

CORNFIELD CIRCLE REPORTS

I. AN AMERICAN CORNFIELD CIRCLE

*By Robert E. Reid (Florida)
Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret'd.)*

Our new contributor, Colonel Robert E. Reid, USAF (Ret'd), whom we are very happy to introduce to our readers, is aged 52 and spent more than 26 years in the U.S. Air Force, retiring in 1987 to Florida, where he is extremely active as a MUFON member. He has been greatly involved in the investigations of the extraordinary GULF BREEZE case, and his name will already be familiar to all who have kept abreast of GULF BREEZE in the MUFON JOURNAL, or who have read Donald Ware's chapter on the case in Timothy Good's latest book, THE UFO REPORT 1990.

British readers will also be particularly interested to know that, when in the U.S. Air Force, Colonel Reid spent three years stationed at RAF Bentwaters, Suffolk — in other words "in Rendlesham Forest territory"! — EDITOR

PERHAPS, with rumours of typically American "UFO abduction" phenomena now occurring in England, it is only appropriate that the States get a reciprocal share of England's cornfield circles. So far as we know, the modest circle reported here is the first such example recorded in America in recent years. Compared with the artistry of its British cousins this simple whorl is really quite unsophisticated — but then again we all have to begin somewhere.

A primary coincidence in this case is that our swirled circle occurred in Gulf Breeze, Florida. Readers will recognize Gulf Breeze as the sleepy little town on northwest Florida's Gulf Coast where in late 1987 and early '88 "Mr. Ed" took almost 40 photos of high strangeness craft. A lesser included coincidence is the fact that Ed Walters himself helped me photograph and measure the circle. (I just caught the glance and knowing smirk of those of you who persist in chasing the Gulf Breeze hoax hypothesis, but you don't know Ed. No individual is more anxious to find out what is really going on in Gulf Breeze than is Edward Walters.)

The accompanying photos were taken on the morning of the 17th November 1989. By this time the

circle was at least 48 hours old and had weathered the passage of a violent storm front. The person who first found and reported the circle is unknown, but Ed learned of its existence by telephone from a friend who is a television news reporter in Pensacola. The local ABC TV affiliate station had received a telephone call on the morning of the 15th reporting the location of the circle in neighbouring Gulf Breeze, and Mark Curtis had passed the info on to Ed the next day.

Mr. Duane Cook, editor of the local newspaper, accompanied Ed in search of the circle around midday of the 16th. The caller had said it was along an isolated stretch of beach near the western boundary of Shoreline Park (approx. 1/4 mile walking distance from the parking lot), but the men did not find it on their first sweep of the area. It was on the return that Mr. Cook came upon it, while negotiating a grassy swale behind the beach line.

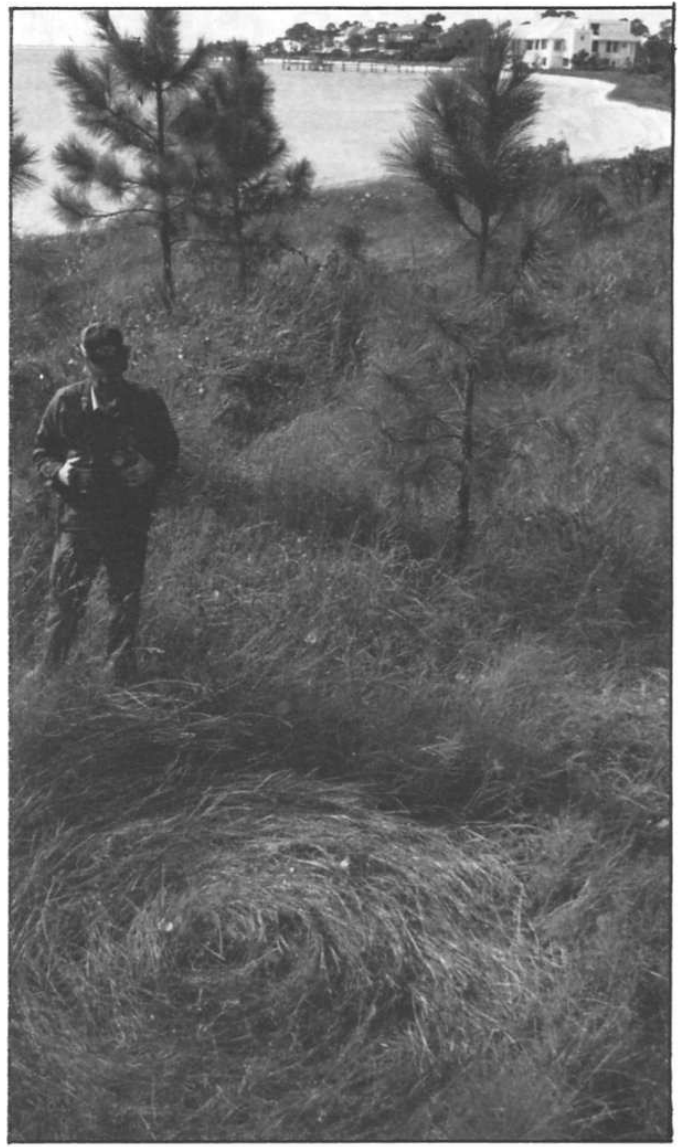
The circle appears uniformly round and measures approximately seven feet, eight inches in diameter (as a further coincidence note that Dr. Bruce Maccabee has calculated the diameter of the base of the craft in Ed's "roadshot" photo at 7 feet, 8 inches). Direction of



Obscure location of circle.



Ed Walters examining central whorl (photo by Duane Cooke, Editor "GULF BREEZE SENTINEL").



Ed Walters at circle.



The central whorl.

rotation is clockwise. There was no evidence of disturbance to the soil beneath the circle, and the vegetation did not appear burned or dessicated.

I accompanied Ed on a second visit to the site the next day. We took both still and video cameras and a ladder to help in taking pictures.

While there we attempted to tread out a similar circle in an adjacent stand of beach vegetation. Ed recorded on video as round and round I shuffled, doing my best to duplicate the wallow and thrash of amorous alligators; — we have no hormone-heavy hedgehogs in Florida. The only important thing we learned by this exercise is how difficult it is to make the vegetation lie down and stay where we wanted it to.

This may be a point of serious interest. The beach vegetation in which the circle occurs is a heterogeneous mixture ranging in height from ten to thirty inches, and with several wiry components; some such as smilax, and what I call "spear grass", are especially recalcitrant as regards their prostration potential. I simply could not get them to lie down for even the few minutes we were trying our experiment. However,

in the original circle most of the vegetation was still lying down as if it had been "steam-ironed" into place. A violent storm with heavy rain and winds gusting above 50 m.p.h. had passed through the area on the evening of the 15th, — 36 hours before I took these pictures, but several hours after the circle was first reported to *TV-3*. At the time of my photos the circle was amazingly intact, considering what it had been through.

Although Ed Walter's UFO "photo-op" window closed 18 months ago, the Florida Panhandle continues to be a locus of strange activity. UFOs are still being reported at this time of writing (November 20, 1989), but unfortunately nobody seems to be taking pictures these days (— Ed did take two photos of an object seen by a whole group of people attending a MUFON meeting in downtown Pensacola a couple months ago, but that's a different story). No contemporaneous UFO sightings or other anomalous activities have been correlated with the genesis of this odd circle in the American grass.

II. AND NOW . . . CORNFIELD CIRCLES IN AUSTRALIA!

By Paul Norman, Vice-President, Victorian UFO Research Society (VUFORS); FSR Consultant

Mr Max Jolly and his wife Nancee and their 29-year-old son Stuart own the 9000-hectare West Park Farm in the Mallee region of the western part of the Australian State of Victoria. ("*Mallee*" is the aboriginal name of a particular species of scrub-land tree growing plentifully over the region before it was cleared and found suitable for farming — especially for *wheat crops*. ED.)

For about two years past odd things have been happening on the Jolly's farm.

For example, in 1987, they had sightings of "eerie aerial lights". Then Mrs Jolly discovered that the farmhouse's 4,000 litre water-tank had been totally drained overnight. To a journalist from the Melbourne newspaper *Weekend Truth* (December 16, 1989) she said: "We haven't a clue what happened. All we know is that someone — or something — took every drop of water."

(In 1981 I investigated several similar cases of seemingly UFO-related "water disappearances". All were in the northern part of the State of Victoria.)

A Shattering Noise from the Sky

One night in December 1988 the son, Stuart Jolly, was rudely awakened from his sleep by a shattering noise outside his bedroom window. He told the newspaper: "I thought the racket would puncture my eardrums. It was like the scream of jet engines revving up and down, with the shrilling of thousands of cicadas mixed in!

"My dog would normally have been on the spot, and barking, but he seemed to have shot through.

"I rushed outside, but saw nothing. The racket seemed to be coming from empty sky."

"Beserk"

In May 1989 the Jolly family experienced an even



Mrs Nancee Jolly and her son Stuart.

more bizarre brush with the unknown.

Stuart said: "About 9.00 o'clock one night, I heard a commotion and I went out to see what was happening. The trouble was centred on the sheep-paddock.

"Our 700 ewes and lambs had gone beserk. They were dashing about and bleating in total panic — AND THEN I SAW WHY!!

"A Huge Yellow Light"

"Hovering above the paddock was a huge yellow light that seemed to be pulsating.

"At first I thought someone was spotlighting our sheep, but then I realized that the light was far too big for that.

"Also, it was making a weird, high-pitched noise, like the blades of a helicopter with its engine off and slowing.

"I'd never seen sheep go wild in that way before.

"If a dog had been threatening them, they'd simply