

More mystery circles . . . and UFOs

We read in the edition for Tuesday, May 4, 1971 of *NZ Truth* that—"Five more Ngatea-like circles have been discovered—this time in the Taupo area.

"They were found by a helicopter pilot, Mr. R. D. Nairn, and last week *Truth* flew to an area about 17 miles south-west of Taupo to investigate.

"At the same time, reports have come in from the same area of several sightings of unidentified flying objects.

"They were seen over the Napier-Taupo highway, Acacia Bay, Wairaki Valley and Taupo itself. Dozens of people saw the phenomena.

"Now interested parties are asking whether there is a connection between the UFOs and the puzzling circles. It seems strange if there isn't.

"Auckland pilot Captain Bruce Cathie is a man particularly interested in UFOs. He also has visited the area east of the Rangitaiki River, and on the edge of the Kaingaroa Forest and near the Taupo-Napier highway.

"He landed on one of the circles in a helicopter and collected specimens of the weird plant growth there. It is now being analysed.

"*Truth's* chartered helicopter, piloted by Mr. Nairn, flew over the area and took aerial photographs of the circles. Four of them were in a straight line and just over a mile apart.

"The fifth was about a mile to the west but lined up with the last of the other four.

"*Truth's* helicopter also landed briefly on one of the circles. They range from between 200 and 300 feet in diameter and each covers up to 6,000 square feet.

"A fungus-like growth, only about three or four inches high, covers the circles like a carpet. There is no other vegetation.

"Captain Cathie told *Truth*: 'There is no direct evidence that the circles are made by UFOs, but they certainly are not man-made. But they are in a pattern and spread evenly apart, which suggests that they are artificially made. Otherwise, they would be spread out in a haphazard fashion.'

"He said that another strange factor was that whatever retarded other growth did not affect the fungus-like plant.

"A spokesman for the 12,600-acre Lilburn estate, on which the circles were found, told *Truth* he knew nothing about the mysterious patches.

"The estate carried about 10,000 sheep and between 600 and 700 cattle, but none of it was on the area where the circles were discovered. They certainly had not been made by anybody connected with the estate, he said.

"So the mystery deepens."

Credit: Mrs. P. D. Dixon of Te Atatu North, Auckland, N.Z.

A 19th century landing?

Cornwall is famed for its "little people", but the Lake District has them too—the dobbies. Through past centuries, they have been widely accepted and believed in by the country people of Cumberland and Westmorland, and so it is not surprising that a sighting in 1850 of strange little people should be explained as dobbies.

Jack Wilson of Martindale was returning home in the moonlight and, when he neared Sandwick Rigg, he noticed a large company of dobbies "intensely engaged in their favourite games" (no other indication of exactly what they were doing!). They noticed him as he approached, and climbed a little ladder into the sky. This description sounds suspiciously

like many reported sightings of UFO occupants, and this also raises the old question of whether all "little people"—be they called leprechauns, fairies, dwarves, goblins, brownies or pixies—are the old-time ufonauts.

Story taken from *Ghosts of the Lake Counties* by Gerald Findler.

Credit: Janet Gregory.

Musical UFO, poltergeist, or what?

This bizarre story comes to us via the pages of the *Bournemouth Evening Echo* of May 21, 1971, and the courtesy of a Honiton reader—

"This was the UFO to beat the lot. It couldn't be seen, but it kept Mrs. Barbara Williams awake for one and a half hours.

"For this time our friends from another world came in the form of a 'terrifying noise' which hovered in the middle of the night over the Williams' house in Watcombe Road, Southbourne.

"Mrs. Williams can't quite make up her mind how to describe the noise. 'It was like the repeated sound of a train crash,' she mused. 'Or maybe the roaring of a prehistoric monster . . .'

"And she's baffled, because the only other people to hear the noise were her next door neighbours. 'We almost rang the police, but we thought they would already be inundated with calls,' she said. 'But when my husband saw the police the next day, they said they had heard nothing.'

"Mrs. Williams was too frightened to look out of the window. Her husband Edward poked his head out and heard what his neighbour described as 'interplanetary music' floating through the night air.

"The noise kept repeating itself, and there was a continual hum overhead,' said Mrs. Williams. 'Eventually it faded away.'

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Robert A. Schmidt

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