

“Crop Circles”

Talk by Andy Thomas on 17 September 2024. Review by Marlene



Everybody knows what crop circles are! - or do they? Our speaker for this meeting was Andy Thomas who is an author and dedicated researcher of unexplained mysteries. Without launching into who, how or why, Andy Thomas took us on a history tour back to the earliest “traceable” reference, in a paper of 1678, to what is identifiable as a crop circle (with a devil in the picture as well). Moving forward in time, an actual photograph from 1932 featured a circle in a laid crop, and later press cuttings were mentioned dated the 1940s onwards.

In the 1970s to 1980s, we were told that the assumption for the formation of these unusual happenings was down to the weather. As more complex patterns began to emerge, it became clear that this was unlikely. Andy described and showed video footage where visible lights were seen moving around in the field, which led to the questions – were they the by-product of crop circles or were they making the crop circles?

By 1990, complex hieroglyphic shapes were being seen. At this point Andy showed his audience some of the intricate detail and sophisticated geometric designs which only deepened the mystery of their existence. He pointed out that, if made by hand or boot or if string and wood were involved, the crop stems would inevitably show signs of damage. On some crop stems, just touching them would remove the bloom normally present and would be noticeable. Circles clearly man-made did not show the woven aspects or the

layer configuration of the those circles which appeared suddenly. Theories abounded. It was questioned if it was possible that microwaves were involved.

Andy then mentioned UFO footage (which we were told was testified by the US military) and ventured the thought that the more complex/fractal patterns were formed to create more interest/show “they” are here!

At this stage, mapping of crop circles, particularly in England, had been carried out. It was found that they were prevalent in chalk areas with aquifers. Water diviners had long talked of energy and ley lines, so the question was whether natural processes were involved, for instance, solar energy changes. Even Princeton University brain power research was mentioned.

The first big hoax story appeared in 1991. It sought to explain how crop circles were made, but it was clear that such procedures as described resulted in no layering, no weaving, damage was obvious and creating the circles took a long time. Against this, Andy pointed out that some circles appeared suddenly, despite the elaborate designs and incredible mathematical complexity. In 1996, one phenomenon was composed of 159 circles (fractals), which appeared in 45 minutes, in sunlight at Stonehenge, with eyewitnesses present. There was immediate denial of this phenomenon.



As a more amusing aside, Andy mentioned a publicity stunt by Mitsubishi to create a car shape in a field. Planning took weeks and the actual work in the field took 2 days. On the other hand, Andy offered the example of a 900 foot diameter design of small circles which appeared a couple of years later in one single night. Other amazing designs included a face, the “Shreddie” (grid of 780 boxes) and one design apparently showing an alien (as we imagine such?) carrying a disc showing a message in ASCII code which has been deciphered. Other odd things which seem to have emerged include a Sussex example. In 2003, each ellipse created in a field in Lewes had an oat stem still standing in the centre.

Declarations have been made that crop circles have now stopped. According to Andy, this is not correct. 2024 has been quiet so far, but not without such phenomena.

Andy concluded with the how and why, and said the answers may matter less than looking at the questions.

The audience were very appreciative of Andy’s talk and delivery and particularly of the wonderful images he provided, sources for which were given in his handouts. The audience asked a number of questions pertaining to appearances of such phenomena in other types of terrain, and Andy mentioned examples in grasslands and deserts,

and one u3a member spoke of her own experience of entering a crop circle.

Our thanks to Andy Thomas for a very interesting and thought-provoking talk.

