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Last 1999 Crop Formation in Wiltshire, England

© 1999 by Linda Moulton Howe

October 14, 1999 Avebury, Wiltshire, England



Aerial photograph © 1999 by Ulrich Cox and Peter Sorensen,
September 1, 1999, Avebury, Wiltshire, England.

Earthfiles, news category.

Peter Sorensen, Videographer, writes in an e-mail: "This eight-armed formation that appeared with the mathematical symbol for Pi next to it at Avebury, Wiltshire was discovered on September 1, 1999 the latest date so far on record for an English crop formation to appear."

Pi is the 16th letter in the Greek alphabet. Pi is also used in mathematics to represent that ratio of the circumference of a circle to the diameter which is 3.14159 to many more decimal places.

Peter's e-mail continued: "And, to my knowledge, it is the last one in England for the Millennium! Several of its nine major circles (center and eight surrounding ones) also had very peculiar lays, including raised, snake-like coils that could be clearly seen from the air."



A center coil created by stems laid over several inches above the ground around a "fountain" of standing wheat discovered September 1, 1999 in Avebury, Wiltshire, England. Photograph © 1999 by Peter Sorensen.

I visited it the next day, September 2, with Ulrich Kox, the German researcher who had taken aerial shots of it for me with my video camera on the first

morning. The formation had occurred in one of the very last fields still standing. The wheat, past due for harvesting, was shabby, with its ears bent down and readily released seeds if rubbed gently between the fingers. There were also some small bald patches which added to its disheveled appearance. Yet the lay was every bit as amazing as we expected!

The unique 'snakes' were formed by narrow arcs of crop which was bent (crimped) over as high as a foot above the ground, and therefore a good eight inches above the more normally flattened crop that surrounded them. The term, 'snake,' was coined because one of them suggested a loosely coiled serpent, but on the ground the arcs defied comparison to anything. They were curved, puffy bands which was bent over much higher than the surrounding lay. Virtually every large circle in the formation had them, but only a few were dramatic.



Coil created by stems laid over several inches above the ground around a swirl of wheat. Photograph © 1999 by Peter Sorensen, Avebury, Wiltshire, England, September 2, 1999.



Close-up coil construction with stems laid over several inches above the ground around a swirl of wheat. Photograph © 1999 by Peter Sorensen, Avebury, Wiltshire, England, September 2, 1999.

Equally remarkable was the lay of the central circle, which consisted of three distinct and different flows. The very center was a small, ordinary clockwise swirl with a 'bird's nest' in the middle. There had been a clump of standing stalks inside the nest, but these had been cleanly cut off a few inches from the ground probably taken by someone sampling the crop. This central swirl overlapped a radial lay that went out about ten feet before it which in turn overlapped a clockwise, concentric lay. (The radial and concentric flows are distinct in the aerial shot, but the little central swirl is barely recognizable.) I have never heard of combined radial and concentric flattening. Radial is rare enough!



Large central circle with man standing on radial lay splayed out in 360 degrees surrounded by concentric flattened wheat flowing in clockwise direction. Photograph © 1999 by Peter Sorensen, Avebury, Wiltshire, England September 2, 1999.

The Greek Pi symbol was a controversial feature. Suggestive of a signature, some cropies have rejected the entire formation because of it, while others believe it was merely added by an early visitor. Still others are adamant that it was/is very important to the original formation. At least two dowsers found positive results.



Mathematical symbol Pi next to eight-armed formation like a "signature." Photograph © 1999 by Peter Sorensen, Avebury, Wiltshire, England, September 2, 1999.

Charles and Frances Mallet reported that the tapering point at the right end of the Pi's curvy, horizontal stroke, had a very thin (2 or 3 inch-wide) line meandering off and out into the standing crop for well over a hundred feet. Amazingly, it was crimped down just a few inches below the ears of wheat - not at the bottom of the stalks! Unfortunately, no one took an aerial close-up of the Pi, although one of my pole shots shows the horizontal stroke tapering to fine point, and there appears to be a line going straight off from it a ways.

When Charley tried to photograph it, his camera failed. He was surprised, not only because his camera had never had a problem before, but because it was a very old, mechanical camera with no electronics in it. Assuming it had simply decided to break down after all these years, he was taken aback when he thought to test it with a shot of the formation from the roadside and his camera then worked perfectly. His curiosity peaked, he went back into the circle and the camera again failed - only to behave when he returned to the road. [If anyone has a photo of the mysterious line or an aerial close-up of the Pi, please contact me croppie2@yahoo.com, or cropcircleconnector.com, or earthfiles@earthfiles.com! I would also like to hear reports of other unusual features or experiences.]

The formation may not quite qualify as a Grand Finale, but it is a fascinating finale - for the year, AND the Millennium." End of e-mail.



One of the eight circles surrounding large central circle with wheat
laid down in clockwise concentric pattern around tuft of standing crop.
Photograph © 1999 by Peter Sorensen, Avebury, Wiltshire, England, September 2, 1999.

Websites:

<http://cropcircleconnector.com/Sorensen/PeterSorensen99.html>

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