil's Den and Cherhill respectively. But this year saw the first appearance of an eleven-fold design (*if implicit*) in the Menorah at Barbury Castle. This is equally significant in the symbolism of numbers and represents a stern reminder of our role in the Universe. The number eleven symbolises transgression and peril. The seven branches of the Menorah represent the Universe in Jewish tradition and the four on the 'stem' are the Earth. But four is also wholeness, rationality,

■ FEATURES ■ THE FURTHER EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Back in SC 72, PEGGY BUNT described her views that the crop circles were taking us on a journey through the symbolism of consciousness. Now she updates her views, taking into account the formations of 1998 and 1999...

measurement and justice. This reminds us of how our transgressions against the Earth and the whole have placed it in peril. We know this to be true so it is not surprising to find this message in our fields.

The Menorah appeared on 31st May and, thereafter, the message seems to emphasise the positive. The ten-fold geometry of the cosmos and the return to unity is found in the striking West Overton glyph of 23rd June. The hexagons, harmony, are ten in number. Folded, it becomes the Platonic solid representing air, an octahedron. On the same night there appeared at Allington Down the amazing pattern which, from the air, is quite obviously a cube - in traditional symbolism perfection and stability, and the Platonic solid for the Earth. (This exact symbol is also known as *The Antahkarana*, a Tibetan symbol which is said to connect the physical brain with the Crown chakra and is used to release negative energy - Ed.) It is interesting that these two glyphs should have appeared concurrently. The culmination of the series was the wonderful

glyph at Hackpen Hill on 4th July. This is a three-fold pattern and three symbolises creative power, growth and synthesis, the overcoming of duality. It is the heavenly number, the soul. Therefore, this glyph can be seen as the ultimate evolutionary state which we humans need to achieve, in order not only to save the planet and the Universe but also to fulfil our higher destiny. This is a very positive note on which to end the season, for, as Andy Thomas has pointed out, all the above occurred before the eclipse which seemed to quieten everything down, so that event may have had the significance accorded to it by many people.

The message of the glyphs has remained constant. At first seen as a cry for help from the Earth, it has been re-emphasised and expanded through the years, so that our responsibility and involvement is clearly set out. For those of us who believe the glyphs to be communications from a higher intelligence, and accept an interpretation through the symbolism of Number, the message is there for all to see. The time is now. **PB**

LETTERS

2001: A DATE ODDITY

We read with dismay your prophesy that there will be no formations during the calendar year 2000 (**SC** 86, page 8, Avebury: "there's every chance that this was the very last formation of the 20th Century"). In that case we agree with your statement "what the new century will bring... we await with interest" (page 15) even more than would otherwise be the case.

Can it be true? How can you know, in advance, of what the next year (2000) will - or will not - bring to amaze us, unless you personally have participated in all formation-making so far, and are intending to take a year's sabbatical?! As people who have never actually seen a formation, let alone been in one, we would be truly sorry to miss the **SC** pictures and 2001 calendars of a year with no formations. Please clarify your intentions.

(Anyone who is under the impression that the 20th Century ends on December 31 1999 is commended to review <http://www.timeanddate.com/counters/mil2000.html> for the correct definition of the New Millennium.)

David & Beryl Holyoake, USA, via E-mail.

Okay, okay... Most people in the western world seem to agree that 1999 is the last year of the 20th Century, whether technically correct or not, and my comments were simply going with the flow of this opinion. Does this mean I get an invite to David and Beryl's New Millennium party on 31st December 2000, then? - Ed.

ORGANIC MECHANICS

I recently had the pleasure of visiting three beautiful crop formations in Hampshire.

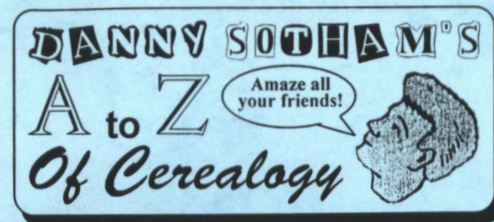
Naturally I started conjecturing the source of the marvellous mystery and wondered if **SC** has considered the murky possibility that the ever-increasing complexity of design involved some dabbling by the giant promoters of GMOs?

Our government seems very eager for the tests to continue and would therefore be likely to offer any technological assistance required by these immensely powerful companies.

I also wondered if formations had ever occurred in organically produced crops and if samples from them and chemically-treated crops had been compared?

Anne Cooper, Midhurst, West Sussex

Crop circles have been found in organic crops before (example: Yapton, West Sussex, 1991) but how biological effects differ to standard fields hasn't yet been put to the test to our knowledge. Why GMO manufacturers would want to engineer crop formations or what process might create them isn't known though, and a bit doubtful - Ed.



'HANDS OF FRIENDSHIP': So-named formation which appeared at Cherhill in 1993, actually more closely resembling two grappling Captain Hooks than 'hands'. Nevertheless, some felt this was an overture of friendship from the Circlemakers - like, they'd really want to mix with the likes of people who hang round empty fields all day, swill beer at *The Barge* at night and argue over which hoaxing group made which pattern, instead of reaching out to a social set more likely to give them an interesting conversation. The same year, an American researcher of sorts went out into a cornfield with a rotavator and etched a crude design of a human and an ET shaking hands. This shaky symbolic message, which would have disgraced a four-year old, probably did more harm to interplanetary relations than any single event since we carelessly started broadcasting *Third Rock from the Sun* out into space.

HANGOVERS: Common ailment amongst campers at *The Barge* which usually prevents 'researchers' heading out into the fields much before 4.30pm, just in time to get a quick round of formations in before returning to the bar to get down to the serious business of contributing to the following morning's mystery illness.

HAWKINS, GERALD: Pioneer in the discovery that many crop formations encode the 'diatonic ratio' in their dimensions. Yes, that's right, the diatonic ratio. You know, er, like musical scales... ..white notes on a piano... ..funny numbers... ..Stonehenge... ..hugely important... ..er... well, you know how it works, don't you...? *Don't you?* Give Professor Hawkins a call. He'll explain it to you. Whatever it means - and most preach of its importance without actually knowing - the matching of diatonic numbers apparently requires very accurate measurements being taken to the nearest inch. Given the general state (see HANGOVERS) and limited capacity of most cropies when it comes to numbers or even holding a tape measure straight in the first place (let alone turning up in the right field), one wonders if Professor Hawkins has been alerted to the probability that most crop circle surveys are elaborate works of fiction hastily concocted from averages when it becomes apparent that too much bar time is being jeopardised by the lengthy work *real* surveying takes to do.

HEADACHES: One of many reported anomalous effects oft reported amongst visitors to crop circles which clearly has no connection whatsoever to a) the burning sun above, b) pesticides/anti-croplie death sprays slurped all over the field by the farmer, or c) the seven pints followed by a rum chaser and a curry in Devizes the night before.

HEALINGS: Given the troubles of the National Health Service, it's a surprise they haven't started writing prescriptions for sufferers to get themselves down to a

crop formation ASAP, where, according to sources, miraculous cures await all who enter. Well, apart from those who come out with vomiting fits, blinding headaches, rashes and depression, but these are obviously *cathartic* symptoms and they'll feel a whole lot better afterwards. (Well, they would, wouldn't they?) Those unable to physically visit one of these beneficial patterns in cropfields can now save themselves the travel fare and instead shell out a perfectly reasonable 20 quid for a small plastic bottle of healing tapwater previously buried in a formation for two minutes. Isn't medical science a marvellous thing?

HITLER DIARIES: It's sobering to think that most 'right-thinking' people in the western world see crop circles as having about as much validity as this other well-established fraudulent scam which fooled the world for five minutes. Or was it a scam? What if it was *real*? Is Hitler still alive? Who cares? Apparently a swastika formation a couple of years ago "dowsed well", though.

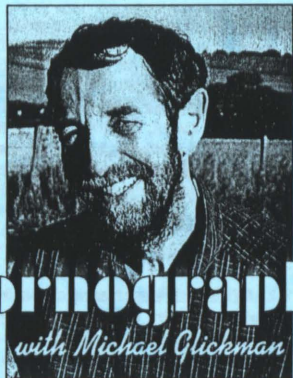
HOAXES: A term now considered offensive to 'human circlemakers' by the, er, hoaxers and some misguided cropies alike who would have us believe such jolly japesters are in fact guided by 'higher forces' to create their works of genius. Yeah, right, like Doug Bower is an agent of the Divine. If he is, one can only imagine it's the Divine of the deceased mad drag queen type rather than the Holy Creator. And as for 'Team Satan' - well, hey, the title says it all. A 'hoax' is something with the intention to deceive by way of pretending to be something it's not, you see, whereas the human circlemakers believe they're in fact devoting time and spiritual energy to making all our lives better with their works of inspirational art. Ahhh, bless 'em.

HOPIS: Red Indians, sorry, Native Americans, who get terribly excited when they see pictures of crop circles and sing their praises accordingly for the deep meaning they have for Humankind. Typical, isn't it? The circle-making forces go to all the trouble of making their enlightening precision symbols in the holy area of Wiltshire, England, only for cackling locals to go "it's all bloody students, ain't it?", while a small group of spiritually advanced tribesmen seeing a bunch of *Foto-Stop* prints in Cod Creek Backwater several thousand miles away are the only people who seem really interested.

HORMONES: 'Scientific' research into anomalous effects suggests large increases in the production of human hormones take place when visiting crop circles. Given the amount of near-copulating couples found writhing inside formations each year, it hardly needed a, er, hard scientific study to show that. Perhaps this also sheds light on the unexplained grey jelly-like substances researchers have found on, er, entering crop circles in years past (*oh, stop it - Ed*).

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM: It's amazing the amount of cropies who also claim that the story the beloved NASA has fed the world about the Moon landings might be just a teeny-weeny bit of a fib and that the whole thing was a big fraud. Could this be because after the hard slog of getting someone to consider the unlikely possibility of *this* idea, selling the idea of crop circles being made by extra-dimensionals suddenly seems a doddle in comparison and can be produced as a nice little conversational dessert after gruelling dinner party discussions? **DS**

More next issue!!!



I spend too much time dealing with the antics of the hoax claimants and I resent every second I give to the subject. It is entirely without profit and it demeans us all. We are involved in a high work and these villains repeatedly and fraudulently succeed in getting our attention.

An interesting argument *against* ignoring them is the regrettable fact that they leave a huge volume of hypocrisy behind them. Someone has to clean up! Here in the US, for example, the original Doug and Dave footage is played relentlessly and - inevitably - it has an effect. People actually *believe* this stuff. What is one to do? It's a rotten job but someone must clean up the sewage.

In all their claims during the last ten years (the whole ever-changing unpleasant cast from D & D to the unappetising 'Team Satan'), we never hear a note of artistic pride. They are very pleased with their supposed mechanical skills and their superlative PR. Above all, like disturbed adolescents, they take real pleasure in cheating. Their highest aspiration is deceit and the discomfiture it causes. However, when have they spoken with warmth or understanding about their claimed achievement? In 10 years I do not recollect a single occasion. And now, when the current members of this shifting, ephemeral crew call themselves artists, we might have expected, just occasionally, a note of pride in this prodigious art which they call their own. Don't hold your breath!

Interviewer: "Mr Scorsese, people have been, as usual, very moved by your latest work. Can you comment?" Martin Scorsese: "I was very pleased that it was in focus all the way through."

Interviewer: "Herr Mozart, your latest quartets are divine. What can you tell us?" Mozart: "The musicians were all in tune."

Interviewer: "Mr Rembrandt, your paintings are said to establish new standards. How do you respond to the public's appreciation?" Rembrandt: "There was very little paint dripped on the floor."

Many readers will have heard of this season's video footage of luminosities over several formations. I have received a letter from Professor Anthony Antennae of the Department of Lepidoptery (the study of butterflies) at the University of Creepy, Crawley, who points out that, having examined all this year's footage and that of previous years that the luminosities are all, in fact, butterflies. There are three types of white butterfly found in this area during the summer, the Small Cabbage White, the Large Cabbage White and the Greenveined White. Professor Antennae confirms that every supposed luminosity ever filmed is in fact one of these.

Contradicting this conclusion is the evidence of several witnesses to events overlooking the Oliver's Castle formation. A party of Japanese visitors were seen on the hill rapidly making small Origami birds or gliders out of brilliant white paper. These were then passed to a group of Chinese *Tai Chi* Masters, under the direction of Dr Nan Lu, who, with astonishing power and slow control, threw them into the air to glide gently, before the unwitting videographers, over the formation. My case rests.

As I have repeated over the last few years, the Oliver's Castle video of the formation of a crop circle seems to me to be not only the real thing but, in fact, the most compelling and beautiful confirmation of the crop circle phenomenon that we have ever been offered. I also repeated often that, if any real evidence in support of the falsehood of the video (as opposed to the gossip, innuendo, *ad hominem* argument, endless promises of confessions, etc.) was ever forthcoming, I would immediately respond to it, apologising if necessary. Surely the risk of it being real should have caused the raving debunkers to pause for a moment to consider the effects of what they were doing and to contemplate their obligations. If, eventually, they were shown to have been mistaken in their relentless campaign, they were responsible for the greatest single disservice to crop circle research.

The elastic has slapped painfully back.

This summer brought hard technical support for the footage in the form of video analysis by Chris Everard which demonstrated other areas of mysterious light activity on the periphery of the screen. This was never mentioned by either the supposed hoaxer or his supporters. The Everard work is, to use one of the favoured phrases of the last few years "the final nail in the coffin" of the faked tape nonsense.

And so, a challenge. I have asked Chris Everard to send a copy of his analysis to Peter Sorensen and Colin Andrews, the leaders of the fraud scenario school of thought. I find it hard to believe that they are not already familiar with so crucial a piece of evidence. I know that they both take their responsibilities seriously and I look forward to their comments in the next issue. **MG**