

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape featuring a large field with a prominent crop circle in the foreground. The crop circle is a complex, multi-lobed design. In the background, there are rolling hills, a small farm with a white building, and a line of trees. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, looking down on the field.

**SC**

**THE BIMONTHLY  
JOURNAL OF  
CROP CIRCLES  
AND BEYOND**

**94** **SPRING  
2001**

**£2.00**

**CELEBRATORY  
FINAL ISSUE**

**THE SC TEAM  
LOOK BACK -  
AND FORWARD**

**THE LAST WORD**

"Parting is such sweet sorrow"  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Over the years I sometimes wondered what it would be like writing the final editorial for *SC*... and here I am doing it at last. It feels strange - and yet right. I don't think I need to elaborate much further on the announcement in *SC* 92 about our reasons for ending this little venture. There just comes a time when you know it's right to move forward. I need to divide my own time more fairly among the other projects which are calling to me, and at the same time, the crop circle news and commentary facilities which I have been proud to have spearheaded for so long can now be better served in a new medium. Those two rationales alone carried the decision and though it is actioned with sadness, there is no regret. In the end, I think it will prove to be a positive decision.

A few have asked me what my 'other projects' are. Well, anyone paying attention to my Glastonbury Symposium presentations in the last few years will have a good idea of the realms I want to spend more time exploring. My immediate plan is to continue work on a long-planned book about the power of the collective mind and the perils of its misuse. Without *SC* I hope to give it the space to evolve properly in a slightly less pressured environment! I also have other works I am committed to (including a photographic book of the recent flooding in my part of the country!), either as author or editor.

In addition to my role as co-organiser for this year's annual Glastonbury Symposium, I will also be continuing to give lectures on crop circles and other issues, and, of course, will be webmaster for *Swirled News* - see opposite for more! This is a commitment I take as seriously as *SC*. It will still be time consuming, but should prove a lesser burden than the bi-monthly deadlines. The thought of expanding the SCR ethos out to a larger world-wide audience is something I have great enthusiasm for. Once again, apologies to those who lack the technology to be able to join us for this new venture - but we do have some suggestions for you on the page opposite.

Southern Circular Research is 10 years old this year, as is my own involvement with the circle phenomenon. That fateful day when I discovered the crop circles of Wiltshire during my honeymoon (!) ensured that life would never be the same again. The sights I have seen, the wonderful things I have experienced and the people I have met through this area of interest have been both a delight and a bane - and I wouldn't change a day of it (well, not many). Whatever they may really be, crop circles are life-alterers, as many cropies can testify. 10 years ago I would never have envisaged that I would address audiences or write books, inspired by something beautiful which touches everyone in some way, yet somehow this has come to pass. All my colleagues have had their own lives shaken up on their own levels. It's been a major trip for everyone, as their testimonies show in this very last issue which celebrates nine years of *SC*, while looking forward into the future. We've spared you the history lesson on how this journal came about (well-documented in *SC*s 25 and 75), but otherwise this is an unashamed slab of nostalgia and parting missives, with some other novelties slipped in. We even have two pieces of fiction for you! A first - and last! - for *SC* (though some might say everything was fiction anyway...). And, for only the second time in our career, we have a colour cover too! Enjoy, even as you reach



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Front Cover: Martinsell Hill, Wiltshire, August 2000. Photograph by STEVE ALEXANDER

for the hankies.

So many people have contributed to the success of this journal that it's impossible to name them all, but very special thanks must go to mailers past and present in the form of Debbie Pardoe and Nigel Tomsett, and Di Brown and Jason Porthouse. They did a stirring task, the enormity of which I suspect was underestimated by most of you! And thanks, of course, also go to Martin Noakes (money matters), Barry Reynolds (all sorts of things), Michael Glickman (you know), Danny Sotham (annoying satirist), Steve Alexander (photos), Lucy Pringle (photos), Karen Douglas (on-the-spot correspondent), Michael Hubbard (photos), Marcus Alien (various bits of advice), John Cole (early treasurer), Linda Reynolds (long-suffering wife) and Sloane Noakes (long-suffering wife). There are many others besides; whoever you are, thank you - especially you, dear readers. But mostly, I pay tribute and give love to my own long-suffering wife Kaye, who has painstakingly proof-read *SC* for the whole nine years and put up with my eccentric lifestyle for so long... A medal is surely deserved.

I'll leave my final thoughts to the indulgently long article on page 20. So, for one last time... read on!

ANDY THOMAS

# SWIRLED NEWS

## FROM THE ASHES OF SC COMES... WWW.SWIRLEDNEWS.COM

Even as *SC* fades into the sunset, so arises *Swirled News*, our new, long-awaited web site, which should be online by the time you read this - or very shortly after.

**Why a new web site?** Despite the existing presence of some very good circle web sites, the ideals and energy embodied in *SC* have long been lacking on the Internet - we hope to inject something new into the pantheon. With the demise of *SC*, its spirit will now be reincarnated in a new medium and reach out to a wider audience.

**What will *Swirled News* provide?** It will not be a rival to *Crop Circle Connector* (which will be supporting us, and we them), and will NOT be a new circle reporting site - this is already very well catered for. Instead, *Swirled News* will be a sister-site to *Connector*, providing a cerealogical rolling news and current affairs service with headlines and articles presented with the incisive commentary, analysis and humour which *SC* has provided for so long. Beyond the sites which show what's going on in the fields, there are very few currently to be clicked on which provide a true insight into what is going on in and around the world of cerealogy in a concise format, written on an informed basis by those at the frontline. *Swirled News* will cater for this, highlighting the most relevant recent discoveries, pronouncements, media events and reports, croppie scandals and enlightenments, and fighting sceptic propaganda with all the honest and outspoken reaction which readers of *SC* have come to know and respect. It will be an open window into the world of crop circle research for anyone entering the site.

**What else will *Swirled News* offer?** Two of our most popular *SC* features will go on in new guises - Michael Glickman will have a new continually updated column with *The Voice of Reason*, and Danny Sotham's A to Z of Cerealogy will continue, with other satirical items, as *Danny Sotham's Mighty Column* (!). Familiar *SC* correspondents will continue to contribute news, articles, book and video reviews, though anyone will be welcome to submit material. There will also be a letters page, *Feedback*, providing a forum for reaction and comments on recent *Swirled News* stories, and we will have a new feature in the shape of *Parrott's View*, with our resident cartoonist Brett Parrott!

**Who will be running *Swirled News*?** The web site will be run by and large by the same team from Southern Circular Research who have given you *SC* for nine years, albeit with shifts of emphasis in duties. Andy Thomas is editor and webmaster for the site, while Jason Porthouse is its artistic director. Others from the *SC* team will be involved as appropriate, as contributors or organisers.

**Where can I find *Swirled News* and is it free?** Simply go online and tap in our web address above - [www.swirlednews.com](http://www.swirlednews.com) - and you'll find us. For now, we intend the service to be absolutely free!!! (One advantage over *SC* at least!) How long it stays free will depend on our expenses and the cost of maintaining the site, which we will keep under review.

**How can we find out when it is updated?** The site

will be updated every few days or as necessary (obviously slower in winter), so a look at our main page will always reveal the latest additions. However, we also intend to have an e-mailing list to which we will issue notice of major updates. If you wish to be part of our new e-mailing list, please e-mail us at: [info@swirlednews.com](mailto:info@swirlednews.com), simply saying 'Please include me on your mailing list' (no other communications to this e-address please).

#### WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE NOT 'ONLINE'

If you are not online yourself, but still want to keep up with *Swirled News*, see if you can find a friend or relative who does have access and persuade them to periodically print stuff off from the site. Ask around - most people know someone on the Internet. Buy them drinks or chocolates from time to time, as payment for this favour! Alternatively, there are many Internet cafes and libraries around, where you can very cheaply buy time online. The simplest answer, of course, is to get a computer and go online yourself! It really is much simpler than most people think, and without a doubt the Internet is, in time, going to become as much a part of normal life as a TV, like it or not...! Indeed, some TVs can now be adapted for the Net. But if you're really stuck, and the post-*SC* blues really do strike hard, there are, of course, other printed publications you may be interested in... Neutral details of the most prominent titles follow, alphabetically. They are all quite different to *SC* in style and content. However, they are other sources of information you can try out if you dare! **AT**

**THE CEREALOGIST:** Editor: John Sayer. Contact: 17 Spindle Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR6 6JR, tel: 01603 486722. Subs: UK - £12 Europe - £15 Elsewhere - £18 USA - \$35. Cheques to 'The Cereologist'. Format: A4 mag, b&w. Frequency: Three issues a year.

**THE CIRCULAR:** Editor: Terry Wilson. Contact: Andy King, Kemberley, Victoria Gardens, Biggin Hill, Kent, tel: 01959 571860. Subs come with membership of the Centre for Crop Circle Studies (CCCS): UK - £15 Europe - £18 Elsewhere - £22.50. Family memberships available. Cheques to 'CCCS'. Format: A4 mag, b&w. Frequency: Quarterly.

**THE CIRCULAR REVIEW:** Editor: Nick Nicholson. Contact: 6D Pond View, Moor Farm, Moor Lane, Calverton, Nottinghamshire, NG14 6FZ, tel: 01159 653488. Subs: UK - £10 All overseas - £15. Cheques to 'Circular Review'. Format: A5 booklet, colour. Frequency: Quarterly.

**CROP CIRCLES COMMENTARY:** Editor: Carol Pedersen. Contact: CCCS USA Network, 20075 SW Imperial Street, Aloha, Oregon 97006, USA. Subs: Voluntary donations requested, but technically free! Cheques to 'Carol Pedersen'. Format: A4 stapled sheets, b&w. Frequency: Twice yearly.

**MEDWAY CROP CIRCULAR:** Editor: Graham Tucker. Contact: 87 Hurstwood, Chatham, Kent, ME5 0XH, tel: 01634 666729. Subs: Please enquire for details, enclosing an SAE. Format: A4 folded sheets, b&w. Frequency: Quarterly.

**THE SPIRAL:** Editor: Francine Blake. Contact: Dereka Dodson, PO Box 2079, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1US, tel: 01380 728114. Subs: UK - £15.36 Europe - £17 Elsewhere - £22 USA - \$35. Cheques to 'WCCSG'. Format: A5 booklet, b&w. Frequency: Monthly.

Wishing all the SC team the very best in their next venture – despite the fact that I shall now be forced to go onto the Net – so far avoided – thanks SC!!!

**MARY BENNETT, Avebury, Wilts**

Re. the demise of SC; terribly sad, completely understandable and absolutely right! Thank you so much for all you have achieved through your devotion to the cause. May I wish you God-speed as you widen your horizons... ..Receiving SC more or less regularly has been a highlight of my life! Thank goodness the meetings are to continue.

**PAMELA RIHAL, Heathfield, East Sussex**

Good luck for future endeavours.

**PETER DOYE, Croydon, Surrey**

Thank you for all the work in the past and I look forward to your web site.

**JOHN TAPLIN, London**

Sorry to hear SC is coming to an end; it's been an excellent up-dating guide to many season's crop circle activities. I see your point, now that the Internet provides an even quicker service. However, we'll miss the articles. (*There will still be relevant articles!* - Ed)

**MIKE ROGERS, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire**

For the last 4 years SC magazine has provided me with an excellent source of topical debate about the crop circle phenomenon and related subjects, coming in a handy, pocket-sized read-anywhere format! Many articles have stimulated further thought and prompted me to read more books. I shall miss the magazine, especially Michael Glickman's column which never fails to make me laugh. However, I am pleased that the SCR meetings are to continue since the quality of the information disseminated at the group is always impressive and the open discussions add new perspectives to our study of the phenomenon. SCR meetings are certainly not a gathering of wacky people with wishy-washy ideas about crop circles, but a focal point which attracts a large number of highly intelligent, perceptive individuals keen to understand more about our existence. It is interesting to observe that each member of the SCR team has a specific specialist area of expertise that they bring to the group - no coincidence there, I'm sure! In my attempts to actively encourage people to come along to the SCR meetings and other similar groups, I have set up a website called Sussex Alternative Connections which provides all sorts of information about Sussex groups/events visit [www.sussexac.freeonline.co.uk](http://www.sussexac.freeonline.co.uk) to see what you're missing!!

**MELANIE GAMBRILL, Worthing, West Sussex**

Good luck and best wishes for your new project.

**GILL & BOB NICHOLAS, Bristol**

Thanks for the good work!

**RON RUSSELL, Aurora, Colorado, USA**

So sorry to learn of your demise – SC will be sadly missed.

**HALCYONE MARSH, New Milton, Hampshire**

Your journal has made a very significant mark, as will come to be seen in any history of the phenomenon, and I shall miss it in spite of having access to the Net. There really is nothing else that comes near it for informative rational discussion about the croppie world and the overall scene in general. I hope you will be able to maintain the excellent service on your new web site in due course. I do understand your personal motives and also the rational basis behind the decision to discontinue SC. It only

remains for me to wish you all success in your varied endeavours.

**JACK SULLIVAN, Crowborough, East Sussex**

Thanks a lot for the job you've done so far and for the one to follow.

**JEAN ARCHAIMBAULT, La Rochelle, France**

At the start of a new Millennium, I salute the passing of an era. SC is to be no more! At first I was sad, now, in a strange way, I am glad. You and many colleagues have done so much in this connection since issue number one – I have them all. Now you have a deserved freedom to reallocate some of your time. Well done, one and all. Although I'm not on the Internet, I'm sure news will get through to those who want to know. I am fortunate enough to live near enough to visit the famous SCR Scout Hut from time to time. Thank you and best wishes for the future.

**GRAHAM HOLMAN, Forest Row, East Sussex**

Sorry to learn that SC journal is folding. I shall no doubt miss the feeling of pleasant anticipation that comes with its appearance on my doormat, as well as its content of informative reportage on a most remarkable phenomenon. I feel certain that the SC journal, like others of its kind, will be seen to be important primary source material by future historians and others.

**DERRICK HUNT, Bromley, Shropshire**

Deep within us is the knowledge of who we truly are and it is to this part that I send my gratitude to you all at SCR and all who have been connected to SC. Our beings have been touched by the resonances of truth that this phenomenon has catalysed in our awareness and in the SC magazines, debates, meetings, symposiums, ad infinitum. Upwards and onwards.

**NICHOLAS SHAKERLEY, South Ambersham, West Sussex**

## LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

From the moment our ending was announced, letters and phone calls have been coming in to express sadness, goodwill and thanks for SC. A selection of your kind comments follow, for which, many, many thanks...

I was very sorry to read of the demise of SC. It is a bit like hearing about the death of an irritable old aunt, who I have never met, but who sent bilious letters every couple of months. I will miss SC very much.

**PETER MEARNES, Hopwas, Staffordshire**

Keep up the good work! Sad about the mag, but I look forward to the web site!

**ROBIN JOLLIFFE, Weymouth, Dorset**

Bon voyage to you... ..I am one of the 'dispossessed', an OAP rising 86 who has sent the booklets around, but will keep all intact eventually... ..I shall pass my own collection to my grandson – now 3 – when he is old enough to study and enjoy pattern, symmetry and maths... ..Very many grateful thanks for the pleasure and culture you have given me and my friends.

**PAM MCKEOWN, Eastbourne, East Sussex**

Good luck with the Internet – perhaps I don't move with the times enough! And thanks for all the team's hard work over the nine years.

**ANN APPELMELK, Nailsworth, Gloucester**

I'm very sorry about the closure of SC, as many others will be too, especially if they are not on the Net! Keep up the good work.

**MICHAEL GREEN (CCCS President), Clapham, London**

It was indeed a shock to see issue 94 will be the last of such an excellent magazine... ..Us out-of-touch types will be really missing the latest news your magazine was so good at giving. It is very understandable that the time involved every day in getting SC printed, etc. has got beyond being reasonable, but I would rather put up with a makeshift editor or something else than not to have SC at all! This also means no more dear old Glicker's column either...! Perhaps he could do a twice yearly newsletter or something? Sincere wishes to all concerned for a very successful future.

**MARGARET REVELL, Hounslow, Middlesex**

Thanks so much for all your hard work and dedication. I think this move is a great idea.

**PAULINE BLACK, Worthing, West Sussex**

I have enjoyed your publication and will look forward to seeing you on the Web. Thank you very much.

**JO SAGE, Mountainair, New Mexico, USA**

Keep the balance of my sub after the final SC. Buy a pint with it – you've done a superb job.

**MIKE BRAYSHAW, Brighton, East Sussex**

SC disappearing; it is a pity, but understandable. Thanks for all!

**JALF BEVRIJING, Aalten, The Netherlands**

I applaud your decision to change from the written format to the Web. I am often frustrated by the length of time between the appearance of a new circle (which I

find out about on the *Crop Circle Connector* web site) and your comments. The CCC does a grand job of reporting new formations, but there is no 'editorial' comment which you provide – a big part of the fun. Good luck, and I eagerly await visiting your upcoming site.

**PENELOPE MARTIN, St Catharines, Ontario, Canada**

The journal will be sorely missed. I have enjoyed the dedicated but informal and irreverent approach used in reporting the circle phenomenon (it knocks socks off the [*deleted!*] publication that I also subscribe to), and hope the style will find its way into the new look website.

**SIMON DAWES, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex**

It's about time this wretched rag met its maker. May it smoulder forever on the eternal book-burning pyre.

**DANNY SOTHAM, Clacton, Outer Mongolia**

I cannot tell you how sorry I am to hear of the demise of SC! For us non-electronics, a grievous loss. If it is not too late reconsider, reconsider! (*Sorry!* – Ed) ...A sad day for crop circle dissemination when SC goes. That being said, I can imagine the huge amount of work you have to put in and you have already done as much as anyone in 'promoting' the phenomenon to a very wide audience for which no praise can be too high. Thank you for all the work you have done; very sorry to see you go.

**BOB BOYD (Plymouth UFO Research Group), Plymouth, Devon**

As you look forward to a new era in your life with the final issue of SC and the beginning of your new website *Swirled News*, I would like to take this opportunity, as a crop circle researcher, to thank you most sincerely for your unwavering dedication to circles research and the priceless information service you have provided through the pages of SC over the last nine years. I know many people, including myself, will miss the hard copy of SC very much, but I do understand and applaud your determination to move with the times, and wish you every success as you swirl your way through 2001. Cyberspace beckons... see you there.

**CAROL COCHRANE (CCCS Chairman), London**

Sorry we shall not have the SC bi-monthly mag any more, but not surprised. You were doing so much and we would all rather you could use the time more on your research... ..Thank you for the mag/journal and I wish you well in all your research and projects. Your enthusiasm is infectious!

**MARY FREEHOLD, Reigate, Surrey**

Sorry to see SC go. Thank you for all your hard work. It was most informative – a good read!

**HILLARY COPLAND, Horsham, West Sussex**

I was very sad to read that SC was disappearing as a printed journal. But eventually I have got over the shock and am repeating to myself that in the future I can go regularly on the web and print out my own journal made up from all the information that you release on the homepage. Anyway, I'm going to miss the printed magazine. It has been a luxury to know that

without doing anything other than paying the bill, I would, every second month, receive the information about crop circles you have chosen for the readers. I have enjoyed not having to take any responsibility, but just to be *informed*. That is a luxury in our times!

**EVA-MARIE BREKKESTO, Jar, Norway**

Yes, so sad. *SC* has been a unique and much loved 'little' magazine - its format, content, thoughtful little quotes, aliveness and identity endearing it to myself - and, of course, many others. You and your team are now on to new things, as is proper - though it is a sad reflection yet again of how the Internet, and all its interconnected services, is the new God which it seems no-one can do without... Now it is time to thank you and all your team for all the issues of *SC*. I've been with you since the start, and you have provided much thoughtful comment, interest and pure pleasure of reading - all success to you for the future.

**JOHN HITCHENS, Petworth, West Sussex**

I'd like to thank you and the whole team for all the hard work you have put in producing *SC*. I am really going to miss it. I'd also like to say a very special "thank you" to Jason and Di for giving up a whole weekend last year to come and help set up the database for the WCCSG

membership list. Thanks to all, and good luck with the new website.

**DEREKA DODSON (Wiltshire Crop Circle Study Group), Devizes, Wiltshire**

The Medway Crop Circle would like to express its gratitude for all you have done for us. Since starting this group, which has had a lot of local support, we have looked to SCR as a role model. If it wasn't for so much encouragement, help and inspiration, we would probably never have got this thing off the ground... We were surprised and upset when you told us the magazine was to finish. We shall REALLY miss the BEST crop circle magazine around, but of course it's a new beginning, and we look forward to clicking onto the new web site. MCC wishes you the greatest of luck.

**ANN PEDERSEN (Medway Crop Circle), Rochester, Kent**

I am fortunate enough to own all the issues of *SC* and the question I have to ask is: just how complex must these formations be before the Establishment finally decides to let the general public know that something truly amazing is going on in our fields?

**MARTYN HICKS, Plymouth, Devon**

*Special editions of SC are the traditional forum to explain those tiny little messages which pop up down the side or (more recently) along the foot of a page once every issue. It all started as a one-off joke (see explanation in SC 50) and kind of stuck. So, for the last time, we reveal the true meaning of the cryptic messages since the last batch were explained in SC 75...*

**SC 76/77: "Happy now?":** Accompanying *Cornography*, wry acknowledgement to Glickers that the 'topless Glickman' masthead which had irked him for a whole year had finally been replaced with something more tasteful...

**SC 78: "Some Nescafe on Ice...":** Simple phrase from the REM song *The Sidewinder Sleeps Tonight*. Why? God knows.

**SC 79: "Revenge of the flying pineapples":** The flying pineapple theory of crop circles is an under-exposed but widely-held view, which states that the crop is swept down by acrobatic aerial fruit manoeuvres. First proposed by Michael Glickman as being a theory as likely as the total hoax view (held by Grant Wakefield, whose letter this quote accompanied) for which there is an equal amount of evidence...

**SC 80: "Hi, Rob!":** Your humble *SC* editor sits on the famous ITV *GMTV* couch with delectable interviewer Penny Smith, watching a monitor showing the image of one Rob Irving, standing in a formation he's just made for the TV cameras that morning. Rather charmingly, he says "Hi, Andy" to me live on air, but I don't get a chance to reply. So this quote fills in my missed opportunity to convivially respond.

**SC 81: "Three points for a pot of parmesan":** The day I put this page of *SC* together, I decide to pop out to the shops to get some cheap grated parmesan cheese to use with my lunch. I go a little too fast in a built up area. A police speed gun clocks me. I get waned into a lay-by. I get 'done'. £40 fine and three points off my driving licence. All for a pot of parmesan cheese. Buzzer.

**SC 82: "Cheers to the Irrepressible Gordon!":** A genuine thank-you note to the indeed irrepressible Gordon for putting me up one night in the coldest house in Northampton.

**SC 83: "A bad case of the heebeegee-Beebs":** Affliction resulting from terrible BBC debunk programmes such as the Doug Bower *Countryfile* fiasco, defended on the same page by its producer...

**SC 84: "No... Not the mind probe!":** Celebrated cringeworthy piece of *Dr Who* dialogue (story: *The Five Doctors*) to accompany a submitted photo of

the TARDIS in a crop circle, a happy combination of two things dear to my heart.

**SC 85: "Check it out now, Funk Soul Brother":** Our assessment of Colin Andrews's recent Rockefeller funding deserved special commemoration, hence this lyric from the *Fatboy Slim* record *The Rockefeller Skank*... Who said we weren't hip?

**SC 86: "We're waiting for your letters, Karen and Mary":** None-too subtle message to two well-known figures in the crop circle community who might have been upset by aspects of *The Stargate Conspiracy* book review above...

**SC 87: "Oh yeah... cheese":** Marketing slogan to remind people of the continuing existence of cheese, as featured in the hilarious *The Onion* satirical news web site... No connection with the adjacent article whatsoever, but a great line.

**SC 89: "Cut out and paste this message to the last issue":** For the first time since all this message business began, we forgot to insert one in *SC 88!* Hence this ironic 'replacement'.

**SC 89 #2: "Oliver Norvell Castle...":** The real message for this issue, obscurely inspired by watching too many Laurel and Hardy films with my son during its compilation. Oliver Hardy liked to stress his middle name when introducing himself; "Oliver Norvell Hardy". So here it is mutated with a crop circle location reference. Well, that's the sort of thing stress does.

**SC 90: "My door hasn't fallen off yet":** Obscure riposte to somebody who reportedly described me as "unhinged" (which I take as a great honour). Geddit?

**SC 91: "The hole truth and nothing plug the truth":** Silbury Hill starts to fall to bits... hence 'clever' pun. Sort of.

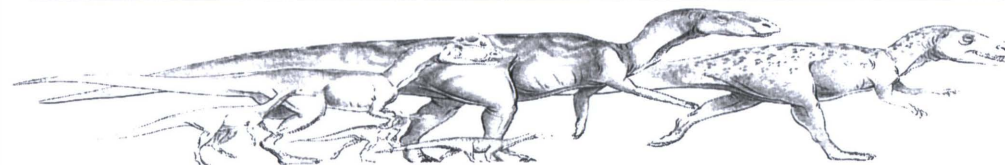
**SC 92: "Wipe the tear, baby dear, from your eye-ee...":** Applicable line from good old First World War song *Goodbye* as the forthcoming demise of *SC* is announced... Not quite as great a tragedy as family members trotting off to their doom in Flanders, admittedly, but some kind of comfort perhaps. Or maybe not.

**SC 93: "The final countdown":** Horrible old soft rock tune title for the penultimate message of the penultimate issue...

And, apart from the closing effort in this issue, that's it. We shall never see their like again. Perhaps. **AT**

# BALKING WITH DINOSAURS

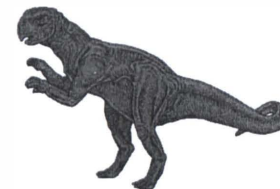
For his farewell *SC* piece, DANNY SOTHAM presents a crucial guide to the prehistoric creatures you need to watch out for in the cerealogical jungle...



Of those who have been taking the *SC* trip longer than I care to think, some may remember *Cropassic Park*, one of my earlier pieces (*SC 20*), still fondly remembered by aficionados and students of cerealogical dinosaurs. As things have moved on a little since then, I felt that for my last contribution to this journal an updated guide was in order, taking in some new species which have evolved in the last few years. My final *SC* message to you, then, is to watch out for these dinosaurs in future and tread carefully, as we go *Balking With Dinosaurs*...

## EGOTRIPPUS (*Biggus Headus*)

Often found alone in the outer wastes of the Worldwideweb, where its reputation cannot be so easily shown up by more advanced dinosaurs, this curious species is distinguished by having a very swollen head and its call of "Me-me-me" and "I'm so clever-clever-clever", which accompany wild assertions of new 'litmus tests' and deep discoveries unverified by other species. Egotrippus will never acknowledge the significance or even existence of any other dinosaur, even in its rare forays into gathering places of other Researchosaurus species, where it holds its head high and has a curious habit of looking down its nose at those around it. However, it thinks nothing of liberally robbing other nests, the contents of which it then claims for its own. Egotrippus can always be easily spotted from the distinctive poise of having its head up its own behind.



**Feeding habits:** Feeds on attention and refuses ever to eat humble pie.  
**Points scored for sighting:** Nothing but Egotrippus allowed points in its presence.

## GOLDENAGEASAURUS (*Rosetintus Mythologicus*)

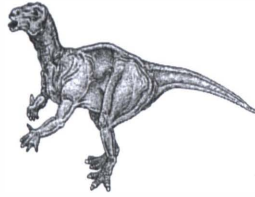
This delusional creature regularly roams croppie haunts and the Worldwideweb pastures, easily recognisable from the rose-tinted spectacles it wears. Its main distinguishing feature is the continuous noise it makes about "the good old days" and "the Golden Age" of cerealogy, a time when the world was a sunny place of harmonious balance, crop circles were treated with respect by all in the kingdom and Researchosaurus tripped gaily and freely with each other without strife or recrimination. These little whimperings are usually followed by more aggressive murmurings of how such days of bliss have been spoilt by all those nasty hoaxers and horrible upstart whipper-snapper croppies being so rude and flippant about their dinosaur forefathers. There is no cure for the genetic affliction Goldenageasaurus suffers from and there is little point in telling them that there never actually was a Golden Age and that if history ever records one, that time will actually be the very one they are frittering away right now. The only treatment, which can quell the symptoms a little, is to sit them down in a corner with another pint of ale and a copy of Jim Schnabel's book *Round In Circles* for a reality check.

**Feeding habits:** Hates hard cheese, but loves sour grapes and a nice Golden Delicious.  
**Points scored for sighting:** A hundred and one damnations.



### IGNORANODON (*Ignorant Pigguss*)

All-too common species with a brain the size of a walnut. Populating a large part of the globe, Ignoranodon makes very loud noises such as "It's all a load of old rubbish, innit?" and "Obviously it was those two old blokes what dun 'em all", often drowning out any dissenting squeaks from the more advanced, but far less common Researchosaurus. When challenged to defend itself and explain what hidden knowledge it has to support its widespread call, Ignoranodon will puff itself up into defence mode, spitting venom indiscriminately ("an' that Loch Ness Monster, that's anover load of old cobbler") or resort to distraction tactics ("anyway, let's talk about fings that really matta, not all this crap"), before finally admitting it has never seen nor studied a single real crop circle in the whole of its all-too long and pointless existence. Various sub-species, masquerading as intellectuals, can be found among the plains and wastes of the Media.



*Feeding habits:* Absorbs junk food and gives off bullshit.

*Points scored for sighting:* Five pints and a packet of pork scratchings.

### KISSASS (*Bathesin Reflectedglorius*)



This dinosaur can usually be seen following close behind the backsides of *Egotrippus* (qv) or *Theydoassureus-saurus* (qv), attaching itself parasitically to stronger species, sucking up close with reassuring mating noises and liberally feeding on the dripping secretion of 'perceived glory'. This enables Kissass to grow in stature and attain a higher elevation than would otherwise be possible in its mundane and entirely unoriginal natural state.

However, Kissass can sometimes give a vicious bite to the hand that feeds it, striking out on its own when enough glory has been absorbed to make it feel confident in its own space. This can in turn lead to outbreaks of second-hand and fuzzier secretions of 'information', often inflaming the previously sucked backside and provoking its owner to loud outcries of "plagiarism!". Some sub-species, however, never detach from the hosts they suck on, retaining their parasitic nature.

*Feeding habits:* Picks up scraps which fall from others' tables.

*Points scored for sighting:* As many as you want, sir. Oh please, go on, take more, as you're so clever.

### MATTINTHEDOCKUSS (*Crimeosaurus Proudus*)

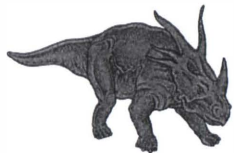
Known for its nocturnal habits of creating messy damage in crops, this increasingly common sight can also be found in fields of dock, and can be heard, standing in the dock, making its familiar call of "Yes m'lud" and "Give me back my computer, you bastard". Known to have a 'problem' with authority, this species is no respecter of land rights or property, trampling where it will, sounding its mating call of "bloody farmers, they're all earning thousands out of this anyway". Often preyed upon by the dreaded Glickuss, Mattinthedockuss is regularly seen in newspapers or preying in turn on the migrant Gulliblesaurus species [distantly related to Kissass (qv)], which attends open-mouthed in awe, irretrievably, if dumbly, caught in the web of deceitful intrigue spun before it. Mattinthedockuss can often be seen grazing in retreat at *The Barge*, sometimes in the increasingly rare company of the deadly Pauldamonodon.



*Feeding habits:* Feeds on the oxygen of publicity.

*Points scored for sighting:* £100, plus £40 costs and a criminal record.

### PTELLATALLTAIL (*Lying Bastardus*)



This species may often be found in its breeding grounds at *The Barge*, herds huddled together making an ever-growing cacophony of sound as strange tales of major UFO sightings over Silbury Hill, personal eye-witness sightings of formations appearing and other unlikely events are communicated loudly in an effort to outdo its mating rivals. However, Ptellatalltail can sometimes break out of this relatively harmless enclosed habitat and appear in the wider world on conference platforms and web sites, spreading these harmful noises and

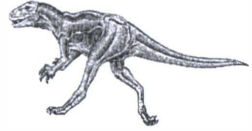
polluting the environment with something very akin to cattle excrement. When challenged to produce the important secretion known as 'evidence', these noises often unexpectedly alter to something far less confident and its true form is revealed as being a lesser relative of *Egotrippus* (qv) and *Theydoassureus-saurus* (qv).

*Feeding habits:* Can swell to twice its size after feeding on attention, but can quickly deflate.

*Points scored for sighting:* As high a figure as can be made before the truth outs.

### TEEMSATAN (*Mediawhoreus*)

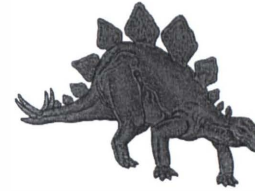
This species is ubiquitous, though very small in number, always to be seen at least four or five times every summer, making its now-familiar loud noise about the very rare examples of crop damage it has caused. A superior, if equally irritating, species to Mattinthedockuss (qv), Teemsatan can easily be spotted on TV, radio and in newspapers *ad infinitum*, having wormed its way into virtually every channel of information available. How it does this with such a low secretion rate of 'proof' is still a mystery to most students of its behaviour, given the sloppiness of its reasoning and the rarity of its works, yet it is still taken seriously by several sub-species of the very common Ignoranodon (qv). Teemsatan spends its life making media contacts and regularly preys on search engines in the pastures of the Worldwideweb, ensuring that the web it spins around itself (masquerading as a genuine interest group) draws the unwary in sooner or later.



*Feeding habits:* Laps up fees from TV companies.

*Points scored for sighting:* Very low, being exceedingly easy to spot any time during the summer.

### THEYDOASSUREUS-SAURUS (*Hot Airus*)



Though inwardly deeply insecure, this species is well known for making loud reassuring noises about big discoveries it has made, the government contacts it has, high hoax percentages and the 'inside information' which it cannot reveal, changing to aggressive growls when challenged to secrete the gooey necessity of 'evidence' by species such as the Glickuss. These warning noises then develop into high-pitched threats of "you'll be hearing from my attorney". Theydoassureus-saurus has one fatal weakness, though - it has no spine, leading to sudden unexpected withdrawals from conflicts and conferences when the going gets rough.

*Feeding habits:* Feeds on ego and second-hand information, regurgitated as fact.

*Points scored for sighting:* To be agreed only after receipt of attorney's letter.

### UNDERGROUNDUSS (*Satirist Invisibilitus*)

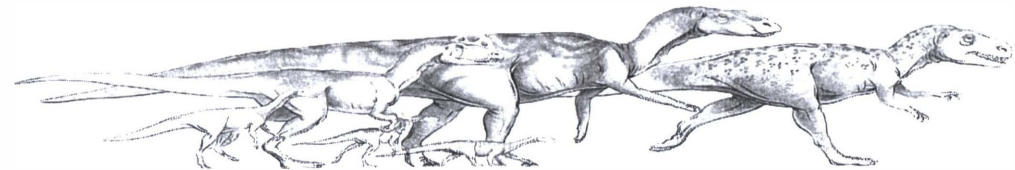
Rarely-seen and solitary dinosaur which feels it has the right to attack other species, despite staying out of the limelight and refusing to get properly involved itself. This perilous creature skirts the outer fringes of the cerealogical plateau, observing the odd behaviour of others from a distance before unexpectedly going for the jugular. Can easily be spotted performing just such predatory manoeuvres through satirical venom-spitting in the pages of journals like, er, **SC**, er...



*Feeding habits:* Feeds on the misfortune and perceived failings of others.

*Points scored for sighting:* Very sharp ones.

So don't forget, these strange and dangerous creatures are roaming freely about your world... Keep 'em peeled. Thank you for listening all these years. **DS**



# CLOSURE

A Short Story

by

MICHAEL GLICKMAN

## Introduction

**This is the first time I have written fiction for SC and it is a fiction. It is a story, an invention, a narrative, a fable, an entertainment. I do not believe it to be true nor, in the slightest detail, to approximate reality. Can I be clearer than that? I am in no doubt, however, that despite these protestations, some people will believe the veracity of this supremely paranoid tale. Caveat emptor.**

**Michael Glickman**

The entire staff of CC2, five of us, sat silently at the huge table. We were all preoccupied with the rumours that Bradford was about to shut us down. It had been common knowledge for days, but only this morning had he announced the meeting. We were all in awe of him. He had an almost magical reputation in the organisation; he seemed far too senior, powerful and mysterious for our tiny crop circle operation.

"He's coming" said Alli and the door opened. Bradford moved quickly to his chair and his companion sat down next to him.

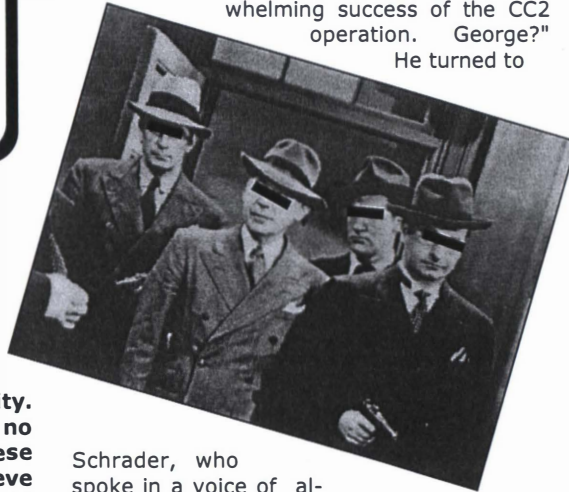
"Many of you will have met Colonel Schrader from the US Embassy. He has been our liaison officer for the last few months and he's here simply to observe."

There were nods and slightly stilted smiles around the table. We knew Schrader well. Officially he was a Cultural Attache, but we all knew he was agency.

"I think you all know why we're here" said Bradford looking around the room, his eyes, as always, floating a few inches above our heads. "We are closing the unit down and I

will be meeting with each of you to discuss your reallocation. I want you all to understand that this is entirely a tactical decision. There is no real or implied criticism of the group or any of its members. Indeed, much of the reason for closure is the overwhelming success of the CC2 operation. George?"

He turned to



Schrader, who spoke in a voice of almost unnatural depth. "For our part we have been delighted. I was not present, as several of you were, in 1990 and 1991 when CCs 1 and 2 were set up, but we never imagined how successfully they would achieve their objectives."

Bradford seemed embarrassed by the effusive praise and, quickly clearing his throat, continued. "As you know, both departments were set up as a response to the appearance of the crop circles. CC 1 was to collate information, both on the ground and from aerial and satellite surveillance. They have successfully maintained a varying number of sleepers among what I would ironically call 'the crop circle community' for ten years..." He smiled at the ceiling.

"Some of you - we'll be talking of this later - will be moving to CC 1 in Salisbury."

He shifted his skeletal body in the chair. "CC2 - you people - was set up to organise disinformation and confusion on the ground. It was always felt that contacts between the two units should be limited. Frankly, the less you people knew about what was really going on, the better. Not that CC 1 has had any great success." He said this bitterly, raising his eyes even higher. "They seem to have even less understanding of these events than 'the

croppies'...!"

"Our first operation, Doug and Dave, in 1991 was greeted with some derision by the community and it was at this stage that friends of ours..." - he glanced at Schrader - "...became involved."

Schrader, understanding he had permission, went on. "We put Schnabel in and that taught us several lessons. Not the least of which was the astonishing ease of local recruitment." He pronounced this with heavy irony.

Bradford resumed. "Through the mid-90s we saw how difficult the task was. These people were stubborn and determined. For many of them the hoax idea was flawed, if not completely ludicrous. We brought in more people on the ground and, for a while, we seemed to be making headway. Oliver's Castle was critical. CC 1 immediately understood the importance of the event and called us in to clean up right away. But there was no way they could have known that the boy Weyleigh would be there with his camera. He got to *The Barge* before we could neutralise him and you all know what happened then. We activated a couple of our sleepers and the matter was fundamentally extinguished."

He paused for a moment. The Oliver's Castle episode still irked him. "I remain convinced that the name 'Team Satan' was a serious error," he favoured Schrader with a cool glance and went on, "but certainly the idea of finding a few disaffected young men with internet skills was a good one. But even with them actively in place, I felt we were losing the game. Then, as you all know, Tim had an idea." He actually looked at Tim before his eyes, as though on elastic, rose again to the upper part of the wall. "You know, I was not initially enthusiastic. What was it, three years ago? We started developing the notion that our hoaxers were now not only making the circles but seeing light phenomena and experiencing what these people call 'time anomalies'. They were to represent themselves as a component part of the phenomenon. Language! Language! How important words are! We put one of our Psych-Op people on this and he came up with 'Human Crop Circle Facilitators'. We roared with laughter, but - PhD he was - he was adamant it would work. Sure enough, they swallowed the whole thing."

He paused to make one of his signature theatrical snorts.

"You'll all remember how easy it was. They hardly ever had to actually *make* a circle. Just hang around that wretched pub - what's it called? - *The Barge*, and the sheep simply ate up whatever our people fed them. Without question! Couldn't get enough of it! The same with their 'spiritual contacts'. In the classic way, we first mentioned the idea and then, over a year or so we developed it. You will remember that by then we had virtually abandoned the goal of persuading these people that the majority were hoaxed. Even our active plants were regarded with scorn at this time. So the goal shifted to distraction. How could we find a way to simply distract them from their work? Some of these people were getting far too close. They had to be... diverted."

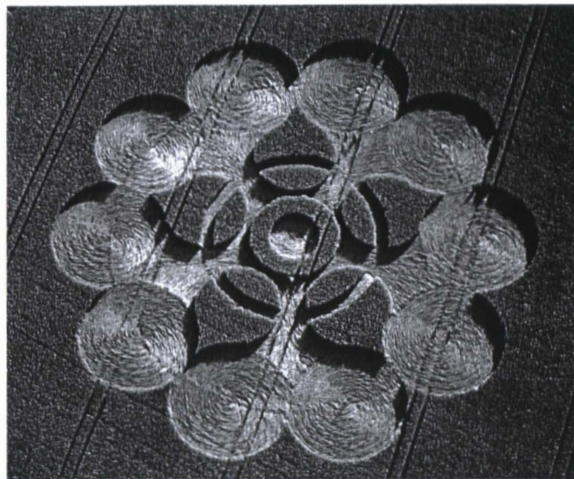
"Or discredited" Schrader added. "Of course, we had always seen the potential of splitting the community. This is a classic propaganda and disinformation technique and at this time we decided to activate a couple more of our sleepers."

"And the result," said Bradford, smiling at the picture rail, "has been beyond our wildest dreams! Half of them actually believe that the 'facilitators', as they now call them, are truly in 'spiritual contact'" - he smiled at Schrader - "with the circle forces, while the other half are at each others' throats. There won't be much serious investigation there for a year or two!" Schrader, who by now had gained a little courage, said "Of course, one or two of our people overstepped the mark. They really have started to take things too personally. They will be dealt with in due course."

"I warned you about amateurs, and especially stupid ones" said Bradford, continuing "and so, you see, we have completed our task. It is possible that this operation will eventually be seen as an exemplar: manipulating events and false information so that the target population destroys itself. This is why CC2 is to be closed. I congratulate you all. Your congratulations - and indeed your rewards - would have been more substantial if the target had not been so easy, so compliant and, above all, so gullible."

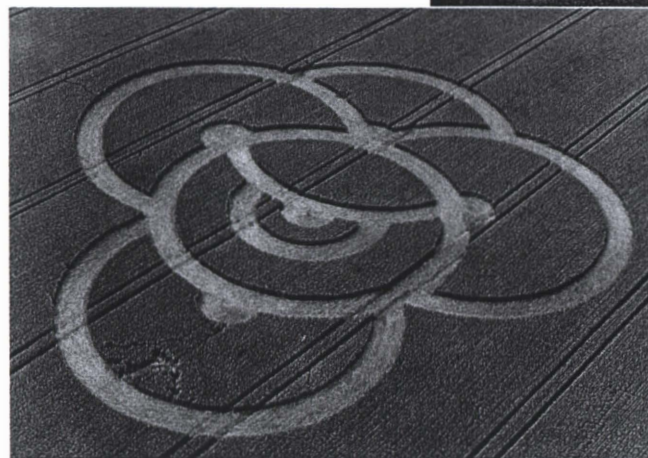
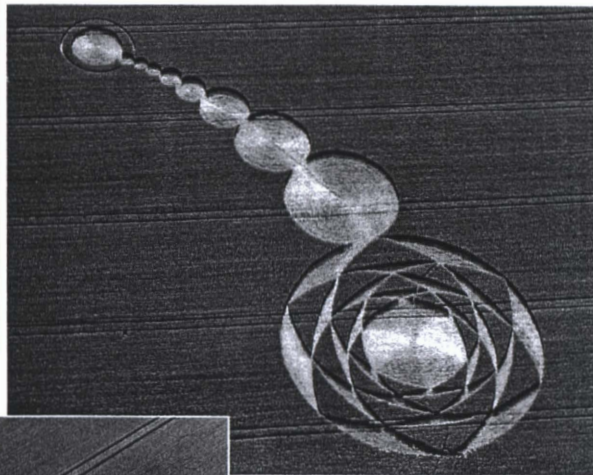
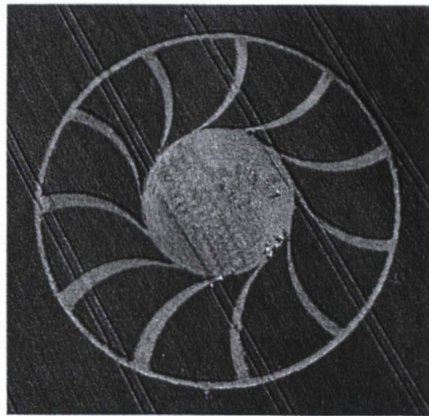
**THE END**

**Michael Glickman  
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LEFT: Martinsell Hill, Wiltshire, 10th August. Report: SC 92. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

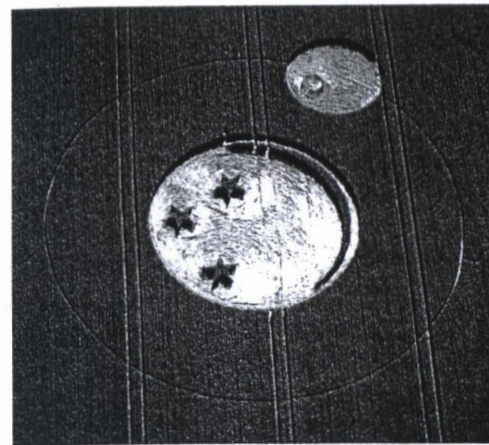
BELOW: North Down, Beckhampton, Wiltshire, 25 July. Report: SC 92. Photo: LUCY PRINGLE



MIDDLE LEFT: Giant's Grave, Oare, Wiltshire, 3rd August. Report: SC 92. Note the - deliberate? - geometrical inconsistencies in one of the ringed segments. Photo: LUCY PRINGLE

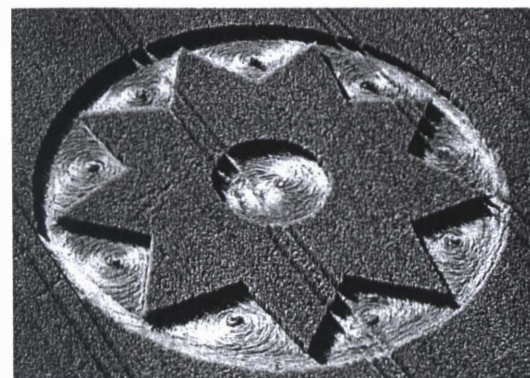
ABOVE: Uffington, Oxfordshire, 22 July. Report: SC 92. This appeared not far from the famous white horse. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

LEFT: Bishops Cannings, Wiltshire, 26 July. Report: SC 92. The 'carpet beater'! Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER



ABOVE: Pewsey, Wiltshire, 7th August. Report: SC 92. There seems a very astronomical look to this - could the orbiting circle represent Jupiter, the thin ring being its 'red spot'? Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

RIGHT: Chilbolton, Hampshire, 13th August. Report: SC 92. A response to the radio telescope...? Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER



# FORMATIONS 2000 GALLERY #4

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 02392 352867  
e-mail: temporarytemples@netscapeonline.co.uk



LEFT: Patcham/Hollingbury, East Sussex, 12th August. Report: SC 92. One of the more elaborate recent Sussex patterns. Photo: MICHAEL HUBBARD

BELOW LEFT: All Cannings, Wiltshire, 8th August. Report: SC 92. Note the gorgeous sculpted swirls in each segment of the pattern. Photo: STEVE ALEXANDER

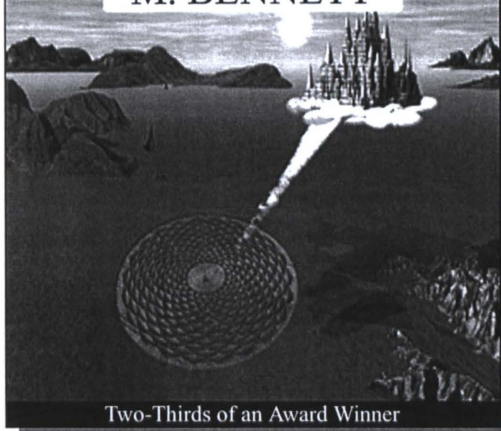
BELOW RIGHT: Sompting, West Sussex, around 10th August. Report: SC 92. A thin trail of laid single stems lay behind standing unaffected stalks along each perimeter. Photo: MICHAEL HUBBARD. And with a Sussex formation - where it all began for SC - here seems an appropriate place to end!



# LEWIS JOTTER

and the Circles of Niarg

M. BENNETT



Two-Thirds of an Award Winner

## Lewis Jotter and the Circles of Niarg

### CHAPTER ONE Vastermind

Lewis Jotter held the H-shaped envelope gingerly in front of him while thinking furiously about what to do next. An Amber Gambler was whizzing around him, appearing and disappearing, urging him to open the Hunch, for that's what it was. The Witch & Wizard (Witzas) Code decreed that he either return the whole thing unread or open it and follow his Hunches immediately. Lewis knew where it had come from because Amber Gamblers were the Firewall Postal Service of the Witzas Inti-Tut (Internet address: [www.wit.nit/plc](http://www.wit.nit/plc)). They were, in fact, the dots in the Internet address. Currently hovering above the Upside Downs in southern England, *Nitwitzend* (the student's name for the huge Inti-Tut) had been specially built in gothic-fantasy style and encoded from cellars to attics with mythological designs and mathastromical proportions.

After magic school most Witzas went to one of 13 different Inti-Tuts, each specialising in a particular subject. Crop Circles was the *Nitwitzend* speciality. The Inti-Tut operated in reverse to magic school, being there during 'holidays' and not there in 'term time'. However, it was precisely because of the careful architectural planning and encoding within *Nitwitzend* that these Witzas were able to harness their Witz, take a

Vastermind (the Witzas' degree) and still live seemingly ordinary lives. They also gained intuitive understanding into many things. First year students thought that everyday life was like term time and that Witz activity meant holidays; second years knew better on both counts. Third years knew that one-third was actually slightly more than two-thirds and as a result immediately became fourth years, even though there was no fourth year course at *Nitwitzend* - allegedly. Upon realising something of all these matters, the Witzas completed P. Art Won of the Vastermind.

From all of this, you might be inclined to think that the place never existed at all - especially since it could only be reached by taking the *Upside Down Spinner* from platform nineteen point four-seven at Victoria station. This transporter was an experimental spinning-disk-system running under the supervision of Professor L.R. Thin (HyperD.Tech) so its general design and appearance tended to change from holiday to holiday, as did the location of *Nitwitzend*. However, at the beginning of every student's personal holiday it was always hovering over the Upside Downs. *Thin's Spinner* operated once a day during holidays, not at all during term time, and never as far as Luggles were concerned - because Luggles haven't had active Witz for over six generations and only a hyper-happening will switch it back on. Although Luggles could no longer hear their Witz, all Luggles attend *Nitwitzend's* night school during their sleep, so that their Witz can hypernate at the right rate for at least part of the time. Witches and Wizards come about because their owners use their Witz all the time. Some Witzas, expelled from *Nitwitzend* for their unfortunate inability to keep to the 'light side' of the corridors, change into Deniators: those who can still hear their Witz but won't listen to it and are prepared to interfere in order to suppress any outward signs of Witzness occurring in the world. So in one way or another everyone has a hypernating Witz.

And thankfully, Deniators give themselves away quite often, being addicted to *Prigley's Gloomig Gum* which they chew endlessly - favourite flavours: *sneer* and *boast*.

Tired of watching Jotter's thought processes, the now-nearly-bursting-with-impatience-Amber Gambler swooped on him at tremendous speed. Feeling the Gambler before he saw it, Lewis made up his mind, tore open the envelope, flung the empty H in the air and watched it disappear into the golden flickering light. "So that's what the Snitch does when it's not playing Quidditch" he thought, as the Gambler vanished, all bets now off.

The Hunch was from Buzztop Bumblebore. All 13 further education magical establishments are under the holographic tutelage of a crystal skull, and their heads have titles honouring the great Albus

Dumbledore of Hogwarts and all Inti-Tut-Ors were known as Skullkas. Lewis Jotter saw that what old Buzzers had written was going to give him a holiday and a half, and probably a headache too:

Jotter: P. Art Too: Crop Circles Common Scents /versionSC  
Where and when will P.Hi ley by (22x14) + (13x8)?  
What or Who is 4/7<sup>th</sup> of the E.P.O.N.A.?  
Why is virtually 27.2 almost certainly the Witz hypernate key?

Although delighted to know that Buzzers thought him qualified in P. Art Won - he wasn't quite sure whether these questions were a beginning or an ending - you never could tell with old Beebore. Quite often his questions were really answers and you'd only know the real question by becoming the disguised Answer. Or perhaps 'Bee-ing', as Bumbors had set them. He'd have to think about it. Ignoring his broomstick in favour of his car he set off from his house near the Upside Downs and drove in Witz fashion (about which more much later) westwards. Lewis knew that the best place for complicated thinking was *The Honey Sweet*, a pub much frequented by his crop circle colleagues. It was August 12<sup>th</sup> and late in the season and he wondered if anyone would be there to help him decode his Hunches without grousing.

As a result of their mental affinity with their Vastermind subject, Bumblebore's Witzas were naturally drawn into one of three shapes - the Circlebuffs, the Glyphindoors and the Claimemfoax. Although deemed foolhardy by their Skullkas and those they left behind, a minority of Witzas would shift from one shape to another.

The Circlebuffs were the largest shape (a sphere) and consisted of the journalists, photographers, filmmakers, writers, mathematicians and artists who, with great enthusiasm, used their Witz to promote awareness of 'Crop Circles' to all and sundry. Gregarious, jolly folk, they had two designated Skullkas: Professor P.C. MacApple (Comps/Tech) and Doktor Blad Hassle (photo/sven). Circlebuffs were mostly ex-Hufflepuffs with some Ravenclaws (magic school pupils will understand).

The Glyphindoors were the smallest shape (an inverted tetrahedra) and a much quieter lot, tending towards the outer edges of mythological hypertechno interpretation - to the extent of calling their subject 'Crop Glyphs'. They had naturally chosen Professor L.R. Thin for their Skullka, but they rarely saw him even when he was there, as he was generally doing hyperdimensional research. However, as a result they did get to 'see' a lot of the action. Their name reflected the fact that they were rarely spotted in *The Honey Sweet*, preferring to gather away from the crowd. Indeed, their mutterings were seemingly so hermetic that the other two shapes wondered if Glyphindoors (ex-Gryffindors with some Ravenclaws) would ever get to the end of their Vasterminds and even if they did, would anyone else understand their answers? There was a lot of amicable opinion exchanged between the Circlebuffs and the Glyphindoors, but none at all between these two shapes and the Claimemfoax.

These ex-Slytherins (with some Ravenclaws) were relatively few, but very fierce. Much given to airing unsubstantiated opinions on their Vastermind subject, they could hardly be bothered with Bumblebore's philosophical answer-questions, preferring the practical side of the subject; they considered themselves as facilitators in their chosen field(s). Hating 'Glyph', and avoiding 'Crop Circle' as much as possible, many of them called it 'circlemaking' or 'Landscape art'. The Claimemfoax did not have a defined shape. Rather they created a shadow of themselves which naturally evolved according to their numbers, and these were dependent on the time of the month; Deniators sometimes joined them and a few pragmatic Luggles used them. They hadn't designated a Skullka for, in their opinion, they had no need. Bumblebore disagreed and without their knowledge assigned Professor F.T. Tape (Not Metres) to monitor the Claimemfoax. Which was bad luck for them because Tape measured everything he came across and kept a tally on his Future Ruler of those who squared the circles. Their time would come.

Glyphindoors and Circlebuffs who found their P. Art Too questions beyond their Witz would mostly shape shift to the Claimemfoax and then denounce their former colleagues as naïve fools or worse; none would regret their move, but some would pretend to do so, reshifting to their former shape as agents for the Claimemfoax, in an attempt to reduce the Vastermind Crop Circle degree course to one dimension.

As Lewis was thinking these interesting thoughts about his Vastermind subject, he reached the end of A 272, the Transdimensional Highway leading from the eastern Upside Downs towards the western Upside Downs. He then found himself approaching the important but invisible boundary marker at Cheesefoot Head, measured in statute feet, hence the name (those who've read the adventure book will understand). Whistling loudly as he sensed it, Lewis Jotter hung a right and headed north towards *The Honey Sweet* and Pi-way 361. He was 23 hours and 56 minutes away from 'when' and whistling himself nearer and nearer to 'where'.

"I've started, so I'll finish." He thought to himself. **(To be continued..?)**

With acknowledgements to J.K.R. & Harry.  
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## PARTING SHOTS

Your last chance to hear the thoughts and ruminations of the SC team, in these pages at least, as they bid their farewells...

### MICHAEL GLICKMAN

Making our way along the endless beautiful corridors



Looking back over the six years of my association with this funny little mag and its radiant team, my overwhelming feeling is of gratitude. I start out with the sense that I am the luckiest man on the planet to be so closely involved, for most of my waking life, with this charmed and charming phenomenon. To

have had the chance - in addition - to write a column for SC was not the cream on the cake. It was cream on top of the cream.

I have told this story before, but it's good enough to bear repeating. When, in 1991, John Michell asked me to write a regular column for *The Cerealogist* I was shocked, though delighted. "But, John," I said, "I don't know anything about the crop circles."

"Exactly, my dear" he replied, and there started my career - unique, I suppose - as a crop circle columnist.

With Michell's departure after three years, the tone of *The Cerealogist* became hoax-obsessed under its replacement editor. I resigned immediately, grateful that I had contributed to the glowing early issues of that journal. The ceremonial handover from John Michell to George Wingfield took place at the 'Cornference' in Dorchester in 1994 and I had laboriously crafted a realistic Olympic torch to be symbolically passed on. The burning part was a pack of candles melted together into the kind of unit I felt would be necessary to give a theatrical enough flame for the occasion. When it was lit it ignited like a five foot blowtorch and the portent of the handover was dwarfed by the threat of imminent conflagration.

I always look back and feel that flame (though I swear it was not deliberate) was a premonition of what was to follow.

And so SC, or *Sussex Circular* as it then was, asked

me to move in. There was a gap, but I realise I have been writing a crop circle column for more than 10 years. And to have worked with the two best editors we had!

So the old ship goes down, and where has she beached us? This season will be the tenth anniversary of the great Doug and Dave scam and where are we?

At the end of this difficult transitional phase, I was overwhelmed to realise something so obvious that I call it Axiom One. It is as follows: Everything to do with hoaxing is untruthful. *Everything* to do with hoaxing is untruthful. This ranges from the unrelenting straight lies from the usual deceivers to the evasions, economies with the truth, dissemblings and incomplete disclosures from those who used to be researchers.

Here is a fact. I was around at the time of D & D and I have watched the unfolding of the unsavoury cast since then. I cannot look back and put my finger on one single truthful element, one unquestionable fact, in the whole polluting hoax story. Can you? I had hoped that, when passed through the courts, the recent prosecution might provide a single small rock of veracity, but even this event has been clouded by a strident revisionism.

Why do we never learn? We are closer here to the numinous and wondrous than most people could dream of and yet recent events have brought a level of abuse, ugliness and dishonesty beyond my experience.

I also realise, and I must apologise here to my readers, that I have given these matters too much energy. Please forgive me. I felt I had to speak against the unremitting (and still continuing) tide of debunking, trivialisation and raw falsehood.

We have received a wonderful gift. Somehow, from somewhere, with no explanation, we have been given an enormous and magical palace. It has a thousand elaborate rooms and chambers and galleries, each packed with exquisite art and furniture and curiosities. Each of us is able to find our own way along the endless beautiful corridors. We can open any door which intrigues us. Am I alone in believing that we might find enlightenment, or at least wisdom, through one of these enchanting doors?

(Many of our erstwhile colleagues prefer to descend the stairs to the dank and gloomy cellars in search of rats. Crop circle research as forensic investigation! With 'Detective Agencies'! Well, bless the ratcatchers, too.)

It has been a pleasure to be on Captain Thomas's crew. We did not always agree, but we never disagreed. I stand in awe at his achievement in piloting this tiny vessel so successfully through so many gales. And without the Support and Loyalty of our Dear Readers, where would we have been? Thank you. **MG**

Photos by MARCUS ALLEN, KAREN DOUGLAS & ELTJO HASELHOFF

## KAREN DOUGLAS

A reassuring constant in a world of shifting opinion



There are many things that could be said about the virtues and accomplishments of SC, its international success and wide appeal. It has, to quote one advert, reached the parts that other crop circle journals cannot reach. It has, despite its humble design and production, simply become one of the true bastions

of crop circle research.

No doubt some of its success has been due to its regularity (originally monthly), its commitment to listing crop circle reports as they happen and to having regular galleries of images. However, where SC has flourished has undoubtedly been in its commentary. It takes courage to enter into the world of the commentator. Being a voice often puts you in a position of vulnerability, leaving you open to personal attack, especially if your comments have been critical. It takes much personal robustness to live with the knocks as well as the praise, and this often sees you placed on sides you don't really occupy but appear to simply because you have said something that has upset someone. Having a voice also places a large burden of responsibility on your shoulders. Trying to be fair and just whilst holding onto your idea of the truth is a delicate and precarious line to walk. It isn't an exact science, and even if it were, Lord knows, none of us are perfect. That responsibility means having to live with your mistakes, and a constant strife for fairness and balance is always being fought.

The thing I have most admired about Andy Thomas and SC has been their struggle for civility in an often uncivil crop circle community. What do I mean by civility? Well, certainly not politeness; civility and politeness have little in common with one another. By civility, I mean the struggle for integrity in the face of knocks; saying something because you believe it to be true even though you know the flack will be quick in coming; living with, and learning from, the knocks, finding new and better ways to say what you want to say in an honest and open manner; soul-searching, for balance and fairness and the realisation that you are only part of something much bigger. Sometimes, in the search for true civility, it becomes inevitable that you are going to hurt someone's feelings. I have nearly always found that SC has handled its responsibility with courage, honesty and commitment when faced with such dilemmas. If you remain unconvinced by this, try it sometime.

The commentary SC has provided has been crucial in raising and debating the serious issues which affect this subject. It has often been a forum for an exchange of views on numerous subjects in which many people have been able to take part and, at the very least, it has kept many informed and up to date with the latest questions, issues and news. Perhaps this has also been part of its success - it has always kept people included in the loop and not excluded them from the big debates. Rigorous and open debate, as any wise man will tell you, is part of the process of walking the road to wisdom. That is why I am so pleased that this vital part of SC's tradition will be kept on and expanded at [swirlednews.com](http://swirlednews.com). This type of incisive commentary is so very hard to find - most knowing all too well the commitment and risk involved! So it is with a glad heart that I bid SC a fond farewell and wish every success to *Swirled News*.

So where does all this leave us? The crop circles still continue to appear despite our debates and arguments. I find them a reassuring constant in a world of shifting opinion. Their gentle non-threatening presence is the perfect antidote to an often stormy vista.

For me, the crop circles have grown to be my most beloved of teachers, both in the manner of their appearance, their demeanour and in the wisdom of what they can teach us about our environment and, most importantly, ourselves. I believe the crop circles can teach us a new way of being and a new way of manipulating our environment which is both in complete harmony with the natural world and at the same time non-harmful. I also believe there are greater things yet to be learned. The circles have taught me much about the way in which this world is constructed and designed - and the fact that it *is* constructed and designed! Most profoundly, they teach a way of using this 'natural science' to heal and expand human consciousness - what more important or timely lesson for humanity could there be? **KD**

## MARTIN NOAKES

Not rocket science, but common sense

As I sit in front of my computer screen, ready to type my last article for SC, I realise that were it not for crop formations I wouldn't have met up with and befriended some of the most interesting and fun people I have had the pleasure to meet.

I have had quite a few monumental days in my life, some very



high and some very low, however, 10 years on, and I can still remember the effect that entering my first formation had on me. It was then, and continues to be, a life changing experience, challenging at times, but one I always knew would steer me into uncharted territories. Once that kind of curiosity is triggered, there's no turning back!

The strange thing is that, realistically, we are no closer now than we have ever been to unmasking the creators of these masterpieces, but maybe this is how it's supposed to be; an enigma that lodges in our subconscious, willing us to let go of dogmatic views in order to encompass a new and profound look at the nature of life and the world around us.

Personally I now find it increasingly more difficult to deny the existence of the spiritual aspect of humanity, and I believe that our only hope of salvation is a return to the attitude of ancient cultures. It's now time to re-introduce respect. Respect for our fellow man, and respect for our environment.

The world is in a terrible state and we *can* change it! But it starts with us as individuals. We don't need to be told what to do, it's obvious! If we continue to allow the planet to be raped unnecessarily for financial gain, then we are as guilty as the companies raping the planet. *It's not rocket science, it's common sense.*

This may not sound like the result of 10 years of crop circle research, but a major part of my thinking has been transformed due to it. I am proud to have been involved with this magazine, and have not encountered a more honest publication since it first went into print.

I applaud Andy Thomas, who has put in more work to enable this magazine to reach you than I care to even think of, as well as: John Cole, Debbie Pardoe, Nigel Tomsett, Jason Porthouse, Di Brown, Barry, Jean & Stan Reynolds and anyone else who has contributed their time over the years. Without these people it would not have been possible.

I can't explain why, but very early on in my research I came to the conclusion that: Crop Circles = Maths, and Music = Maths, therefore Crop Circles = Music. I have no idea why this is important, but I feel it is... **MM**

## JASON PORTHOUSE & DI BROWN

The first step on the path  
of self-awareness

So, this is the last ever SC. The LAST EVER. No more. Finito. End. SC sleeps with da fishes. OK, you've gathered that by now - but it still

hasn't quite sunk in with us yet. We're in denial. That's the only reason for feeling this sanguine about the demise of our esteemed journal, isn't it? Unless... maybe it's just the *right time*.

The circles themselves have a right time. They are transitory - they have progression. Simple circles from the 1980's have a vintage air to them now. They almost appear quaint when compared to the majesty of today's works of art, designs that we could scarcely have dreamt of a decade ago. That the circles occur at all is magical. That they don't blow our minds completely - that is progress.

SC has mirrored that progress, from a single photocopied sheet to - well, okay, a number of lasercopied sheets lovingly folded and stapled together. It has endured, matured even, reflecting the evolution from excited, child-like wonder to more serious debate, always tempered with humour and affection. It has charted the rough journey many researchers have endured, the highs and the lows, the wonderful and the crudely mundane. It would be nice to think that in a couple of centuries, some expert on *Antiques Holoshow* will unearth a complete set of SCs and, ruminating over their mottled brown pages, utter the immortal words "Well, they're worth bugger all, actually..."

In all seriousness, SC has documented a phenomenon that will, with hindsight, either prove to be the biggest hoax ever perpetrated on mankind or a turning point in the evolution of humanity. We hope - and believe - that the latter will be true. We all play a huge part in steering the progress of this wonderful story, which begs the question - what happens in the next chapter?

Anyone looking in from the 'outside' would still see a community in flux. Arguments fly back and forth as new theories get bandied about, some with merit, some without. Ripples of excitement and anger emanate from the latest stone lobbed from the rumour-mill of the hoaxers. Researchers fall by the wayside and others take their place, eager to stake their claim on the truth. Come to think of it, nothing has really changed in the years that have passed since SC 75 - or SC 50 come to that. Look back if you can and see what was written then, and think on this - whilst we argue about the whys and wherefores, the phenomenon continues to evolve. Are we keeping up? Will we get left behind?

It is often said that we attract that which we need in order to progress. If this is the case, anyone interested in crop circles has been given a pretty steep learning curve, with little in the way of course notes. There's lots of opportunity for background reading (recommended starter pack includes sacred geometry, ancient wisdom, a little conspiracy research, anything by God, Mo-



ammed, Buddha - although some suspect these may be a *nom de plume* for someone else), but if you're expecting a structured syllabus you may be a little disappointed. And the final exam? Well, no one knows when it is, or if it even exists. A few dates have been bandied about - 2012 seems to be a prominent one, but this could be the graduation ceremony. Some have even suggested that we're taking the test at this moment! Whatever the truth, our capacity for love may well feature very highly in the final mark.

In SC 75 some wag wrote that it was time for us all to put what we have learned (remembered?) to practical use. The end of SC plays a part in this. On a personal level, we both feel happy to have been a part of its life, but we will also embrace the possibilities presented by its passing. We all have a golden opportunity to *do good things* - for ourselves, for others, for the planet. If the circles galvanise us into taking the first step on the path of self-awareness, their provenance is of little importance. We should not allow the petty arguments of man to eclipse this truth.

Oh - and one other thing. We'll both be glad to never lick a stamp or stuff another envelope for a very, very long time. Much love and light to you all. **JP/DB**

## BARRY REYNOLDS

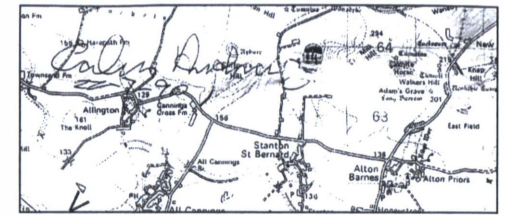
You know it's all over  
when the fat lady sings



Write a "final" article he said.

A "final" article, wow! That sounds kind of - final! But things are far from over in the cerealogical world; in fact they are only really just beginning. Maybe that is why I am struggling to put fingertips to keyboard. It is not all over, far from it. SC may be drawing to a logical conclusion, but the phenomenon will continue, SCR meetings will continue and the new website will arise phoenix-like from the ashes. Nevertheless, let us use this final article to take a selfish look back at what has been an amazing and life-changing journey from *The Sussex Circular* issue 1, through to SC issue 94. In fact, to go back to my beginning, we need to travel back to 22nd July 1990 when I found myself standing in the original East Field pictogram. I remember it as if it were only yesterday; you don't forget life-changing days easily, and I know the date as I got a famous crop circle researcher I met there to sign and date my O.S. map (see picture)! Still, I'm sure it will be collectable one day!

Then what a ride it has been through highs and



highers (I have never experienced a 'low' in crop circle research). Many have been and gone during this time, but the true researchers still remain and hopefully will continue to do so. The doers and shakers are still doing and shaking, the likes of Glickers, Lucy, the Headmaster, Karen and Steve, BLT and Andy. Andy, now there is someone I should mention.

Here in Sussex we have always been known as a 'team'. With 'The Team' producing 'The Mag'. But when it comes down to it, although everyone on 'The Team' does their bit, Andy does a bigger bit than the others. So let us firstly just say a BIG thanks and sloppy kisses to Martin, Jason and Di for masses of hard work, and then other thanks to John Cole, Debbie Pardoe and Nigel Tomsett for their work in the past, before getting back to Andy. It is impossible to quantify the amount of effort that Andy has put into 'The Mag' over the years, but Kaye, his crop circle widow, is well aware. If I had a medal I would award it to Andy for 'Meritorious Conduct in the Field of Crop Circle Reporting'. Unfortunately I do not have a medal, but then Andy does not have a chest to pin it on anyway! Ha ha! (NB. for those of you, and we know who you are, who are devoid of a sense of humour, the prior sentence is a joke which 'The Team' will chuckle childishly about. It is the second one in this article, but only a few will have spotted the first. A third now follows; on a clear night, if you look outside, you may be able to see Uranus). Oh, how I digress. Where was I? Oh, yes, Andy; it has been worth it. A round of applause and a quick toast. OK, that's enough.

On a personal note, I may have been a little quiet on the public front recently (I have 'retired' from public lecturing; 73 in seven years was quite enough!), which has led people to believe that I have gone away, but I have not. From my point of view, my beliefs have never foundered. They are still as they have always been - Dr Levensgood, John Burke and Nancy Talbott saw to that. Several years of hard grafting in the fields for the BLT team proved beyond any doubt that real science is involved here.

Which is why I felt a "final" article was hard to write. As Andy has now discovered, my half-page article has rambled on, but he is used to that and as the editor I am used to him cutting out half of my article...

Now, about that fat lady. Can you hear her yet?

**BR**

**A phenomenon of beauty to a few, a pointless blot on the landscape to most others.** An enclosure of sacred space or a human folly. A symbol of hope? A meaningless joke?

Yes, the Millennium Dome, Tony Blair's bequeathed gift to the British nation, generated critical dismissal like no other public happening in living memory. Except perhaps crop circles.

There are certainly many cerealogical lessons to be learned from looking at the treatment metered out to the Dome from the ever-negative British public. It was intended as a symbol of humankind's achievements, a place of celebration to unite technology and the soul – and, of course, prove Britain was still 'Great', by the demonstrative ability to build such a monumental edifice. How proud we would all be!

Anyone on this side of the Atlantic knows the overwhelming reception the Dome actually had – scepticism, cynicism, dark critical reviews bordering on hatred, and public indifference. For one long year, the Dome was the ultimate media cannon fodder, portrayed as an unhideable empty symbol to the squandered resources of a government the press had been just waiting to pounce on after the initial euphoria of New Labour's landslide election in 1997. The Dome was the perfect chink in the armour.

The Dome, as an attraction at least, was to be open for just a single year. As autumn 2000 came and the much desired demise of 'Blair's folly' drew ever closer, I found myself wondering whether I had been told the truth about it. Should I check it out myself, just to formulate my own opinion? Everyone seemed to *have* an opinion on the Dome, after all – despite the fact that only a handful of those mouthing them had actually been there. My cue to go came when attending a live audience debate with Michael Grade, one-time controller of the Channel 4 TV station and well-known media mogul. As a director of the Dome, he was grilled as to his real feelings about it – but his support remained firm. I sensed a light behind his eyes when he spoke of his charge – it was clear he genuinely *believed* in it.

So, with just weeks to closure, my family and I set off one early December weekday to explore the Dome for ourselves and make up our own minds.

And it was, of course, wonderful.

Flawed in places, yes, and clearly financially mismanaged, but a towering achievement all the same, in more ways than one. The Dome itself

was a thrilling structure, more impressive in reality than in pictures, its great gantries thrusting upwards into the east London skies. But only inside did the scale of the place hit – a massive enclosure, filled with a fantastic assortment of colourful architecture which dazzled and dizzied, inducing a

euphoric vertigo as one gazed up at it. Rainbow auras of light were splashed liberally onto the inside of the tent-like surface, creating shifting atmospheres and moods as you walked around the perimeter. The central auditorium itself was perhaps the most breathtaking aspect, a vast spacious womb, enclosed by draped blue curtains which soared upwards to radiating petals of steel. Some indoor structures entomb and deaden, but not the Dome – this truly

felt like a sacred space had been created, a vibrant, tingly interior, where magic could happen.

Some who could agree with this might feel the educational exhibits, running the gamut of human experience, didn't live up to the magical space created for them, and there is some truth here. Too much of it had a whiff of corporate exhibition, a sense that something profound was being reached for by some of the 'zones', but compromised by well-publicised bad management, lack of time (the Dome was rushed into existence) or true commitment – though given its press even before it opened, the collective mind hardly aided this.

But the Dome had *heart*. Its flaws were more than made up for by the structure itself – and the Millennium Show, which took place three times a day, every day. A vast auditorium demands a big show to fill it, and the temptation to mount a crowd-pleasing empty spectacle to keep the kiddies happy must have been great. Instead, something far deeper was presented, a beautiful, stunning ballet of high-wire dance and acrobatic mime, with sound and light, telling a story of the struggle between nature, technology and the spirit, as the sky-people meet the earth-people and try to meld their cultures and skills. Backed by Peter Gabriel's moving and totally appropriate music, the show brought genuine tears to the eyes and I can still feel a lump in my throat when I recall it now.

But in the weeks after my visit, I was troubled. Was I being delusional? Had I kidded myself? Was I just playing Devil's Advocate, sympathetically backing the poor loser by voicing support in the face of abusive cynicism? I had to find out, and that meant going back. With just three days to its doom, the day after Boxing Day, I returned to the Dome with my family. I was reassured – my

memory hadn't lied. For all its faults, I was in love with the Dome. I watched the show twice more, each time equally enrapt, and walked around the edifice with the same sense of awe. My task there was now complete and I returned home content, even as the bidding vultures began to move in to downgrade the Dome into mundanity.

Now, you may think all this over the top. You may even have visited the Dome yourselves and disagree with me. You may think I am a sad sycophant playing with flowery language. *But are you going to deny the reality, for me, of what I experienced?*

Seeing the crop circle metaphor yet? Of course.

I was not alone in my support for the Dome. My sometime colleague Barry Reynolds had also been impressed, and after my first visit, we urged attenders at the December SCR meeting to get down to Greenwich while the chance was still there. Rolling eyes and amused tuts came from some. We asked if they had been – sheepishly, they admitted they had not. Shame on you if you have ever found yourself doing the same, because by this you commit the very crime which has condemned and stigmatised the crop circle phenomenon to the outer fringes of ridicule.

The negative attitudes projected from positions of total ignorance which condemned the Dome's reputation to a slow, agonising death are exactly the same as those which have dogged the crop circle phenomenon since the days of Doug and Dave. The public forever give their powers of discernment and observation away to others. Many cropies do, too.

You are reading this publication and presumably don't stand on the ignorant side of the fence when it comes to the circles, whatever your opinions of them, so why do you need to know this?

For my very last *SC* piece, I mused for a while over what thought I should leave you with. *SC* has been a prop for many readers over the years, helping them through times of the most hideous lies and misperceptions about our pet phenomenon from the media and public opinion. Always we have sought to counter this by actually *informing* and daring to speak out against sometimes mischievous, sometimes simply misplaced pronouncements and assertions, often from within our own cerealogical community. We know from the numerous letters and comments we have received over the last decade that we have been a great encouragement, particularly in those darker moments of doubt which some can't help themselves almost succumbing to in the face of huge media scams. Now, for those without access to *Swirled News*, we are no longer going to be there for you and you will need to stand on your own feet from today! You must keep yourselves informed now, and remain steady in your chosen positions against all the flak which will surely come. The strength will be there, if you really believe some-

thing of importance is happening out in the fields. Note, "something of importance". We at *SC* (and other groups besides) have often been portrayed and dismissed by outside foes as delusional 'believers' – that word! We have been accused of trying to set up a "pseudo-religious" cult from which no fall from blind faith into hoax heresy can be countenanced, promoting celestial circlemakers as spiritual saviours and waiting for the little green men to come down and save us all. Not one of these accusations is remotely true, as anyone who has ever read *SC properly*, attended an SCR gathering or met its members as individuals is already aware. The fact is, nobody knows what makes the crop circles, nor why, if there even is a why. That is the honest truth. We accept that there are some man-made formations, as we always have done. We do not accept that explains the whole phenomenon. We simply believe *something of importance* is occurring, wherever it comes from. We don't need to go over the theories and their pros and cons here. There are 93 previous issues, together with books and videos from various *SC* contributors, which have neatly taken care of that. So why our continued venom against hoax theorists? The big problem we *do* have with the continual promotion of hoaxing as being the answer to the mystery from the media and some alienated sections of the crop circle community itself, is that, even apart from displaying often massive ignorance, sheer stupidity and another kind of self-delusion, it trivialises *the reality of people's personal experiences*.

There are many, many folk out there who have had their lives transformed by the presence of these strange glyphs in their lives, had epiphanies that might forever have eluded them without the catalyst of the circles, and experienced weird and wonderful phenomena. Each time the media, the sceptics or hoax claimants carp, criticise and attack with the usual sneer of self-satisfaction, they are spitting in the faces of those who have seen the doors to some kind of heaven. Why should these people's experiences be denied or ridiculed?

Increasingly aware, perhaps, of this jarring point, there have been feeble attempts by the hoax claimants and the more numerous hoax apologists, particularly of late, to change their claimed rationale, stating that the crop circles are made as 'spiritual machines' to stimulate the soul, or 'phenomena attractors' to generate strange effects by the power of shape alone, intended to harm or fool no-one. This attempt at saintly self-presentation might wash if this attitude were borne out by their behaviour, but it so obviously isn't. Too often, we see instead clear attempts at mischief, dark deception and lies, and the betrayal of friends. The sheer relish at the fun of robbing the faithful of their vision of a mysterious and wonderful Universe is all too obvious as claimants unveil their one or two 'human-facilitated' efforts and imply authorship of the rest thereby. The

## THE LAST WORD



**So the moment has come at last. The nine-year mission to boldly go where no circle journal has ever gone before ends here. ANDY THOMAS addresses the SC masses one final time for some closing thoughts...**

recent antics of Matthew Williams are a fine example – his unexpected criminal conviction has seen him produce endless e-mails of self-justification and martyred bleeding heart testimonies to media and researchers, stating how he only wanted to show that man himself could create phenomena-attracting beauty in the fields. But this cannot offset all the deception, aggressive e-mails, written threats to “destroy” the credibility of the circles, and obnoxious behaviour which so obviously rob his statements of any sincerity. Most ‘human facilitators’ simply do not generate the light around them that one would expect if their intentions were spotless, nor do they treat the phenomenon with the sense of the sacred you would feel their position would demand if claimed motivations were true.

In my book *Vital Signs*, I wrote of hoaxers: “For a few, perhaps art and the need to create really does play a role in their motivation – but the messages they give out in their behaviour suggests less integrity. Too many opportunities have been missed to demonstrate either their commitment to inspiring beauty or the exact abilities with which to pursue it”. I accept that a good man-made formation can affect someone as much as one of another origin if the undiscerning visitor doesn't know which is which – but to the discerning eye, man-made demonstrations continue to fall far short of what these people should be capable of if their claims are true, and I still stand by that paragraph.

The sadness is the amount of people who fall for the apparent charisma of these ego-fired claimants, and the catchment of researchers who have allowed their initially genuine work to be diverted and mutated, from a fear of being ‘caught out’ in public. Better to be seen to accommodate the hoax community in the name of balance, they protest – but of course, there is no balance; the habit of accommodating becomes an obsession, over-exposure to weasel words eat into their brains and they always fall permanently into the sceptic camp in the end.

The debunk scams of Doug and Dave and then Jim Schnabel and company in the early '90s began the rot, as the big researchers of the day suddenly became reluctant to show their true opinions for fear of being humiliated by the media. We at **SC** had a baptism of fire and came in just as the Doug and Dave furore was at its height, starting from a position of being under attack, never knowing any (totally mythical) ‘golden age’ of harmony and balance. Consequently we had nothing to lose and were not embarrassed to declare our belief in a real phenomenon – there were no pedestals to be toppled from.

It's easy now to underestimate the impact **SC** had on the old ways of cerealogy. We rattled the old established ‘names’ and actively campaigned against some of them as was necessary, as their failure to ‘solve’ the mystery (as some of them had clearly expected to) turned to rampant scepticism

and bitter resentment of the optimistic new crop-pies. **SC** was denounced several times from live platforms for its troubles, but each time it just reinforced the growing significance of our little A5 booklet, which quickly became the underground champion of the ‘believers’. And where are the denouncers today? Largely gone or rendered impotent by their own devices. Yet we remain, unjaded (partly why the disaffected hate us so much), campaigning still, our longevity now far exceeding the active interest periods of most of our predecessors.

One advantage the **SC** crew always had was that we didn't all live too close to the main action and avoided falling prey to the traps lying in wait at *The Barge* and all the traditional croppie haunts which can snare after over-exposure to constant hoax rumour and innuendo. A nice place to visit... but a better one to stand back from and evaluate with a clear head from time to time. There is no doubt that our geographical distance helped **SC** become very influential in forwarding crop circle research by balancing centralised disinformation with steadier assessments.

Stand back, then, and assess with your own clear heads from now on. Listen carefully to all that is said and done in the name of crop circle research and see how it feels to you. Above all, *do not give your powers of evaluation away to those who may simply appear to be in the know*. Remember the Millennium Dome.

The world of cerealogy has been filled with very BIG pronouncements and claims from charismatic figures over the years, both non-sceptical and sceptical. Of those pronouncements, only a few have ever turned out to have any substance. Beware those who use phrases like “I do assure you...”, but won't then give you the evidence. Claims made without evidence are as a riverbed without water; dry, arid and useless.

Use your brains! What do *you* think of a formation? Does its beauty or structure speak to you? What do *you* think of a cerealological assertion or theory? Does it seem to have validity or substance to you? If you have a viewpoint, then congratulations, you are as informed as any other person on the planet. Other researchers may have more facts and figures than you, but the truth is everyone is in the dark when it comes to explaining this phenomenon; it's all speculation. So when you hear someone state that 95% of formations are man-made, ask how they *know*. When you hear that 35% of formations are made by kinetic mass-energy vectorisers or whatever, ask for evidence. If Joe Bloggs tells you he knows that this formation is man-made but that one isn't, ask him why he's so sure. You'll never get a straight answer, because rumours in the crop circle world are hardly ever verified and ‘litmus tests’ will forever be argued over. So walk away from all these people, go to the pub, have a chat with your friends and invent your own ideas. They'll be of equal worth.

But don't then impose them on others. Offer them, perhaps, but don't pronounce. Similarly, listen to what other researchers have to say, read their books, enjoy their lectures, whatever, but keep your own counsel and powers of judgement.

The best and purest thing we can do is simply *inform* those who will listen of what is going on in the fields. Show them the photos and watch them gasp. Take them to the fields and see the jaws drop. And then leave them to it. It's the only responsible thing to do.

The mission to inform is not always a smooth path, of course – sometimes you have to fight for your beliefs when foes threaten. As Ian Macdonald writes in his Beatles book *Revolution in the Head*; “For better or worse, it is impossible to conduct a revolution without picking a side and pointing out the drawbacks of its rivals.” But, fights over truth aside, even the power and ego struggles which have afflicted the cerealological community since the earliest days, or the eternal conflict between sceptics and believers (let's call them ‘positivists’ – there's a new term for you) have not been wasted. I don't see these cerealological tussles, as some do, as being an aberration in what was ‘meant’ to be a perfect and pure phenomenon. If anything *planned* the crop circles, and the ‘sky people’ are attempting to meet the ‘earth people’, they must have known what would result and how human nature would react. I used to be Chairman of a Brighton opera company and the in-fighting and back-stabbing there was much worse, I can tell you. No, the slugging and slating of views and characters must always have been anticipated to be part of the scheme from any intelligent mind.

The epic sci-fi TV series *Babylon 5* had an interesting slant on this idea; the galaxy is being torn apart by a vast struggle between the Vorlons (apparently angelic beings) and the Shadows (apparently evil, insect-like demons), each sponsoring different races to support them in their eternal strife. After endless battles and disasters on a planetary scale, a representative of the Shadows finally sits down and explains the reason why all this is kept going. It turns out that the Shadows and Vorlons have a joint agenda – to stimulate the evolution of galactic life through the innovation and needs created by conflict.

This is not to justify the continuing need for such conflict in our real world, but it at least gives some sense of reason as to what these comparatively mild cerealological wranglings might have been about. In the croppie arena, we choose our sides and fight our battles according to what feels best, and the ultimate realities, which no-one can seem to pin down on either side, neither sceptics, positivists, scientists or New-Agers, are almost irrelevant. And maybe that's okay. If it feels good to believe something, then believe it. Author Richard Bach uses the phrase “believing in things because they're *fun* to believe in”. It's as valid a template for living life as any other. The resulting whirlwind

of opinion in the middle isn't always fun to be in, mind, but maybe it drives processes which ripple their cause and effect outwards into a wider system we can't yet see. It's certainly stimulating us... This doesn't mean next time I see some stupid hoaxer on the telly that I'll be thanking him for raising the public profile of crop circles once again and creating some good old educational conflict, but we can at least rest easy that out of all this maelstrom, something positive, on some level, whenever, *will* come. Whether an answer will ever come is another matter. Quite possibly not.

But while you're waiting for those elusive answers, don't forget to keep a sense of humour about it all. One **SC** trait has always been the inability to take anything too seriously for long, as SCR meeting attendees know. So have a laugh too, even as you take the subject seriously, and make the very most of this amazing phenomenon while you can.

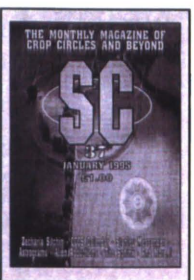
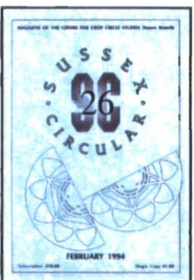
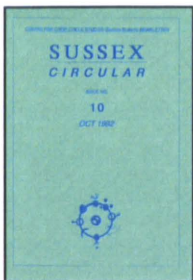
How long we will have the formations with us, no-one knows – I suspect only a few more years, if your want my *opinion*, before the curve of all this moves on to something else, or turns downward again, leaving the wildly elaborate, stunningly beautiful crop formations an obscure, strange curiosity of the late 20th, early 21st Century. Will it be a footnote in history, or a whole chapter? Maybe you will help decide that. Your vote counts.

Chin up, then. This piece is just about over now and so, finally, is **SC**. This is not my nor SCR's last word, of course, but it is as far as this little stapled journal, which has caused so much fuss over the years, is concerned. We will live on in new guises – join us for our new web site incarnation if you can. Each of the individuals who have given of their time and heart to produce **SC** will go on to pursue their own new avenues of crop circle investigation and understanding or move away to pastures new, perhaps into other subjects far beyond. Indeed, part of the rationale for ending **SC** is that it feels like time to take some of what we have learnt from this phenomenon and apply it to other areas of life which need equal attention, whilst never losing affection for those glyphs which first fired us up.

There's a whole world of wonders out there just waiting to be explored – do it on an informed basis with compassion, discernment and integrity, avoiding second-hand opinions, and you can't go too wrong. As long-time readers know, a simple television programme, *Dr Who*, was my first childhood obsession, so you'll forgive me for ending with the very last phrase from the very last episode of the series...

*“There are worlds out there where the sky is burning, and the sea's asleep, and the rivers dream. People made of smoke and cities made of song. Somewhere there's danger, somewhere there's injustice, somewhere else the tea's getting cold. Come on, we've got work to do.”*

Enough said. Bless you all. **AT**



And it's goodbye from them... The SC team and cohorts. Front: (Left to right) **Michael Glickman, Andy Thomas, Karen Douglas, Steve Alexander** Middle: **Denise Miller, Kaye Thomas, DI Brown, Linda Reynolds, Sloane Noakes** Back: **Jason Porthouse, Barry Reynolds, Martin Noakes** (Photo by MARCUS ALLEN, for which many thanks.) We shall never see the like again. Farewell, readers!

