A large, stylized logo consisting of the letters 'S' and 'C' intertwined. The 'S' is on the left and the 'C' is on the right, with their curves overlapping. The logo is white with a black outline and is set against a dark, textured background.

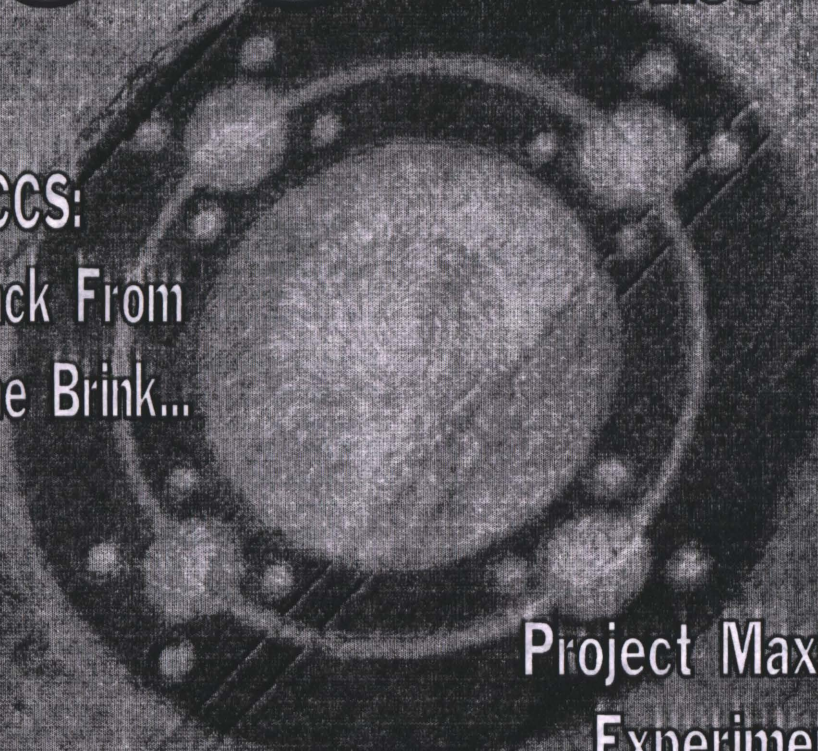
SC

*THE MONTHLY
JOURNAL OF
CROP CIRCLES
AND BEYOND*

52

MAY 1996

£1.00

A large, circular crop circle formation is the central focus of the cover. It features a complex, multi-layered design with a central circular area, surrounded by concentric rings of smaller circles and lines. The formation is set in a field, with the surrounding crops visible as a textured background.

**CCCS:
Back From
The Brink...**

**Scandinavian
Formations**

**Project Maxim:
Experiments
With A Man-
Made Formation**

"There is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested to by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good-sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves" DAVID HUME

Crop circles, for all the ridicule they receive, clearly fascinate television executives, because they never seem to be off the screen for long. In recent weeks, the crop circle conference at Dorchester (organised by David Kingston) was featured on regional TV bulletins, our own Michael Glickman was interviewed on the cable channel *Live-TV* (which also, it should be pointed out, has programmes where topless women play darts and stuffed rabbits interrupt news bulletins) and the promised hoaxers-confront-farmer programme mentioned by Glickers himself in *SC* 49 turned out to be Simon Mayo's *Confessions* on BBC 1, where a bunch of alleged corn-crunchers from Northern Ireland apologised to their victim, unfortunately, in the process, simply re-endorsing the idea in the public's minds that all crop formations are the work of such folk. But... the TV people are still fascinated! Incidentally, the TV report on the Dorchester conference was the first many knew about the event. Don't forget, if you have an upcoming event that you would like to publicise, let *SC* know. We have our occasional 'free plugs' column and also mail flyers at very low rates. Remember, *SC* is read by several hundred people each month, so it's a good place to appear in! Contact the editorial address with details of your events.

SC is hoping to organise a number of its own flights over the crop circle regions of England this summer (assuming there's anything to look at...) and we may have spare aeroplane seats on occasion. If you would like to fill such a place and witness for yourself the circles from above, send a postcard with your name and telephone number to the editorial address, and if a spare seat becomes available the postcards will be drawn from a hat. If your name comes up, you will be expected to be ready at very short notice - could be a day, could be hours... You will also be expected to get yourself to the relevant airport... which could be anywhere! Seats will cost around £25.

Who knows, although the fields are a few weeks behind compared to last year, by the time you read this, there may even be some new formations - there already are in the US (see stop press, page 11)!

ANDY THOMAS

SC

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Front Cover: Telegraph Hill, Hampshire, July 1995. Photograph by Steve Alexander.

Up until 1995 there had been very few crop formations reported from anywhere in Scandinavia. But then everything changed. Courtesy of my Danish friend Preben Hansson we are now able to give you first-hand information, and a world scoop, on some of the first ever Scandinavian crop formations, which appeared in 1995.

The first to be reported was in Norway towards the end of August and consisted of two circles joined by a 'snake' like line.

The next was from the small town of Holeby 10 km (6 miles) west of Toreby on the island of Lolland, Denmark. The

formation (see diagram) consisted of a dumbbell with a crossed-pathway. The circles were approximately 9m (29') in diameter and the whole dumbbell was 33.6m (110') in length. The formation, in wheat, was discovered by the farmer during harvest and was investigated on the spot by Ove Larsen.

Next up was Denmark again and this time near Stubberup, Odsherred, on the island of Sjælland (north-west Zealand). Again, only discovered during harvest (16th July) this formation was a very nice broken double-ringer (see diagram). Inside each of the eight arcs the crop was laid both clockwise and anticlockwise. A Danish engineer, Carl Otto Bindslev, who examined the formation, reported that the rings were actually ovalar and that he could cater for this by taking into account the slope of the field. Mathematically he proved that the formation would have been perfectly circular if it had come down from directly above onto a flat surface but that the ovality is equal to the slope of the field. The diameter across the field was 39.95m with 41.10m down the hill (approximately 131').

The final report we have is again from Odsherred and from a newspaper cutting dated 15th July, the day before the broken ringed formation was discovered. An aerial photograph shows a massive amount of lodging-type damage done to a field. Along one complete side and half

of another side of the field the crop is flattened very similarly to that which we saw during the summer of 1992. This was when huge portions of fields contained what was apparently lodging caused by over-fertilisation and then bad weather. However, it should be noted that where Dr. Levegood has

examined these patches of 'lodging' he has discovered abnormalities very similar to those found in genuine crop formations. This leads us to the tentative conclusion that much of this 'lodging' is in fact not lodging at all but non-geometric crop formations. Perhaps this is what happened in this corner of Denmark.

I am extremely indebted to Preben for sharing this information with us. Skol! BR

BELOW: Map showing the Denmark formations.

- NEWS -
CIRCLES HIT SCANDINAVIA
Across the countries of Denmark and Norway, the crop circles arrived in force at last in 1995. BARRY REYNOLDS rounds up the Scandinavian reports...



DENMARK

There are some who hold that Centre for Crop Circle Studies matters should only be reported in-house and behind closed doors. But to enforce such restrictions would be for CCCS to underestimate their own importance to the crop circle community as the most outward and once respectable face of crop circle research to the public. It would also restrict the airing of praise where deserved (see Winter Lecture review, this issue) and

conversely the sometimes necessary outside cajoling which all organisations need from time to time to help illustrate the need for, and to effect, beneficial changes. No-one should be denied the chance to celebrate the reclamation of CCCS from the jaws of disaster. Such glad tidings can now, and should, be openly conveyed that the once proud edifice of the CCCS has been pulled back from the brink of squabble-induced self-destruction into a (hopefully) brighter future.

Perhaps it was a behind-closed-doors preference that played a part in allowing the build-up of unaired grievances and resentments which exploded into the recent very open battles for the heart and soul of CCCS. The details of how these struggles came about are briefly outlined in SC 46 and don't need repeating. In more recent months, things went from bad to worse as the 'Review Body' which was set up at a Branch Convenors' meeting with the consent of the Council to gauge the feelings of the membership at large, itself fell prey to accusations of unfairness and being used as a platform for personal agendas. This basically came about because some were not happy with what the membership seemed to be saying! Arguments over how to interpret the results of circulated questionnaire forms erupted wholesale.

At the end of the day, however, it seemed clear that most felt some kind of change in the structure of CCCS was necessary to allow greater and wider representation of views in determining the day-to-day running of the organisation, and this meant Branch Convenors becoming part of

Council in some way. A system that would allow six regional representatives from around the country to take the place of some of the existing Council places was proposed, along with several other constitutional amendments which would make CCCS a more open network. Despite these clear feelings, some stauncher 'old-guard' supporters were insistent that the results of the surveys showed that members wanted no change in the structure,

and edicts were even issued to this effect without the consultation of the Review Body, coordinated admirably by Barry Reynolds. The only way to sort it out was to have a meeting. But various circumstances seemed to obstruct a Special General Meeting being arranged in time to clear the air for the Annual General Meeting, despite the required signatures to constitutionally demand such a meeting having been obtained; it was decided to combine the two, and the event finally took

place on Saturday April 20th, at The Fayre Deal Hotel, Andover.

By this time, things were not looking good for CCCS. The President and Patron of the society, Professor Archie Roy and the Earl of Haddington respectively, had resigned (with no official acknowledgement from the Council - Professor Roy's letter was eventually read out at the AGM but John Haddington's remains unaired) and bitter re-cremations and accusations of underhand lobbying were rife. It seemed a devastating spilt in the organisation was inevitable. If the Review Body proposals were voted in, some of the Council had threatened to resign. If the vote fell to the Council, some Branch Convenors were threatening to take their branches away from what was left of CCCS. The organisation would effectively be dead. But the split didn't happen. Somehow, against all the odds, common-sense prevailed at a meeting which was remarkably civilised and restrained, with only one or two exceptions.

The session began at 10.30am with the Extraordinary General Meeting to sort out the issues that would affect all that followed in the Annual General

Meeting, especially election of Council members. CCCS Chairman Michael Green felt that he should not chair a meeting the outcome of which he had such a stake in. Alan Rayner stepped up from the floor and was uniformly excellent in maintaining order and fairness throughout the long hours.

Barry Reynolds was given the floor to propose the Review Body measures and did so by telling the whole recent history which had led to this meeting, necessarily pulling no punches. A long and electric discussion followed, but something very quickly became clear which eased what could have been a very painful day - nearly the whole room was behind the new proposals. At least, they were after an amendment was accepted which stated that the new Branch Representatives on the Council should be elected democratically by CCCS members - one of the main sticking points for opposers of the measures was that they might not be. Once this became clear, a unity between some previously divided had largely been achieved, and it was only a matter of when the vote would be taken, rather than which way it would go. With lunchtime looming, there was a clear willingness to make the decision before the momentum was lost, despite a few attempts to put it back by an hour or so... or in one suggested amendment, a year! But the vote was taken and the room was almost unanimously in favour of the Review Body measures and the entailing constitutional changes (for details of these, see the recent CCCS questionnaires which all SC subscribers received).

The relief which flooded through all those present was tangible - most realised that the passing of these proposals ensured the continued existence of CCCS as a valuable society as opposed to the faction-riddled mess a vote to the contrary might have produced. Lunchtime was thus affable and relaxing for most, although a bit of tooth-grinding was apparent in some. Compromise is not always the easiest option, but sometimes the only one.

In many ways, however, the afternoon session proved to be the stickier of the two, as the implications of the new constitutional amendments were discussed and details of how to implement them were thrashed out, with Michael Green back in the Chair. The amendments, for instance, require the entire Council to be dissolved and to stand again for re-election. Easier said than done! In any case, Barry Reynolds had pointed out clearly the illegality of the method of all the postal ballots CCCS had ever held - by sending in many bogus photocopied

ballot papers in the recent (now annulled) Council elections, he may not have made any new friends but had demonstrated without ambiguity that a new coded system of postal ballot is necessary in the new arrangements...

After the constitutional wranglings were decided as far as they could be without the consent of the new Council, who will be elected over the next three months (the existing structure will stay in place until the end of July), the Annual General Meeting began with as much pretence of normality as could be mustered. Yearly reports and addresses were made, with Lucy Pringle resigning as Vice-Chairman. But by now enthusiasm was lacking, and after the dramatic sweep of the morning's decisions, people were tired and eager simply to get the thing over. Tempers frayed a little as some couldn't resist a few digs and personal remarks. At least one person walked out. But such things were little more than the death throes of all the recent troubles. Nearly all the petty resentments had, at least, finally come to a head instead of being swept under the carpet. By 6.00 that evening, most realised that the past was the past and that for CCCS, for good or for ill, there was no turning back from its decision to move forward.

An opportunity for a new era of openness and positivity has been delivered. More still can be achieved and surely will be in time. There'll be a few teething problems, for sure, but nothing insurmountable with the right will and the right people. There are a few who aren't happy about the new direction but there's no doubting that CCCS has crossed a vital line. Perhaps it has finally realised that as the largest and most prominent group of people researching crop circles, it has a responsibility, to its members, to the outside public, and to the phenomenon itself. Its continued survival is important to more than just CCCS members and should be of concern to all with an interest in proliferating understanding and spreading knowledge of the beautiful shapes appearing in our fields - no CCCS would mean a far less structured and more ad-hoc network with less streamlined channels of information available about a phenomenon we all care about in our own ways. Things may never be perfect within such a large organisation of diverse views, but this isn't a perfect planet. The reason for our collective gathering should never be forgotten. As Barry Reynolds said in his opening speech, holding up a photograph of a crop formation: "Remember these?". AT

- REPORTS -

THE BRINK OF DISASTER

The Centre for Crop Circle Studies had its hand on the red button to self-destruct, after months of bitter in-fighting. But somewhere it slipped off the path of destruction and onto the road to Damascus instead, saving itself in the nick of time. A brighter future beckons as a result of decisions made at the recent Extraordinary /Annual General Meeting. ANDY THOMAS experiences for himself this welcome turning point...

In June 1995 Steve Alexander and I took part in 'Project Maxim', an experiment to construct and examine a man-made crop circle.

For us it had become a necessary evil; we had visited literally hundreds of formations over the years and had been asked to give our opinions on the genuineness of many of them. But by early 1995 it

was becoming increasingly difficult for us to feel confident in the opinions we were giving. We were beginning to ask questions about the standards by which we were actually assessing these formations; exactly what did constitute a genuine circle compared to its man-made counterpart and, moreover, had this actually been tested?

There had been, of course, the infamous hoaxing competition in 1992 which had attempted to discover just what standards could be achieved by man-made efforts but, for us, this didn't seem to go far enough. There were other questions that now needed to be answered which Project Maxim was

going to go some way to try to address.

In its effort to create a complete control circle this project put itself in a unique position to look at the research currently being carried out on crop circles and to assess its validity. Also, and importantly, the project would monitor and record the recovery process of an average crop formation, to note any environmental effects on the crop and any other effects which may throw light on current thought. Perhaps this project would discover new information about differences between man-made and unknown formations, or yet un-noted differences.

In addition to this, Project Maxim was to attempt to gain insight into the man-made construction of crop circles and to try to discern exactly what was possible and what was not possible to achieve manually. During 1994 and 1995 Steve and I had

heard many stories of circle-faking teams encountering some kind of light phenomena in the field while at work. We had even been sent a report in which one foreign researcher had experienced a bizarre set of encounters in a formation he had made himself; perhaps Project Maxim could throw light on this too. But more than any of this, Project

Maxim would be able to give its participants a set of control observations and data which could then be used to compare with formations of a genuine, unknown origin in the field.

It is very important to stress that in no way was this project about deception for deception's sake. It was necessary in producing a complete control formation that no-one knew its exact origin until any analysis was complete and a report produced. This would ensure no bias or influence was placed on the research.

Below is a summary of the project's report. We hope you will find it of great interest. We would also like to state that *apart* from this project Steve and I have had no part whatsoever in making man-

made circles and that our involvement in it was an open-minded attempt at furthering our understanding of the crop circle phenomenon.

Basic Planning and Requirements: Stage One of the project was to produce a man-made formation which would be accepted as 'genuine' by as many researchers as possible. If it was simply branded a hoax we would have achieved little more than what had already been achieved by researchers creating their own controls. This formation had to be treated in the same manner as any other of unknown origin. It had to be measured, sampled, dowsed and trampled by researchers and for this to be possible, nobody else at all should know that it was man-made.

Stage One: In the process of creating a formation which would be acceptable to researchers, there

were several requirements which had to be taken into consideration. The location was important. It should be a fairly well known area where circles had appeared before. It should be visible from a nearby road/hill (for easy discovery). A crop of young wheat should be present in order to study its recovery process and the field should be out of view of popular night watching locations. It should not be put in the exact location of any previous formations to minimise the risk of any 'contamination' of crop/soil from that formation. The design was also important. It should be typical of other 1995 circles, but also simple enough for an inexperienced team to construct at night. Other features were also to be incorporated during construction, ie. the centre swirl should not be the geometric centre, the centre should not fall directly on a tractor line, all circles were to be flattened from the outside inwards as it was speculated that this would give the swirl a tighter and neater appearance.

With these considerations on board, the team constructed the formation. The design had been drawn firstly on paper using a pair of compasses, it was then measured with a ruler and converted into equivalent distances for the field. The maximum diameter would be 100ft to correspond with our soft tape measure.

Only the simplest and minimal equipment was used. One tape measure, one stomper (pole with string attached) and a pocket torch. All measurements were memorised. It took four team members about an hour to complete the formation.

Stage One Observations: Flattening the young wheat down was found to be difficult with only one stomper; other team members found it necessary to stamp the crop down with their feet in order to achieve an acceptable level of flatness. Lack of light proved to be of little consequence. Even though no moon was visible the team had adequate light to see, although the torch had to be used to read distances off the tape. Excess sound was found to be no problem - from a distance of only 50ft no sound could be heard during construction.

Stage Two Observations: The team returned to the formation the next morning in order to assess their efforts and make some initial observations. We were now entering Stage Two of the project in which a detailed examination would be undertaken and then further comparative examinations would occur over the next two weeks. On that first visit several observations of note were made. Perhaps the most striking was of the many single standing

stems inside the formation. When examined, these plants seemed to show very little damage. The base of these stems displayed no obvious sign of bending despite the extra force applied to them by the team during construction.

Looking at the flattened plants, there appeared to be a few breakages at the base of the stems. It was estimated that approximately 35-40% of stems were broken at the base. However, what was noticed were bruise-like marks on some stems. These marks were highlighted, as the stems of the young wheat appeared to be covered by a thin film (this gave the stems a silvery-coloured appearance); this film had clearly been disturbed on some stems. No nodal anomalies were detected after a lengthy examination.

One week later, the formation was re-examined. Differences noted included the fact that the crop inside the formation had begun to dry out, but recovery of stems (phototropism) had begun also. Some parts of the formation had been trampled heavily and plant and soil samples taken. Nodal bending was apparent at this stage due to the recovery process of the plants but it was evident that some recovering stems had been re-trampled, possibly giving the impression of unexplained nodal anomalies.

After two weeks these nodal effects had increased significantly. Parts of the lay were completely dry (1995 was a very dry and hot summer). Examining these nodes, some had the appearance of being exploded.

Stage Two Discussion: Looking at the data collected from the formation we had several areas to assess. The main area was the one pertaining to 'false' nodal anomalies. Two scenarios presented themselves. It was obvious that great care should be exercised in future as to identifying 'genuine' nodal anomalies. Our experiment had shown that the environment could create some type of bending and/or damage to nodes (ie. phototropism/high heat etc) naturally. This effect would be expected to be more pronounced the younger the plant at the time the formation was made and the longer the period of time elapsed between that and any observations. This suggests we should only be looking for these anomalies in brand new formations where natural forces have not yet played their part. Our second scenario is slightly more difficult to assess as whatever energy may cause genuine crop circles may, in fact, take several days to affect the crop and cause nodal anomalies. Our 'false' expulsion

- REPORTS -

TO THE MAX: EXPERIMENTS WITH A MAN-MADE FORMATION

'Project Maxim' was an experiment to construct and examine a man-made crop formation for scientific purposes in 1995, set up in part by well-known researchers Karen Douglas and Steve Alexander. Now rumour-mongering has taken hold to the degree that they are being falsely accused by some, who should know better, of having made many of last year's formations. KAREN DOUGLAS tells the true story of the one and only formation which they did have a hand in making, and explains the reasons behind it...

cavities were more than likely caused by birds (seeking moisture), from excessive trampling by human feet and/or high heat from the sun - when crop is flattened it is exposed a great deal more to the sun. Normal degradation of tissue related to some or all of these factors. Other recommendations for further observations were also put forward at this point and these will be used in the field in 1996.

Stage Three Discussion: Stage Three of Project Maxim involved gathering data from other researchers about their work on this formation. This proved to be of great importance. Both the ADAS (Agricultural Development and Advisory Service - see SC 47) and BLT (Burke, Levengood and Talbott) research teams did discover our formation and carry out their normal protocols within two-three days time after the formation was made and both sets of reports came back from the sampling laboratories showing no changes between samples taken and their controls. This was hugely encouraging (and a bit of a relief!). This was something clear with which we could now say that these efforts were on the right track. These results stand up so well because neither team knew the origin of the formation until all their analyses were complete. The tests were indeed blind. Dowsing reports, however, proved inconclusive; there were those who dowsed the formation genuine and some who dowsed it as man-made, which raises questions about the reliability of dowsing as a litmus test.

The BLT team's report further pointed out two points of particular interest for future research: 1) In the early, vigorous stages of plant growth there is a wider range of variation in node length among individual plants than is found in more mature, drier, plants; and 2) germination studies may be impossible to conduct on formations which occur early in the season, due to the normal lack of development of the seeds in immature plants, thus necessitating a repeat sampling four-six weeks later if germination tests are desired.

Postscript: Very much to our surprise various anomalous effects have been reported to us related to this formation. One visitor reported hearing a 'trilling' or 'clicking' sound when exiting the formation; a researcher reported a compass needle spinning around and then following a fellow researcher as he made his way around the perimeter instead of staying at magnetic north (although this 'anomaly' can sometimes be attributable to the compass needle simply being attracted to a piece of

metal on an item of clothing! - Ed). Then Steve and I discovered that a formation which we had previously visited elsewhere had 'mutated' to take on the appearance of the Project Maxim formation. We couldn't help but wonder what was going on... could it be that once a design is laid down in the crop, no matter by what agency, that it then functions as an attractor of some sort? Perhaps to energies which are either routinely attracted to a particular area, or are indigenous? Since we know that a certain percentage of formations do, in fact, get additions at some later date, do these energies visit specific areas repeatedly? Why sometimes and not always? Did our behaviour, in the making of the Project Maxim formation, result in the addition to the other formation which ended up looking so similar? If so, why?

As always seems to be the case, our investigation has raised as many questions as it has answered; our observations continue to inspire new approaches to field-work in the future. Project Maxim is over, and we will not repeat it - we feel that the experiment was productive because it was a singular event, with specific goals. We are aware that our efforts may have caused consternation among some members of the crop circle community; this was not our intent, and we regret any distress our actions have inadvertently caused. We were motivated, as we suspect most crop circle researchers are, by our desire to understand more completely this amazing phenomenon. We do now understand a little more. But mostly, we continue to be amazed. **KD**

For obvious reasons, this article cannot reveal the location or identity of the formation created by Project Maxim. No member of the SC team took part in, or had any knowledge at the time of, this experiment. Whilst acknowledging the potential value of this one-off project, SC does NOT encourage anyone else to follow this example and is not promoting a belief that mass-hoaxing plays a role in the crop circle phenomenon - Ed.



LEFT: *Inside the Project Maxim formation, July 1995. Photo: STEVE AL-EXANDER*

Just as we were heading out the door toward Puerto Rico, SC 50 showed up

- **LETTERS** -

in our mailbox. A reading of your journal in the sun, as against a foot of snow, causes one to become exercised. And the result...

Listen carefully... You may hear the comment often, and in odd places. "The pace of events, of discoveries, of our lives, seems to be accelerating." The words will be rearranged, and various degrees of awe will become apparent if the conversation is joined by others who agree. But once the thought is launched, the spirit of rapid change, 'driven' by some unseen hand, quickly becomes an accepted norm for our day and supporting stories tumble on one after another to the great delight of all gathered. Given an opportunity to write about pace, guidance and expanded awareness, our crop circle enthusiasts pick up on the theme immediately. The 50th edition of SC bursts with such words as Roland Pargeter offers... "It is difficult to expand at the rate that the phenomenon demands." Mr Pargeter accepts that 'expansion' in all directions is being demanded of us... we are on. Stanley Messenger recognises the call for accelerated expansion in softer terms... "We are being invited to envisage the extension of natural laws..." A few thousand miles away, Chad Deetken knows the call... "Researchers... are being deliberately exposed to a

consciousness-raising process whose goal is still unclear." And ityes... "A major purpose of the phenomenon is to awaken (us)..."

If pounds or dollars grew on trees, and if fourteen contributors could have grown to one hundred fourteen, the sentiments clearly broadcast in SC 50... while approaching the 21st century... might have maintained similar proportions. Well over half of SC 50's proud contributors wrote in terms akin to what Jim Lyons summed up in a short sentence... "We are in a realm beyond existing instrumentation."

Thank you circle makers! We hear the call. Allow us some time to shift gears. Prod and push as you see fit. We will use what tools we have to match your pace...

DOUG ROGERS, Newtown, Connecticut, USA

As we mentioned last month, many readers have expressed very positive feelings about our fiftieth issue, in which we invited many different researchers to give their view of the crop circle phenomenon. This letter sums up neatly the observation made by many of you, that despite apparent superficial differences in opinions, most people investigating the circles are clearly being drawn along the same path... Thanks again for all the good feedback - Ed.

When George Fox founded the Quaker movement (or 'Friends') in the 1700's, which became a philosophy of acknowledging the spiritual light within each individual and having tolerance towards all belief systems, it's a fair bet he never suspected one of his future establishments would be used as a gathering place for people interested in strange, almost pagan, symbols appearing mysteriously in the crop fields of the world. Yet, perhaps

because of that core philosophy, the Friends' International Centre off Tottenham Court Road in London seems the perfect venue for the Centre for Crop Circle Studies' Winter Lectures: many believe the crop formations are awakening the inner light within us which has been dormant for too many years, and little tolerance has been shown by the outside world towards the

minority view that such phenomena could be genuine. The upper room of the Friends' building provides a haven of peace at the heart of the surrounding city madness and from the alleged sanity of those who scoff, a warm, friendly atmosphere where each month, croppies gather and get to know one another in an intimate environment where they can luxuriate in images and discussion of their favourite subject. All this in a city far away from the fields themselves where the phenomena in question occur. These lectures, held when all is icy and dark outside, are like a postcard from the front to those too distant to be regularly involved in hands-on work and are a welcome memory of the glorious summer months of magic.

Tolerance and the acknowledgment of the legitimacy of differing views were, of course, things which CCCS needed more than ever, given the disastrous internal squabbles which the main organisation found itself embroiled in during this winter period. It is to the credit of the organisers and is a sign of the admirable lack of interest in such relative irrelevancies from the London attenders, generally newer to the scene and blissfully ignorant of all that, that not the slightest whiff of these troubles stained any of the five lectures which took place between November and March. This was

especially commendable given that the lectures were capably watched over by the gentle but firm presence of CCCS chairman Michael Green, who, rightly or wrongly, has been at the centre of much of the recent controversy. At the Winter Lectures, all egos and power struggles were put aside and the focus was firmly on the phenomenon and not on the politics. Would that it could always be this way.

As far as each month's speakers went, it's impossible within one piece to do justice to each lecture, presented under the imaginative umbrella title *A New Turn Of The Spiral*; we can but scratch the surface here, however, a small abrasion is better than nothing.

Karen Douglas and Steve Alexander nearly lost their chance to turn the spiral when traffic thwarted their attempts to begin on time, but what they packed into the last hour available to

them was memorable: Steve and Karen are two of the remaining few who actually spend quality time in the crop formations of England, instead of simply talking about them. The experience shows and their observations and Steve's incomparable photographs are of crucial value to crop circle research; that their first-hand contribution, together with other unsung heroes, has not yet been fully recognised by some in the croppie 'community' is strange - and unwise, if cerealogy is ever to move forward substantially.

Carole Cochrane, whose welcoming presence as the main organiser of this year's Winter Lecture series helped make the evenings such a pleasure, gave one of the presentations herself, making her debut appearance as a speaker. Signs of inexperience were not visible as she explored the possibility that place names of crop circle locations may hold encoded information, unlocked through the process of 'lexigramming' (rather like numerology but in the form of anagrams) and psychic divination. The resulting messages were intriguing and somehow charming.

Jim Lyons, as 'scientific officer' for CCCS, is by now an old hand at presenting his views on subtle energies, the human mind and their combined effect on the environment through such effects as

- REPORTS -

IN THE BLEAK MID-WINTER

As the Centre for Crop Circle Studies appeared to be disintegrating in the provinces around it, somewhere in London WC1, croppies gathered each month over the winter for tea, cake and the CCCS' one bastion of sanity, the 1995-96 Winter Lectures. ANDY THOMAS, garlic bread in hand, recalls the cozy dark months...

crop circles. The energy 'vortex' is the at the centre of all things for Jim (he outlines his views neatly in SC 50), and this seems appropriate for one who seems to be animated by so much energy himself as he speaks. No matter how familiar one may be with Jim's lectures - he has rightly been given a lot of exposure through CCCS events - they remain a delight.

I did my bit in recounting the Sussex circle communication experiments (see *Cornography* last issue), and finally John Sayer wrapped up the cycle of lectures with his amusing tales of crop circle coincidences in his life, the recurring significance of the number 23 and of the carpet circles which once plagued his house...

John gave over the second half of his evening to respected dowsing Richard Andrews, who, happily, seems to have recovered from the life-threatening health problems which loomed last year (according to Richard's pitch in the recent CCCS elections, these problems have now been "resolved"). Perhaps the circles worked one of their miracle cures! Or perhaps not in his view, as Richard is subtly, but openly, sceptical of the genuineness of most formations post-1991 onwards, although he continues to be part of circle research. (Richard is planning to 'hoax' a number of formations this year in controlled experiments to test for properties which could mistakenly be taken for paranormal effects - one of these will apparently be in Sussex, but no-one will be told where.) It is perhaps unfortunate that the very last slide of the Winter Lectures was the first and only negative image of the series - a crocodile lurking underwater, a warning to researchers not to be caught out by all the preying pranksters which apparently surround us in Richard's view.

But each speaker threw their own individual light on

SC has yet to report fully on last year's American crop formations (coming up soon), but we can now reveal details of what appear to be the first US formations of 1996! They appeared at Laguna Canyon, which is halfway between Los Angeles and San Diego in California. Three separate shapes have been discovered in scrubland (wild grass and other vegetation) on the side of an artificially landscaped hill (not yet 'stabilised') intended for housing development. First reported in mid-March, one pattern is a 50' multi-ringer (about eight or nine rings) around a 5' circle. Next to this is a smaller version

this marvellous phenomenon that continues to dazzle, whatever the view of their origins, and anyone who attended all five of the presentations that illuminated the dark winter months must have gained a good overall picture, with all the many facets covered along the way in one form or another.

In many ways these lectures are the highest-profile - and only? - regular events that CCCS is involved in setting up. They are a fine example of the good things that can be achieved by the organisation. We can only pray that their legacy of excellence is built on in the setting up of a further series of Winter Lectures and that the exemplary principles and qualities set by them are extended outwards into the entire structure of an organisation that could learn a lot from their own success here.

But outside of what we may have learnt from the series about our favourite obsession, the lingering magic of these events remains for me the cozy familiarity of the little rituals shared by a few one day of each month in a huge city at the centre of a dying civilisation. The hot tea, the fancy cakes laid out by Carole with precision on the trolley, Marcus Allen's ever-present book stall, the pleasant conversation with people you couldn't claim to know but who seemed like old friends after only a couple of meetings... and of course the candlelit intimacy of the 'Caffe Uno club', for those stalwarts who ventured out to the Italian restaurant at Goodge Street after each lecture to round off the evening with garlic bread, philosophy and laughter, watching the snow and rain drifting quietly in the streets outside. These memories I will cherish forever.

Maybe the answer to all of CCCS' problems would simply be to hold their business meetings in nice restaurants. AT

of a similar design. The last formation is what has been described as a 'Maltese Cross' or 'Medicine Wheel' configuration. Perhaps because of the

scrub vegetation which the patterns are inscribed in, the designs are not ultra-distinct but US researchers who have visited the site are enthusiastic and the quality of the

formations is reminiscent of the 'heart' formation which appeared at Lompoc (also in California) in 1994 (see SC 38). The formations are now very eroded but their imprint remains very clear on the soil. Could this be the start of a bumper year for the US..? AT

CIRCLES USA 1996...

Jerome Whitney originated from western New York state where he and his brother were brought up. They spent their idle time trying to dissipate clouds by thought alone so it is no surprise that when he moved to Britain twenty five years ago he became actively involved in subjects like the Druidic Order, Egyptology, Indians, Aztecs, Shamanic healing and alternative medicine including homeopathy, which he teaches.

Tonight's subject was Astronumerology - numbers in our lives. Did you know that each finger of your hand has a meaning when taken in conjunction with the others? For instance your little finger, represented by Mercury, may show whether you are good or bad at communication or organisation de-

pending on its comparative length. Your fourth finger, the sun finger, represents creativity. The longer it is when compared to your middle finger then the more symbolic of creativity it is. If it is a pointy finger then you may be more psychic than the practical person who has a flat-topped finger.

We moved on from hands and covered noses and chins. If your chin sticks out you are wilful, the bigger the nose the more effective the person. And then we moved on again, this time to birthdays.

Jerome drew a table on the flip-chart and then asked for people's birthdays. This was the best bit of the evening. "Good grief, you look much older than forty two!". "And the rest, there's no way you're only twenty eight!". The hecklers were having a field day. Those not too shy or embarrassed to reveal their true age were rewarded with a quick summing up of their personality with the aid of the table and then it was explained how it was done.

You circle the numbers contained in your birth date, ignoring the century (e.g. 30th August 1964 gives 3,8,6,4), on the table with two or more of a number representing even more of whatever it is that number represents.

Number one, the sun, is becoming aware. Awake as opposed to asleep. Number two, Neptune, is planning as opposed to daydream. People with twos in their birth dates should not smoke dope as their brain already functions that way. Number

three, Jupiter, is activity as opposed to stagnation. Number threes will never be poor materially, they cannot throw anything away. Number four, Uranus (huge childlike sniggers from the group of naughty school boys... We know who you are and next time you'll be in detention!), deals with change, they are more creative. And so on and so forth.

By the end of the evening Jerome had done several full character assassinations on several CCCS

Sussex people and to embarrass the people involved completely they were noted down and will now be divulged for the rest of the world:

15/12/61: Likeable, sunny disposition, good mind, intelligent, sits in front of a PC all day and does not do enough exercise. (Diane)

20/9/69: Working on developing structure, needs exercise, loveable and likeable but is horrible when angry. (Jason)

18/11/26: Capacity to be effective, needs to communicate and not be alone, lots of thoughts need communicating outwards, good at artistic work, energy, achieving, working in sequence. (Kim)

28/1/66: (Note how the numbers are the same as the previous person but in different quantities giving a different meaning.) Lots of sixes so young ladies love to hang around this chap! (Nigel)

Bearing in mind that lots of sixes seem to make you appealing to the opposite sex you may be surprised to learn that Andy Thomas wasn't born on 6th June 1966! (*Watch it - Ed.*) However this may also explain why it was that one young lady quietly asked Jerome afterwards what hers meant. Her birth date? - 6/6/63. Wow, anyone got her 'phone number?

All this was truly fascinating stuff. The audience may have known little about this subject at the beginning of the meeting but by home-time we were checking the size of each other's ear lobes, looking for jutting chins and hiding the length of our fingers deep within our pockets! Jerome is an extremely fluent and creative speaker who enthuses about his subject. The only question left unanswered at the end of the evening was "When is he coming back?". **BR**

- REPORTS -

FINGERS, CHINS AND NUMBERS

Jerome Whitney likes playing with digits of both kinds... He addressed a CCCS Sussex branch meeting recently to explain why. **BARRY REYNOLDS** was there...