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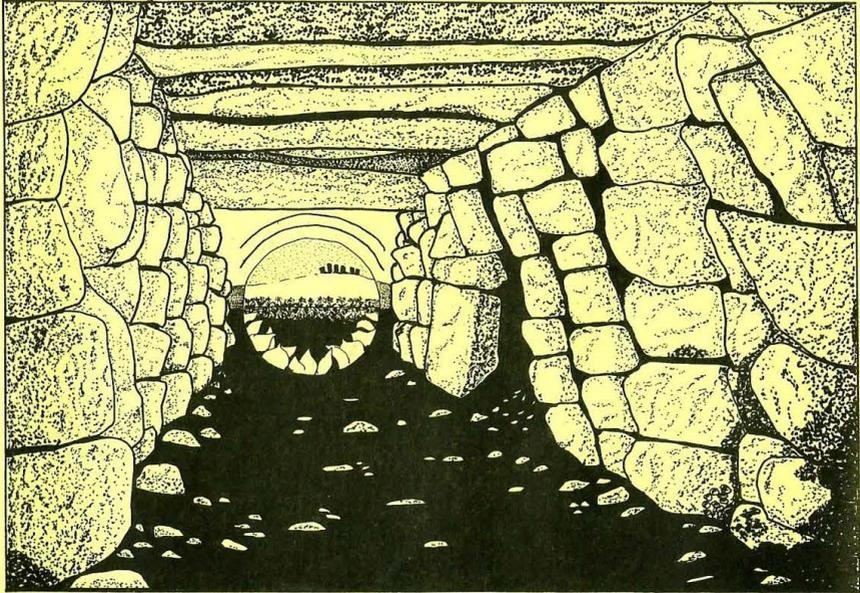
Summer 1989

£1.35



MEYN MAMVRO

ANCIENT STONES & SACRED SITES OF WEST PENWITH.



THE MYSTERIOUS FOGOU • FOUND STONES •
THE TINNERS WAY • PAGANISM • INCENSE •
CHASING THE DRAGON • NEW BOOKS •

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VISIONS+JOURNEYS

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LIST OF EXHIBITIONS FOR 1989

- 18 March-15 June HALLO AGAIN**
 Visions and Journeys reopens after the Winter with new work by Gabrielle Hawkes (silk-screen prints and gouache) and photographs by Tom Henderson Smith.
- 19 June-15 July PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS**
 New work in two and three dimensions by Ryman Atkinson. Paintings, prints and drawings of landscape and people in Cornwall, plus stained & leaded glass and paper-crafts.
- 1 August-30 August WATERCOLOURS & DRAWINGS OF WEST PENWITH** by Sue Lewington and Helen Terry Brunyee.

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Meyn Mamvro

Stones of our Motherland

EARTH ENERGIES • ANCIENT STONES • SACRED SITES • PAGANISM • LEYPATHS
CORNISH PRE-HISTORY & CULTURE • MEGALITHIC MYSTERIES • LEGENDS & FOLKLORE

Our local newspaper "The Cornishman" recently set in motion something of a pagan debate. They ran a frivolous item in the Penwithian column as follows: "I've seen 'Keep Britain Tidy' and 'Keep Britain Nuclear Free' badges, but the one I saw on the lapel of a senior eccentric over the weekend takes some beating. 'Keep Britain Pagan' was the message - and while you're at it watch out for the ley lines, man!" Meyn Mamvro replied to this that we didn't know why wearing such a badge should be 'eccentric' or 'takes some beating': Paganism was the original native faith of this country, and Britain (and Cornwall!) had been pagan for far longer than it had been nominally Christian. We pointed out that there were still quite a number of people today who try to follow the pagan ways, and "although they don't all feel the need of wearing badges to express the fact, they do have a sincere and loving faith based on their care for Mother Earth and celebration of the seasons round." We then mentioned that 'Christmas' which we had all just enjoyed celebrating was only the pagan Winter Solstice rebirth of the sun in another guise!

The Wife of Pendeen's vicar then replied to this with a letter arguing that the Christian Christmas only coincides with the winter solstice by chance! An article on the pagan origins of the seasonal celebrations will appear in the next MM, a copy of which has been sent to the Vicar's wife for her information! The debate provoked a subsequent letter to the paper by Ann Hutchings of Newlyn, in which she pointed out there was no dichotomy between Christmas and the Solstice: "The Pagan's reborn sun is a life-giver and protector of mother earth and supports the human life which came from her." She argued eloquently for a deeper awareness and cultivation of "planet earth and its people", and finished by saying: "It would appear that sometimes Pagans have a greater sense of their custody of the earth than some of the churches."

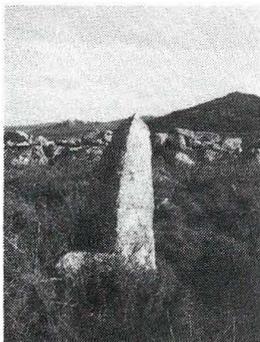
Certainly our earth needs all the help she can get, not only on a global scale, but locally as well. There have been recent disturbing "developments" on the West Penwith moors close to some ancient sites. Firstly on Tregeseal Common not far from the stone circle a trout pond has been dug out with an access track for cars brought down onto the moor itself, changing the whole nature of the unspoilt moorland. And secondly, agricultural buildings have been erected near to Chûn Castle and nearby courtyard houses. Apparently neither scheme needed formal planning approval, and the Tregeseal one in addition has been supervised by the ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area), which seems to make a nonsense of the scheme. How long before all the ancient sites are enclosed with fences, reached by tarmac roads, and surrounded by golf courses and duck ponds?

It has been suggested to MM by some readers that we might like to consider starting up local Earth Mysteries meetings in the Winter and field trips in the Summer. If the demand is there and enough support is forthcoming, this would be a good opportunity to meet people with similar interests and share ideas. We could have regular talks if we can arrange speakers, and the Summer site visits would of course be open to visitors as well. Perhaps any reader who is interested in such an idea would like to drop a line to MM, not to necessarily commit yourself but just to let us know what level of support there might be.

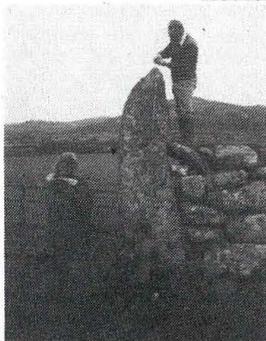
Lost and Found

NEW STONE ROW DISCOVERED AT ZENNOR

A major discovery has been made in West Penwith during the recent field survey undertaken by the Cornwall Archaeology Unit. At Treveglos near Zennor a stone row has been identified, the only one in West Penwith and second only to the Nine Maidens row near St Columb. At one end (SW 4528 3891) there is a stone in a hedge, and a further 2 stones can be found in the field, one of which is standing (pictured right), the other fallen. The row then continues in an ESE direction to a large (8½ft) stone at 4539 3887 now used as a gatepost (pictured below). The stones point in the direction of Zennor Hill at an angle between Zennor Quoit and Sperris Quoit and may have been used to view the Samhain/Imbolc sunrise over the hill or the Beltane/Lughnasad sunset over the sea.



MORE STONE ROWS ON BODMIN MOOR



It was long thought that the Nine Maidens near St Columb was the only stone row in Cornwall, but more have now come to light on Bodmin Moor. Most consist of only small stones, similar to the kinds of rows on Dartmoor, but one row in particular near Colvannick Tor has 4 goodly-sized stones standing or leaning (about 5ft or so tall) with many more lying down, stretching for a few hundred yards. Colvannick Tor itself was probably named after the stones, meaning as it does in English "erect penis", an indication of an ancient awareness of the phallic nature of the stones. A full list of the stone rows so far discovered on Bodmin Moor is as follows:

Leskernick SX 1880/7985.* Tolborough Tor (cairn) 1754/7787. Trehudreth Downs 1267/7297.* Trehudreth Downs (cairn) 1252/7274. Colvannick Tor 1288/7174.* Fox Tor 2302/7862. Carneglos 1990/7740. Craddock Moor 2410/7230.

There is also a recently-discovered 8ft menhir in the De Lank Quarry at SX 1000 7530, a few paces from which is another broken one which would originally have been about the same height - the broken top lies on the ground. A curiosity is that one stone stands at right angles to the other, and a double menhir like this is unknown elsewhere on Bodmin Moor, except for the pairs in burial cairns (mentioned in MM8 p15). There are also the Drift Stones (and others now destroyed) in West Penwith. The De Lank stones may have been part of a stone row though, as the quarry has cut right up to the edge of where they stand.

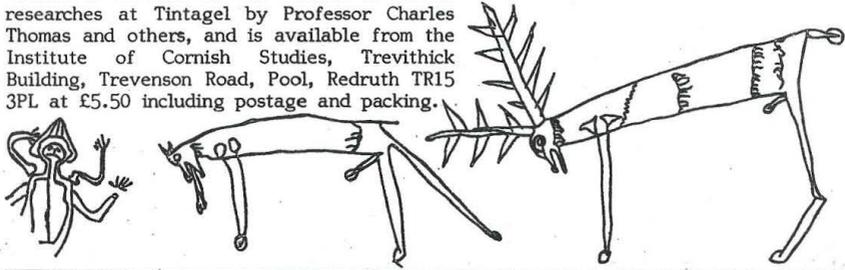
(* can be found on the new OS 1:25000 Pathfinder map (1338). Details courtesy of CAU. Map references refer to middle of rows and some may be approximate, especially hitherto unpublished sites).



Tintagel Slates Enigma



These curious drawings are from some slates discovered during excavations at Tintagel Castle and recently reproduced by Carl Thorpe in the latest volume of *Cornish Studies* 16. The drawings are undated but they do however seem to be based on archetypal motifs, such as the hunter and the horned deer, an enigmatic 4-armed figurine, as well as Celtic knot-work and possible early board games. The whole *Cornish Studies* volume is devoted to the results of recent researches at Tintagel by Professor Charles Thomas and others, and is available from the Institute of Cornish Studies, Trevithick Building, Trevenson Road, Pool, Redruth TR15 3PL at £5.50 including postage and packing.

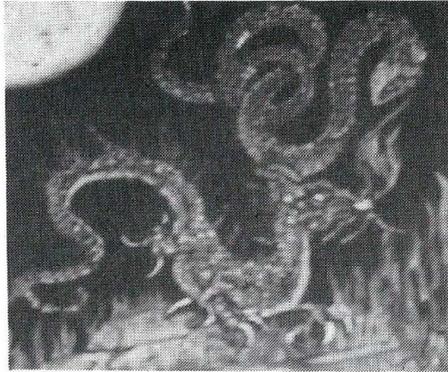


Events Diary

- * **WITCHES WHAT WITCHES?** is the title of a one-day school at Hayne Corfe Centre, Truro examining the image of witches, and focusing on the period of the witch-hunts in England. The first sessions on April 15th and May 6th were quickly filled but another is being arranged for the Autumn. Telephone Exeter University Dept. of Continuing Education on 0872-74503 for details.
- * **NEW AGE COURSES** are being run at the Queens Hotel Penzance throughout the Summer. Courses include Exploring our Heritage, Person/Planet, and Living Traditions & New Awareness, and most include working with the energies of the W. Penwith landscape. Full details from Beth Holman, Penrose, Nancherrow, St Just, nr Penzance (0736 - 787218).
- * **THE DREAMWEAVERS** (see MM8 p22) will be running courses on Shamanic Healing and Lariens at CAER this Summer from June 17th-22nd & 23rd-28th. Other courses on transformation and enlightenment are also available. Brochure from CAER, Rosemerryn, Lamorna, Penzance (0736-810530).
- * **SUMMER SOLSTICE RITUAL** on Wednesday June 21st will be celebrated by the Carlyons at sunrise on Porth Island near Newquay and at sunset at another nearby sacred site. All who wish to attend should contact them at 16 Cross Street, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex.
- * **AN EXHIBITION** of Megalithic drawings by David Gunning (introduced by Aubrey Burl) will be on display at the County Museum, Truro from June 24th-August 5th.
- * **THE NEW AGE FESTIVAL** of mind, body and spirit in Cornwall takes place at two venues this year, one for the first time in Penzance at St Johns Hall on Saturday July 1st 10-5pm, and then again a week later in Truro at the City Hall on Saturday July 8th.
- * **A FOLKLORE SEMINAR** will take place on Saturday September 9th at 10.00am at the Institute of Cornish Studies, Pool. Sessions include Joy Wilson on Tristan and Ysolt and Michael Williams on Ghosts. Cost is £6 inc buffet lunch. Details from Rita Pope, Old School House, Mylor Bridge, Falmouth (0326-72736).

Chasing the Dragon

by PAUL BROADHURST

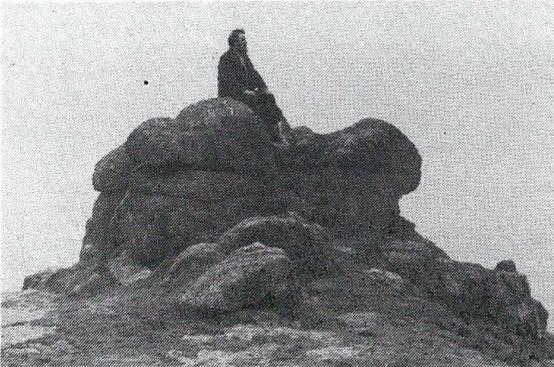


Since John Michell rediscovered the extraordinary phenomenon of the St Michael Line in the late 1960's, the concept has filtered into the popular consciousness in an equally extraordinary way. People who are perhaps hazy about what a 'ley line' actually is seem to have no great difficulty in visualizing a great alignment of sacred sites across southern Britain, which links St Michael's Mount, the Cheesewring, Glastonbury, Avebury and Bury St Edmunds as well as a series of churches dedicated to St Michael and his fellow dragon-slayer St George. It is almost as if an ancient memory is being awakened, a memory that possesses some special significance.

When dowser Hamish Miller and I decided to track the course of the energy that links these legendary places, it had been known for some time that this energy could be detected and measured. In fact, the location of the flow has been used by the British Society of Dowsers as a 'test' to check the accuracy of their members. However, thinking naturally in terms of the classic straight-line, we soon had painfully to discard our preconceptions as we discovered immediately that the dowseable energy flow does not follow a straight course; it is sinuous and meanders over the landscape in true serpentine fashion. Although we were not aware of it at the time, there is a long tradition of these weaving, mercurial currents that animate the Earth. They are the Druidic Wouivres (referred to in Charpentier's book on Chartres Cathedral), the Serpents of 18th century antiquarian William Stukeley, the wandering dream-paths of the Australian aborigines and the Dragon paths of oriental mysticism. 'Dragon' is in fact the same as 'Serpent', taken from the Greek Draconis, meaning serpent.

After the initial shock of this revelation, discovered the hard way by following the course of the energy across field and moor, our quest led into strange territory. Two years later, we have explored the length of the alignment from Cornwall's far west to the Norfolk coast, and made some very interesting discoveries. Forgotten megaliths, prehistoric earthworks and holy wells mark the course of the Earth's serpentine energy currents, and this is particularly so with the St Michael Line. Many more churches than previously recognised are located on it, often dedicated, if not to St Michael or St George, to St Mary, the Christianised Earth Goddess. Glastonbury Tor possesses a dowseable 'energy labyrinth' which may help to explain its timeless sanctity and effect on modern pilgrims, and Avebury is truly the 'Serpent Temple' of William Stukeley, who was not using the description in a poetic or imaginative manner, but merely describing its purpose in terms of natural energies.

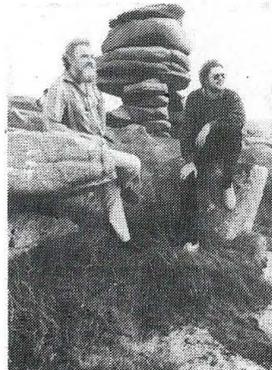
Cornwall in particular has many secrets hidden in its ancient landscape. One of the most intriguing of these is an intimate, secret place on the cliffs at Land's End which marks the spot where the St Michael serpent or dragon comes in from the Atlantic. A great monolith marks out the rocky promontory of Carn Les Boel, balanced inexplicably on three stones so it is not in contact with the earth. The Carn itself looks like many others, but the place is very special indeed. It came as a delightful surprise to us to discover that author Alan Bleakley had mentioned this place as being the end of the St Michael Line in correspondence years before, apparently intuiting what we were to discover later by dowsing.



Carn Les Boel

Other intrigues abound; like the fact that there was a Victorian revival of the system, with the erection of a flamboyant cathedral at Truro on the stones of the ancient St Mary's Church, alongside which the St Michael current runs. Unfinished arches show that a building was planned precisely on the flow, but never finished. Today, a modern chapter house is built on the spot, with a huge cross laid on the ground beneath it. Curiously, the whole edifice is raised in the air, like the above-ground altars in many St Michael chapels. There are other examples of this modern revival of interest in earth energies by both the Church and Freemasonry.

But back to remote antiquity, and the enigmatic remains that tantalise us. It will probably come as no surprise to those who know the place that the dramatic rock-pile known as the Cheesewring, and its associated stone circles, the Hurlers, have a special function in all this. Statistician Bob Forrest has shown that The Cheesewring, Burrow Mump, Glastonbury Tor, Ogbourne St George church and the southern entrance at Avebury all lie in a perfectly straight line, taking into account the curvature of the Earth. The Cheesewring in fact marks the precise spot where the straight line crosses the St Michael Serpent. The Hurlers similarly have a precise function.



Paul & Hamish at the Cheesewring

The list of places in Cornwall that are situated on this terrestrial dragon current is too long for this short article. St Neot's Church on Bodmin Moor, Resugga Castle (a most remarkable earthwork near St Austell), Lostwithiel church and Menacuddle Holy Well are just a few. And then there are the mysteries of St Michael's Mount, where the British St Michael current and a greater one that runs across the channel from Mont St Michel cross. The significance of the St Michael alignment coinciding with the approximate May Day sunrise is crucial to the ancient science of natural energies that is behind all this.

The results of this work will, we hope, encourage others to explore in finer detail what happens to the energies as they pass through their own locality. Most people can dowse them, for they are far more powerful than we can currently conceive, and although intangible with the ordinary senses, they have a potent effect on sensitive people and the countryside through which they pass. Later in the year a series of maps will be available of all areas that are involved, with the course of the energy flows marked clearly on them, so that we can all work together to unravel this most intriguing of the mysteries of St Michael.

A full account of this work is to be published in the Autumn and will be available by private subscription. Please write for details of THE SUN AND THE SERPENT to Pendragon Press, PO Box 888, Launceston, Cornwall or MEYN MAMVRO.

Secret Shrines

In search of the old holy wells
of Cornwall

Paul Broadhurst

'This book, written with energy and insight and illustrated with fine colour photographs, will affect the minds of everyone who even looks at it.' JOHN MICHELL



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the mysterious FOGOU

In the following pages we examine in some depth the Cornish fogous concentrated around West Penwith and the Lizard, with contributions from various people and a 4-page guide to the sites themselves.

Fogous have always intrigued me since there is a doubt as to why they were built and what their original purpose may have been. The best examples remaining are at Pendeen Vau, Boleigh, Carn Euny, Halligye and Porthmeor. There is a ruined one at Chysauster which, a couple of years ago, was blocked up with earth.

One theory is that fogous served as store houses but the amount of construction involved seems rather a lot for a store house. Though being underground and built of great slabs of stone they would have been ideal for this. Another suggestion is that fogous served as places of concealment in the event of a possible attack on the village where they were located. The original inhabitants of Easter Island, for instance, would retreat into elaborately prepared cave systems whenever there was a civil war on the island or unwelcome strangers arrived from outside. The cave entrances were small and well concealed, almost impossible to find. As many of the fogous were built inside villages and were quite noticeable structures - the one at Porthmeor doesn't even run underground completely, for instance - this isn't a very likely role for them. A third possibility is that they were used for some ritual purpose. The fogou at Carn Euny - which is a rather sinister construction - lies in the centre of the village and seems large enough for this. The type of rituals practiced in subterranean temples usually consisted of an initiation ceremony involving some form of death and rebirth ritual. Could this have happened in the fogous of West Penwith?

Fogous bear a resemblance to many similar subterranean constructions on the continent and in the Mediterranean region, including 'souterrains' in Ireland and France and the Neolithic temples of Malta. Other ancient structures reminiscent of fogous are the curious stone buildings at North Salem, New Hampshire on the east coast of North America, these were originally known as Pattee's Caves and now Mystery Hill.

Possibly fogous were originally intended simply as store houses but then developed as something more elaborate. They are certainly among the most intriguing of the monuments of West Penwith and the Lizard.

PAUL THOMAS



The Cult of the Fogou

by Ian Cooke

The Fogou began to be built in parts of the Lands End peninsula in the centuries after 500BC, at a time when that part of Cornwall was almost completely physically cut off from the rest of the County by a rise in ocean level. This 'island' formed a single tribal territory together with the Isles of Scilly which appears to have been originally colonised from West Penwith, and the local inhabitants must have felt almost as much at home on the sea as they were on land.

Although other types of souterrain were being built at that time throughout parts of the Atlantic Province, the Fogous seem to have been a purely localised development which had evolved out of the ancient and revitalised Megalithic traditions of the region. Prior to the Fogou Cult, people lived in village communities of simple round houses, usually with low surrounding (stone) walls and conical timber and thatch roofs. Some of these sites had all-stone 'Beehive Huts' which were very skillfully constructed and built to last for centuries, and the two surviving examples of these structures (with a possible third at Boskednan) both have their entrances facing to the position of the rising midwinter sun. It is likely that they formed the ritual centre for the local community, and had evolved out of the 'Entrance Graves' of the area.

Their orientation and shape suggest that these 'Huts' belonged to a tribal society that was still firmly based on feminine powers and influences, since ceremonies must have been linked to the rebirth of the sun at the time of maximum female potency. Nevertheless it was a changing situation as the accumulation of wealth due to limited trading in the local minerals would have tended to encourage the growth of masculine activities, and the military protection required to safeguard the new wealth would have strengthened this trend.

It must have been a critical and difficult time of readjustment for local clans, as changes in their means of livelihood from a largely pastoral economy to one based on metal trading, and the consequent changes in the environment, began to cause severe disruption within the existing social structure. The previous use of Mother Earth as a loved and respected partner in tribal life was being altered as She became defiled by greedy and rapacious chieftains. These men were largely responsible for the new conditions and became the leaders of the patriarchal family groups which were replacing the older, more centralised form of tribal leadership.

The cult of the fogou arose out of a psychological need of the warrior chieftains to appease the spirits of the Earth for what they were doing, and to ensure that the fruits of the Earth would continue to flow for their benefit. These man-made caves may first have developed along the coastal strip between St. Just and Gurnards Head, where all the known sites show a marked degree of individuality in orientation and design, whereas those from further afield have a much greater degree of conformity.



This area of proposed primary Fogou construction was abundantly provided with both tin and copper and may have been one of the first places to have been exploited for these metals, which would then have been transported along moorland tracks to the coast for sale and export to the continent. The whole area being well protected by a network of cliff castles and hillforts.

As this trade in minerals became more profitable and well established, the new circumstances demanded that the fiercely independent petty chieftains of the area should forget their squabbles and differences to work together with other clan chiefs of their own tribe, to forge trade and cultural links with their sea-faring neighbours in Ireland and Brittany. These links could then be later 'cemented' by means of arranged marriages between the most influential family clans, and the Penwith warrior chiefs must have had at least a second-hand acquaintance with the Celtic barbarian cultures of Europe, from whom they are likely to have learnt the techniques of iron working, and in time their closest contacts were to be with the tribe of the Veneti in southern Brittany.

As the Fogou cult spread over the area with these newly formed political alliances, so did their design and the whole ideology around which they were conceived become more uniform. Even so they still exhibit considerable individuality in plan, but not in orientation or curvature which remained constant, and it shows that each extended family group had a certain amount of freedom in matters of ritual interpretation within an all-embracing tribal religion.

The principal feature of this nature-orientated religion was that it was a continuation of ancient Stone Age Megalithic traditions which has been transposed into the heroic warrior society of the pre-Roman Iron Age. Fogous were linked with the Sun, as had been the great Chambered Mounds of three thousand years before, and were carefully placed within the landscape to make the best possible use of natural energies* and are often sited just below the crest of the high ground, never on the summit. The primary function of the Fogou was to form a physical man-made bond between the body of Mother Earth and Her male consort the Sun, and this is most clearly demonstrated by the orientations of the main stone passages.

This physical connection is essentially of a symbolic sexual nature, whereby the interplay of male and female energy patterns related to the apparent movements of the sun and the moon, directly affect the growth and continuity of the Earth. The way into the Fogou, 'womb-temple' of Mother Earth, would be by crawling through the 'vagina-like' creep entrance - a sign of submission by participants in the rituals. But, whereas this opening was orientated towards the moon, heavenly protector of the Earth, the long 'womb-like' passage would be aligned between the rising midsummer sun and the setting midwinter sun, and be shaped in a gentle 'phallic' curve. This change in emphasis, from the Beehive Hut orientation at the time of maximum female power, to that of the Fogou at times of maximum and minimum male power, would seem to show that there had been some change in social and religious priorities. Some Fogous included an earth-cut chamber, in intimate contact with the soft, feminine (soil) aspect of Mother Earth, and these 'birth' or 'healing' rooms are once more linked to major solar positions.

The folklore associated with the Fogou connects them with the Underworld and spirits of the dead, with fertility rituals and powerful energies - in other words with the various constituents of the eternal Life Cycle from birth, through life to death and eventual rebirth. These ideas are strengthened in their validity by the sexual symbolism inherent in the actual architecture and plans of these caves.

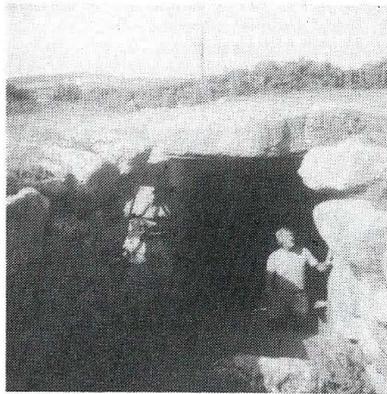
All kinds of small, unexciting and relatively insignificant items have been recovered from within Fogou passages, and it is quite possible that these may represent the remains of offerings rather than simply being bits of random debris. Tin, fertile earth, wood, food, animal and human ashes or other remains could all have been placed within the 'womb' so that they would receive a symbolic boost from

*Geiger counter experiments have apparently shown that radiation levels inside Fogous are double those to be found in a natural environment, and this may have influenced their abilities as places of healing.

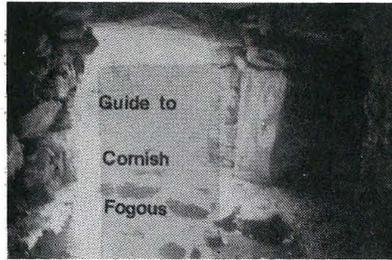
the mighty sun at midsummer in an attempt to promote both continuity and proliferation. In addition, sacrificial and fertility ceremonies could have been performed to augment these dedicatory deposits, with contact being made with the mystical and awesome powers of the Earth Goddess.

Apart from communal rituals, the Fogous could also have been important places where individuals went at the 'turning points' during their existence - conception, birth, initiation, marriage, sickness and death - to receive benefits from Mother Earth. Many ritual-based societies have customs which oblige women to retire to a dark place to give birth so that the sun or the moon cannot 'see' them; while at death a person could be placed within the darkened passages in close communion with the Earth and the underworld, so that their journey into the spirit world might be assisted towards rebirth in the spiral of immortality. The underground chambers would also have been suitable as places where the spirits of dead ancestors could be contacted through prolonged states of trance and where visions or dreams could more easily be experienced.

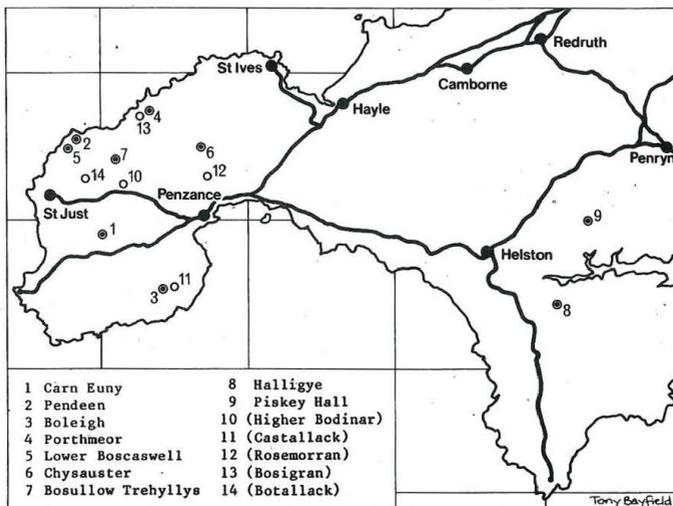
At their inception the Fogous were communal ventures, but the growth of class differences throughout the following centuries was mirrored in the organisation and administration of tribal religion, which seems to have led to the village ritual monument coming under the direction of a particular person, or a chieftain and his immediate family, or possibly a group of female and/or male 'priests', who lived in one of the newly created courtyard houses adjacent to the Fogou. Fogous are only to be found at settlement sites that later evolved into superior courtyard house villages, and at all stages of their use the Fogous remained an upper class preserve, although it may be that the 'lower orders' were permitted to participate in some of the rituals that took place. It seems likely that the Fogous remained as clan ritual structures until the beginnings of the Christian era and the end of the Roman period of tin trading (end of 4th to early/mid 5th century AD), but in those areas outside of the West Penwith 'homeland' some sites may have been 'desecrated' by other pagan tribes who did not follow this particular cult and modified to serve a different function, usually of a defensive nature (e.g. Halligye).



In many respects the Fogou served the same functions as later parish churches - both were administered and controlled by the wealthier, educated classes; both were the most important and permanent architectural structure of the community; both were places of communal worship and individual ceremonies (baptism, marriage, funeral); both were buildings where the local inhabitants brought offerings of produce taken from the earth (harvest festival); and both had links with the Sun. In the case of the church, the altars were placed at the eastern end - the direction of Birth and Resurrection, symbolised by the rising sun; and Christ himself was given his birthday close to the day of the sun's rebirth on the winter solstice with his weekly day of worship being on the day named after the Sun. The pagan importance of Midsummer and Midwinter was continued by the rural communities of West Cornwall in ceremonies and festivities which remained well attended and popular until the mechanisation of agriculture in the last century.



'Fogou' is an Old Cornish word meaning a cave (corruptions include 'Vau' sometimes seen on old maps, and 'Fuggie-hole', the vernacular used by older Cornish people). Their principal features are a long subterranean passage usually curved, together with a narrow side passage known as a creep sloping towards the ground surface, which was probably the original entrance. Some fogous had a further room or blind passage leading off from the side of the main passage. They were constructed of drystone walling in a corbelled shape leading to a roof of massive granite slabs. They are always associated with settlements, and date from about 500 BC - 400 AD, but excavation has revealed very few significant remains. Ian Cooke has speculated (see MM2 p9) that most fogous with their passages curved NE-SW are aligned to face the midsummer sunrise (the main exceptions being Pendeen which faces the midsummer sunset, and Porthmeor where the passage appears to join the 2 positions of sunrise at the solstices). Suggestions for their purpose have included refuges, cattle pounds or storage chambers but all these interpretations show serious defects. Ian Cooke argues strongly for a ritualistic function, and archaeologist Henrietta Quennell backs this up by pointing out that fogous were often earlier than the surrounding courtyard settlement which argues that they were important enough to be incorporated into them. Some dozen sites are known about, all in West Penwith or the Lizard Peninsula, and a further dozen or so possible sites are now destroyed or ruined beyond recognition. This feature lists the principal ones with site plans and concise details.

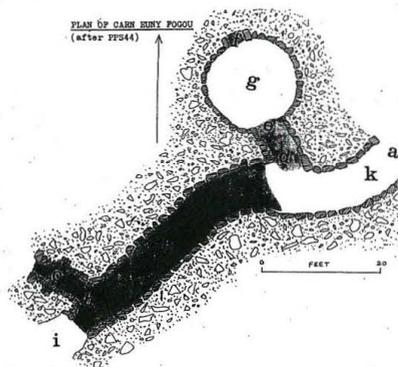


EXTANT SITES WEST PENWITH

CARN EUNY (SW 4024 2885) - pictured on p10 & 11.

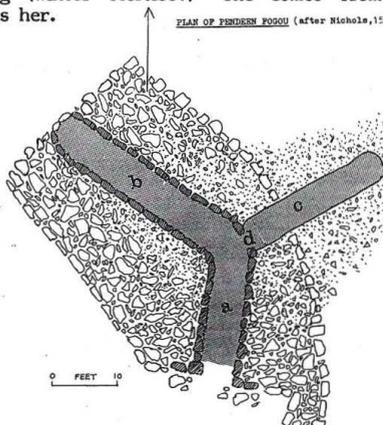
One of the most interesting fogou sites. It lies in the well-preserved Carn Euny Courtyard House settlement near Sancreed, and the fogou leads off a beehive hut (circular corbelled room). It was built in successive phases, the beehive hut being the earliest part. The long passage, closed at both ends, followed, and the only way in and out at this time was by the tiny creep passage. The north end of the fogou was later opened to provide access from the neighbouring dwelling, and finally in recent centuries the south end was opened so you can now walk right through. Excavation in the 1860s revealed some pottery fragments and ashes, and an extensive 10 year excavation took place in the 1960s. The settlement was abandoned peacefully and mysteriously, after about AD 400.

- a. EXIT TO ADJOINING COURTYARD HOUSE
- b. MAIN PASSAGE - Covered portion 33' long, 6' high and 6'8" wide at floor level.
- c. CREEP PASSAGE - 10' long, 2'5" wide at halfway point, 3'2" high - exiting to ground surface at West.
- d. ENTRANCE PASSAGE TO 'BEEHIVE HUT' - Covered portion 10' long, 5'11" high, 3' wide.
- e. LINERELLED DOORWAY - 4'2" wide, 4' high.
- f. 'FALSE DOORWAY' AT GROUND LEVEL - 3' wide, 2'7" high.
- g. 'BEEHIVE HUT' - 16' diameter at floor level, height to top of stonework 11', overhang of corbel about 3'.
- h. DOORWAY - 3'4" high, 2'2" wide.
- i. Broken end of long passage exiting to a later built stretch of open trench.
- k. End of corbelled walling of main passage and likely original north-east termination of covered fogou long passage.

PENDEEN (SW 3837 3553) - Pictured on p8.

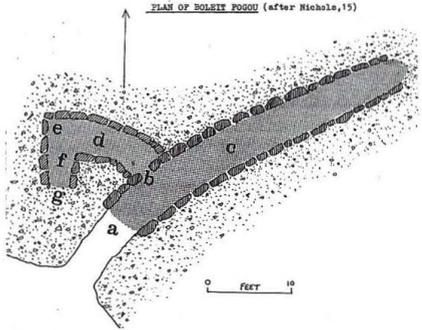
This is a superb fogou in a very mundane site - the back of a farmyard through a very muddy cow byre! Take wellies and ask permission to visit. The fogou opens from the side of an ancient stone hedge and descends steeply underground, then levels and turns sharply left. There is a low creep to the right to which entry can only be affected on stomach - a very claustrophobic experience! This has been cut from the solid clay with no supporting stonework. The floor of both main passage and creep is littered with stones and boulders of all shapes and sizes. There is a legend of a woman in white who appears with a red rose in her mouth at the entrance of the fogou on Christmas morning (Winter solstice?) She comes from Ireland and portends death to anyone who sees her.

- a. MAIN PASSAGE, FIRST SECTION - Entrance 4'6" high and wide, 26' long passage, 3' wide increasing slightly towards the angled bend, as does the height, from 4'11" to 5'2".
- b. MAIN PASSAGE, SECOND SECTION - The total length of the whole of the main passage is 56'9".
- c. 'BAD-CUT CHAMBER' - Dome shaped with an average height of 4'2", width of 5'5" and length of 25'4".
- d. DOORWAY - 2'11" wide, 1'7" high.
(Measurements after Borlase, 5B, and Clark, 15)



BOLEIGH (SW 4370 2520)

The site lies in the grounds of Rosemerryn House which is now the centre for CAER, so permission to visit must be obtained. (An article on it by Jo May the owner appeared in MM3 p7). It was formerly contained in an iron-age earthwork of which no traces now remain. Excavation in the 1940s revealed pieces of Iron-age pottery from the creep. The creep is unusual in having a sharp left-hand bend part way along. Evelyn Clark (Cornish Fogous, 1961) speculates that this may have been the ritual entrance to a shrine at the curved end of the main chamber. The most controversial feature however, which is unique to fogous or any other sites in Cornwall, is an indistinct carving on the left hand entrance stone of the upper half of a figure, carrying a stave or spear in one hand and a possible serpents head in the other (see drawing in MM1 p9). Interpretations of it have included - a symbol of a fertility cult to ensure a successful harvest (Evelyn Clarke), a Celtic hooded godlet - genii cucullati - found elsewhere in Gaul (see Craig Weatherhill MM1 p8), or a celtic god of healing - Clew an Nemed - found elsewhere in Brittany (see Jo May MM3 p8). There is extensive legend of witchcraft ceremonies taking place down the fogou (Duffy & the Devil) which may be memory of the use of the fogou as a place of worship for the veneration of a local pagan deity. There is also reference to a second fogou some 120ft to the west (see MM6 p6).

- 
- a. PRESENT ENTRANCE - 4'7" high, 4'10" wide.
 b. DOORWAY - 2'9" high, 1'3" wide.
 c. MAIN PASSAGE - 36' long, greatest height above floor level 5'6", 4'10" wide at south end, 3'4" at north end.
 d. FIRST PART OF CREEP PASSAGE - 12'8" long to 'e', 4'4" high, 4'4" wide at eastern end.
 e. FALLEN CAPSTONE AT CORNER.
 f. SECOND PART OF CREEP PASSAGE - 8'8" long from 'e', of varying height and width.
 g. DOORWAY - Now blocked but probably the original and only entrance into the Fogou.
 (Measurements after Clark, 15)

PORTHMEOR (SW 4341 3703)

Like Carn Euny, Porthmeor fogou lies at the edge of a Courtyard House settlement, but it differs from other fogous in that it is above ground, is now roofless (though it was originally roofed by corbelling and lintels), and appears to have no creep. Instead the main passage has a graceful sweeping curve. It was excavated in the 1930s when pottery was found dating it from Clst - C6th AD, but it is now quite overgrown and difficult to find.

LOWER BOSCASWELL (SW 3767 3484)

There is little left to be seen now except a short length of covered passage filled with debris and blocked by a modern wall, although originally there would have been a longer passage (at least 17ft) and a creep.

CHYSAUSTER (SW 4720 3483)

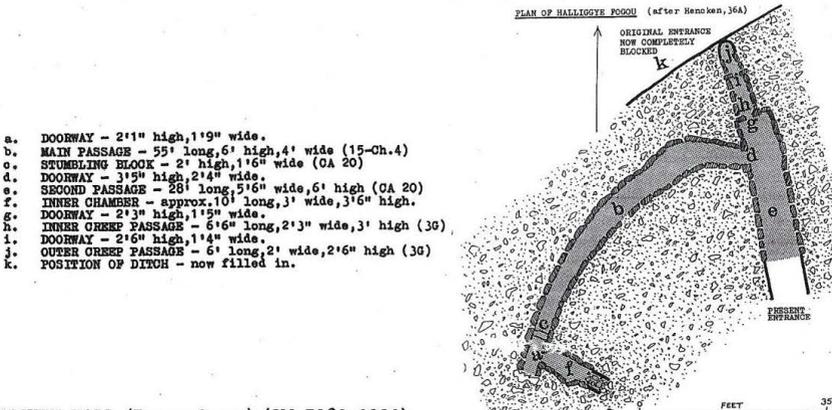
The Courtyard House settlement is extensive and well preserved, but not the fogou which has only 2 roofing lintels remaining.

BOSULLOW TREHYLLYS (SW 4095 3423)

Another Courtyard House settlement with what may be a very small fogou (roofless and above ground) on the NE side.

EXTANT SITES - LIZARD/CARMENELLISHALLIGYE (SW 7132 2395)

This fogou lies in the grounds of Trelowarren estate with a public right of way. It is the largest and most complex of the fogous, comprising 2 main interlocking passages together with smaller creeps. The entrance now is to the south and this has the effect of making an initiatory journey into the various chambers as one gets deeper into the fogou. It is constructed on the natural surface of the ground, not cut out of it as are most other fogous. A full excavation took place in 1980 and it was shown to have been part of a settlement though that is not now visible. It is however a superb site with total of 126ft of passages and well worth visiting.



- a. DOORWAY - 2'1" high, 1'9" wide.
- b. MAIN PASSAGE - 55' long, 6' high, 4' wide (15-Ch.4)
- c. STUMBLING BLOCK - 2' high, 1'6" wide (CA 20)
- d. DOORWAY - 3'5" high, 2'4" wide.
- e. SECOND PASSAGE - 28' long, 5'6" wide, 6' high (CA 20)
- f. INNER CHAMBER - approx. 10' long, 3' wide, 3'6" high.
- g. DOORWAY - 2'3" high, 1'5" wide.
- h. INNER CREEP PASSAGE - 6'6" long, 2'3" wide, 3' high (3G)
- i. DOORWAY - 2'6" high, 1'4" wide.
- j. OUTER CREEP PASSAGE - 6' long, 2' wide, 2'6" high (3G)
- k. POSITION OF DITCH - now filled in.

PISKEY HALL (Trewardreva) (SW 7280 3003)

This is the exception among the fogous, resembling more an entrance grave than a fogou. Unlike other fogous the walls are vertical not corbelled inward, the passage is only 26ft long (very slightly curved) and there are no side passages or creep. It does however face NE-SW as do the others. It lies in a field to the east of the Gweek-Penryn road, not far from the Eathorne menhir and the Tolvan stone.

VANISHED AND DOUBTFUL SITES

A fogou at TREVENEAGUE (St Hilary) was discovered and explored in 1867 by J.T.Blight, and then subsequently lost! It consisted of a main passage with a semi-circular side passage opening out into a ditch. There were signs that there had been a fierce fire at some point, the floor being littered with many loose burnt articles. The fogou was described in detail, but by the 1950s it had disappeared altogether! There is no record of it being destroyed, so it may be buried awaiting a further discovery, if anyone wants to start looking! There were also formerly fogous at HIGHER BODINAR (Sancreed) 4150 3230, CASTALLACK (Paul) 4515 2531, plus another dozen or so possible sites including ROSEMORRAN (Guilval) at 4749 3270 mentioned in MM2 p11, BOSIGRAN at 4270 3695 possibly (re)discovered by the CAU during a recent field survey, and BOTALLACK on Tregeseal Common at 3918 3267, which has never been excavated. Finally, a 'fogou' marked on old OS maps near Alternun on Bodmin Moor is a natural structure.

Information - Cheryl Straffon, Site plans - Ian Cooke, Map - Tony Bayfield

Radio Carn Euny



by Pat Angove

Penwith's megalithic sites have been around a lot longer than we have and yet sometimes those ancient places seem to reach out through time, across the ages to share a little of their power and their history with us. It's as if you are an aerial receiving signals from a transmitter built 3,000 years ago.

I'll show you what I mean. Come with me!

It's a warm, sunny autumn day and we have arrived at Carn Euny to visit the fogou. Other people have the same idea and there are parents with their children picnicking, people out walking with their dogs, others studying the site intensely, armed with OS maps, compasses, books, binoculars and such other regalia needed for close study of a megalithic site and its surroundings.

We shall though, go directly to the fogou. We may have to wait until the other human beings have departed before we can find the space and peace we need for reception.

Make your way down the corridor and sit on the stone just outside the entrance to the beehive hut. Take in the place. The ferns growing in between the lumps of granite, the mossy covering of the walls, the actual structure and architecture. Notice how the beehive hut has the same light as a rock pool on a sunny day, the sunlight diffused and turned green with the ferns and moss. Notice the warmth. You're not sitting in the sunlight and yet you begin to feel quite warm. Drink in the atmosphere, let it filter through your skin. Now do you hear them? The voices, whispering, some talking excitedly, some murmuring, some are whispering right in your ear. As soon as you think that you are imagining the voices, atmosphere and warmth, they are gone, replaced with the everyday noises surrounding the fogou. Noises that until then you had not noticed, almost as if you'd switched TV channel from a silent movie to a hustle bustle city scene. People calling their dogs back, children squealing, even the birds have started their calls again. So was it all imagination?

A dog lopes past you and into the beehive hut intent on leaving a mark of its visit, and you know its now time to leave.

As you re-emerge from the fogou, you notice for the first time that the breeze has a cold edge to it, you also notice the picnickers are only a couple of yards away from the fogou, why did you not hear them before, they are certainly noisy enough?

As you turn to walk away, look up to the sky. The moon, sharing the sky with the sun, is she smiling?

Spirit of the Fogou



For me, fogous are very special places. A fogou is a very feminine place; going down into one is like going into the womb of mother earth, a dank, dark cave of pulsating energies where unexpected things can occur.

I once went to Halligye fogou with a friend. It was our first visit there and we had no torch with us but spent a long time sitting in the dark feeling extremely peaceful. While in there, we conversed little, but one thing we shared was that for both of us it was the first day of our period, and withdrawing from the world in this fashion and sitting in this dark stone womb felt exactly right. We thought how good it would be to do this whenever need arose.

One fogou I have come to know is Boleigh. Whenever I stay in its vicinity – and I spend time in retreat at Rosemerryn every Summer, often camping in the grounds there, – the fogou is at the heart of my experience there. It has become a gateway to the underworld for me; it helps me reach within myself levels of dream and vision which enrich and add meaning to my life and my pictures (I am an artist). That is not to say that the transition is always easy. The fogou has at times had odd physical effects on me, cramping stomach pains, once I was overtaken by acute dizziness, often it seems dark and unwelcoming. It is different on different occasions, or perhaps it is I who am different and at times am not ready to experience its depth or my own. Going into a fogou, I meet myself.

My most intense experience in the fogou was a visual one. I had been staying at Rosemerryn to do a five day group and about half way through, in that fragmented depressive mood which I have always found occurs for me at this stage in a successful group, I felt the need to separate myself off from my companions and my fiance and sleep on my own in the grounds. That night I felt restless and drawn towards the fogou as if the fogou contained some healing secret for me, and although apprehensive, I felt prepared to go through with this. I spent some time within the fogou that night, how long I couldn't say. I remember the feel of the mud floor against my bare feet and of the rug in which I had cloaked myself. As I stood there in the dark, I began to feel strangely without identity or time: I was any woman in any age, looking for spiritual comfort in the fogou. It came in the form of a vision. Suddenly it was no longer dark but I appeared to be standing in daylight a little way from a church and watching a wedding party coming out of a church. The bride, groom and guests were there although I could not see faces clearly. It was a bit like watching a video in the clarity of the picture. Then I remember being distracted and feeling cold and the vision disappeared and I went out. This was a bizarre experience, you could say that I must have dozed off and dreamt it but for me the clarity and lucidity of the images made it different from a

dream, in any case I was vertical the whole time and I remember thinking to myself 'Well, how odd this is!' Also over the next few days I began to see that the experience had been relevant for me on two levels: I felt more at peace with myself as though the 'wedding' had symbolised an inner process of male/female harmonisation which had happened for me; it was also confirmation for me that it was all right for me to remarry, which I did the next year, though not in a church.

'K.G'

Fogou Experiences

The experiences of K.G. in fogous have interesting links with other experiences, legends and theories. K.G.'s feelings about the fogou being a good place for menstruation gell with a possible explanation for fogous suggested by a professional archaeologist down here – she believed they could have been sacred places for women to both menstruate in and perhaps to give birth in the creeps. This would have a parallel in the experiences of some ethnic tribes in the world today, where women go apart together to a special place for times such as those.

K.G.'s comment about the fogou being a different place at different times is also especially relevant. Dowzers and those sensitive to earth currents have reported that at times Halligye fogou seems very charged and at others quite dead. Fogous also seem to affect different people in different ways: One person I know simply cannot go down into Boleigh fogou – she finds the power too overwhelming while another just wants to curl up and sleep down there! Sometimes the fogou itself can seem not to want you to enter: someone else had a strange experience the first time she went to Boleigh. When she got there she found the entrance was covered over by 2 large megalithic slabs, completely blocking the way in. Thinking that this was normal, she returned, only to be told later by someone that of course there was no barrier to the entrance. When she went back again, there were no entrance stones, but she swears to this day that they were there when she first saw it, and were much too huge for anyone to have casually put there and taken away later.

Sometimes the energy or power in the fogou seems active or even malignant (or it is simply the way individual people respond to it?). One person had a ring she was wearing literally wrenched off her hand while she was down there in a way she has never been able to explain. Others, such as myself, have always found the atmosphere down there very peaceful, almost soporific. One of my most powerful experiences was of scrying into a bowl of water by the light of the moon down in a fogou.

I notice that all my examples are of women's responses to fogous. That may just be coincidence, or it may say something about women's natural ability to plug into the earth energies inside fogous – men seem to have a slightly different, more theoretical approach to them. Legends too seem to link women to fogous. At Pendeen fogou a woman in white with a red rose in her mouth is supposed to appear on Christmas morning, though woe betide anyone who sees her for they will die within a year! And in the legend of Duffy & the Devil, the Squire enters Boleigh fogou where he finds a coven of witches conjuring up the Devil. Powerful places, fogous!

The Tinnerns Way - Pathway to the Past

by Cheryl Straffon

The Tinnerns Way is a prehistoric trackway running the 12 mile length of the West Penwith moors from St Ives in the east to St Just in the west. It is now officially waymarked in places (though the rash of wooden posts and yellow arrows has caused some controversy) and makes a marvellous upland walk, passing as it does close to many of the landmarks of prehistoric Penwith. It can be walked with local ramblers groups by day in Summer (contact MM for details) - and it is a most magical experience to walk it by night, as some of us did a couple of years ago by the light of the full maximum summer moonset, with the moon just skimming along the tops of the Penwith hills. Then it is easy to slip back in time to the folklore and legends associated with the sites along the way, and to know that you are probably walking the very same route as that of our ancestors from Bronze Age and Celtic times.

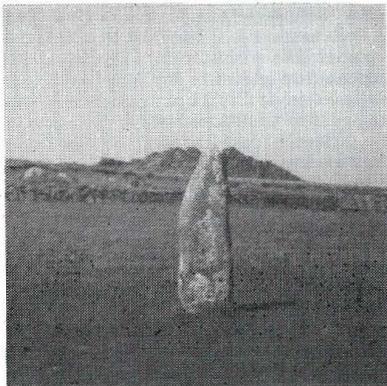


Going from W to E, the route could be said to start at Kenidjack Castle near St Just, an Iron Age cliff castle where tin and copper may have been originally mined in prehistoric times before being transported across the Tinnerns Way to be shipped out through Mounts Bay on the south side of the peninsula, and St Ives on the north side, where there was another cliff castle on the Island. The path itself is easiest to pick up on Truthwall Common just outside St Just, in the corner of which stands Tregeseal Stone Circle. This area was featured in detail in MM2 in the article - "The lost Stones of Tregeseal Common" (see also MM4 p9), an area about which there are many legends and mysterious tales told. It is dominated by the wierd form of Carn Kenidjack on the horizon, about which J.T. Blight (1835-1911) said: "The very word Kenidjack - 'the Hooting Carn' - is ominous, and fearful and melancholy sounds does the wind make in passing around its jagged buttresses." More recently Beryl James in "Tales of the Tinnerns Way" (see p20 overleaf) sums it up thus - "There is no shadow of doubt but that the dead are in possession of the hooting Carn - possibly the spirits of the Celts who were buried in the many mounds and barrows there." The Tinnerns Track crosses this ancient landscape, and then down a muddy lane and over the B3318 Pendeen-Newbridge road it follows a pathway with Chûn Castle & Quoit on the north hill and



Boswens menhir & Common on the south. At one spot you are in direct line and intervisible with both Chûn Quoit and Boswens menhir – a powerful experience. (Chûn Quoit was illustrated and featured in MM3 p12, and Boswens menhir in MM1 p12, MM2 p7, MM5 p2, MM6 p24, & MM7 p14.)

From Bosulow Trehyllys, an unexcavated courtyard house village still retaining much of the atmosphere now rather lacking in the more well-known Chysauster, the Way traditionally goes straight on up the road (there is now an alternative series of footpaths winding across rough ground behind) crossing the B3312 Morvah-Penzance road at the Men-an-Tol studio and up the lane to a group of ancient sites – the Men-an-Tol holed stone on the right with its legends of healing and divination (picture in MM3 p22), the Men Scryfa inscribed stone on the left (see MM7 p14), and the Nine Maidens (Boskednan) stone circle further up on the moors. This area will be featured in more detail in a future MM. On our night walk of the Tinnars Way a stop was made at the Men-an-Tol for our crowst (provisions) by the light of flaming torches sending their flickering light across the stones – a truly magical experience! The Men Scryfa seems to point directly at a gap in Carn Galva, a rocky outcrop on the horizon, (See picture), and the Nine Maidens stand silhouetted on the horizon, sentinels on this lonely stretch of moor.



After crossing this moor the track passes through Bodrifty Hut Circle settlement and over the northern side of Mulfra Hill. On top of the hill is Mulfra Quoit (MM3 p12) with its superb views over St

Michael's Mount and Bay. At the bottom of the hill the track then crosses the B3311 Gurnards Head – Penzance road and continues for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile along a minor road to Higher Kerrow where the road bends sharply north and the track carries along on its final stretch across Lady Downs to Amalveor. A little way off the track to the north is Zennor Quoit (MM3 p12) which makes a marvellous perspective for watching the dawn on a night walk. The area all around here is another very mysterious part of Penwith – traditions of witchcraft abound, and folktales recall how all the witches of Cornwall used to meet near Zennor to renew their vows at midnight while gathered around the midsummer-eve bonfires. From Amalveor (where a bronze-age gold hoard was discovered in 1931) the track becomes a road for the remainder of the walk to Towednack Church (with its legends of protection against witchcraft and piskies, and its re-birth legend of a cuckoo flying out of a burning tree on its feast day close to May 1st/Beltane) and down to St Ives. The walk can of course be started at St Ives, Towednack or Amalveor and walked in the opposite direction towards St Just and the setting sun. Whichever way its done the experience of crossing the moors from one ancient site to another is truly a journey back in time, a pathway to the past itself.

Article, map & photograph by Cheryl Straffon. Sketch by Rob Stephenson

BOOK REVIEWS

TALES OF THE TINNERS WAY – Beryl James (Dyllansow Truran, 1988 £4.50)

Many of the old legends and tales associated with places on and around the Tinnerns Way can be found in this new publication by Beryl James. She includes many traditional stories of fairies, piskies, giants, mermaids and sailors, most of these re-told from Hunt and Bottrell's C19th folklore volumes (though unacknowledged), interleaved with more modern tales of mining and seafaring. Some of the tales do stray a bit off the Tinnerns Way proper to places like Porthcurno, Lelant and the Scillies, but all are enjoyable to read and illustrated in places. Anything that keeps the old tales alive is worth doing – as Beryl James says: "Perhaps because of being so remote from the Tamar and England we retained our traditions and customs longer. This makes the area (of West Penwith) so very different from the rest of the land." Only by remembering the old ways will those differences continue.

MYSTERIOUS PLACES – Peter Underwood (Bossiney, 1988 £2.90)

Other mysterious places in Cornwall are visited by Peter Underwood in this recent book. Cornwall is well represented, and the earth energies experienced at various sites well brought out. For example he says that Carn Euny fogou could well be "an ancient storage place for occult energy" and speculates that fogous could once have been infused with magic that would enhance the survival chances of the soul. He mentions the building of stone circles over springs of geodetic energy and how Tom Lethbridge was able to date the Merry Maidens by pendulum dowsing. Together with legends, folklore, ghostly sightings and even a ritualistic suicide (in 1975 in the churchyard at St Buryan, long associated with witchcraft), this is definitely one of the better "popular" books on anomalous phenomena and strange happenings.

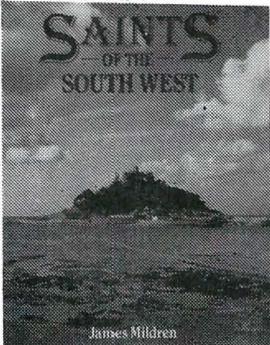
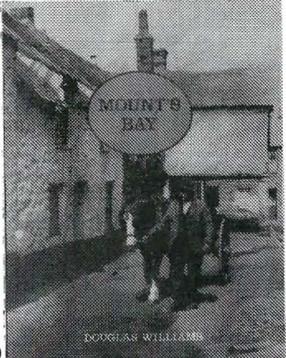
HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE – Lori Reid (Bossiney, 1988 £2.90)

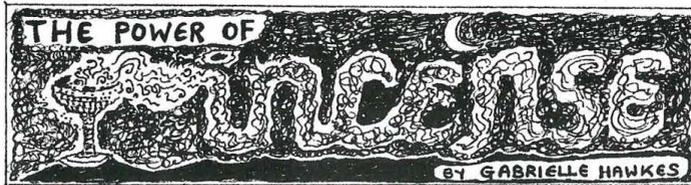
This is an attempt to trace the origins of our modern festivals – as Lori Reid says: "Most of our celebration and feast days have long roots that disappear into the mists of time. When we, in our civilised technological and consumerised twentieth century, celebrate Christmas, Easter or Bonfire Night, we are in fact re-enacting in a modern guise the same primitive rituals that directly link us with our ancient pagan ancestors." That underlying awareness of the ancient seasons cycle runs like a thread through the whole book which completes a revolution of the sun from New Years Day round again to New Years Eve. Along the way many festivals, both Christian and Pagan, are given, and their relevance to our own lives is emphasised. Cornish festivals are particularly featured (Hurling, Obby Oss, Furry, Midsummer bonfires etc) and she is particularly adept at bringing out their original meanings. Recommended as a handy reference to the "paganistic roots that just keep on peeping out through the cracks."

SAINTS OF THE SOUTH WEST – James Mildren (Bossiney, 1989 £2.90)

Finally, James Mildren brings together much lore about the lives of the early Celtic saints in a book that includes a general essay and a gazeteer of the saints. Despite Mildren's assertion that the saints brought "the love of Christ to lives that were brutish and brief", what emerges from the book is in fact how thriving and alive was still the pagan world of the early saints. St Samson found some men at Trigg worshipping a pagan stone, and St Columb was forced to flee the attentions of her pagan lover. St Brioc (Broeke) had his feast day on May 1st, the Celtic Beltane festival, which was followed by "the wildest revelries", and St Euny (whose feast day was October 31st, Samhain eve) had his well near Sancreed venerated for special healing powers involving a sun-wise ritual. Some of the saints are obviously Christian adaptations of pagan motifs – St Breward's original name was Branwalader meaning 'Raven Lord', the Nordic god Bran; and St Michael's Mount was originally called Din-sol from whose hillfort the Celtic Divinity of Sol or Sul (the sun) was worshipped. St Sidwell, venerated at Lanest in Cornwall, and in Devon and Somerset, was martyred with a scythe driven through her neck, but was later 're-born' whole – as Mildren says "A story full of meaningful motifs – the ritual of the corn dolly and of fertility rites"; and St Anne, mother of St Samson, "is intertwined and entangled both before and after Christ's birth with the Great Earth Mother." And a number of Celtic saints, particularly St Nectan, have legends of decapitation associated with them, an original pagan motif where the sacred head was treated with utmost reverence, being the seat of the soul. St Nectan even carried his head to his well, and in fact severed heads have been found in some wells where they were cast as offerings. Much of this can be gleaned from this book, a fascinating insight into the early pagan world these Celtic saints inhabited.

(CS)

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| <p>SAINTS OF THE SOUTH WEST</p>  <p>James Mildren</p> | <p>BOSSINEY BOOKS Cornish cottage publishers specialising in Cornish subjects by Cornish authors</p> <p>✻</p> <p>From all good book shops or write to: Bossiney Books, Lands End, St Teath, Bodmin, Cornwall for our FREE illustrated catalogue.</p> <p>£2.90</p> | <p>MOUNTS BAY</p>  <p>DOUGLAS WILLIAMS</p> <p>£3.90</p> |
| <p>An adventure into the remote past of Cornwall and Devon. St Endellion and Morwenstow, St Just in Roseland and Gunwalloe, Hartland and Bridestowe. Many of the photographs and all of the drawings, remind us of those great Missionaries who combined vigour with virtue and reflect the lovely holy places of today</p> | <p>Mounts Bay – as majestic as any in Europe. From Land's End to Lizard Lights. The most Westerly and Southerly Points of Cornwall. The personal approach and magnificent harvest of old photographs combined to produce a book destined to delight Cornish men and women, and visitors, wanting to know more about this magical corner of Cornwall.</p> | |



To those of you who have not used incense before, a word about its background and use. Incense has been in use for thousands of years, and though it can be used as a way of purifying and perfuming the home, it has always been linked with religious and magical rites. It is thought that it was first used as a means of communicating with the gods and spirits; priests and priestesses would light fires of sweet smelling resinous woods such as cedar and laurel before making a sacrificial offering. Later when sacrifice was deemed unnecessary the practice continued of burning aromatic woods, oils, herbs and gums to accompany prayer. The American Indians still use sageleaves, lavender in their ceremonies and in a practice known as 'smudging' where the smoke from lighted sageleaves is used to cleanse and purify the human aura. Incense is still used in Roman Catholic, High Anglican churches and in the Eastern religions, Hinduism and Buddhism. In rituals of magic, incense has traditionally acquired specialised use according to the kind of ritual being worked, and its preparation by skilled practitioners draws on centuries-old lore as to the properties and astrological association of the ingredients.

So, how does it work? An aromatherapist will tell you that perfumes can have a strong influence on the body and mind, some stimulating, some relaxing, some inducing a change of consciousness. So it is with incense. Breathing in the richly-scented smoke can focus the mind and allow the psychic faculties to open up while creating an atmosphere suitable for meditation or ceremony.

A group of us here in West Penwith who celebrate the ancient festivals together were looking for the right kind of incense for our Winter Solstice ritual. Looking through a catalogue of incenses can be somewhat mind-boggling to the uninitiated as you invariably find a bewildering list of exotic sounding names of incenses often with planetary associations, and often rather far-fetched claims as to the efficacy of each one. Some sound downright alarming and not for the faint-hearted, (unless you enjoy meeting demons, that is!) Seldiy Bate and Nigel Bourne, London-based suppliers of incenses and magical curios sent us their catalogue/magazine called *AKADEMIA* in which they explain how their incenses (prepared under the name *ACCA & ADDA*) are prepared and what they are all for. It makes fascinating reading and is reassuringly demon-free.

This seems like an appropriate time to talk about how to use incense. In case anyone is under any misapprehension, I am not talking about joss-sticks, which is the modern, mass-produced packaged easy-to-use version, great to scent a room or meditate to but lacking the depth and unique energy of the real thing, which contains ingredients hand-collected, sometimes hand-grown and blended during the correct planetary hours, often according to ancient magical formulae. The kind of incense which Seldiy sent us (Real Incense) comes in jars and is an interesting and pungent mixture of herbs, resinous wood, gums etc and is usually all stuck together so you have to dig bits out with a spoon. Preparing to light the stuff is a ritual in itself. First find a heat-proof dish or ashtray, unless you possess an incense burner. Next get your charcoal disc available from the incense emporium. This is a disc-shaped mass of charcoal specially impregnated with saltpetre and when you light it with a match it usually sputters, sparks and then goes out. Keep trying, blowing at intervals and eventually it will reward you by beginning to glow. At this point, dig out your bit of incense, place it on the charcoal and as the blob begins to bubble and melt and the smoke wafts upwards..... breathe in.....

The first incense we tried was called Three Fates. We all liked this one. It had a light, spring-like, spicy, feminine odour with mysterious undertones, which we thought would be highly suitable for an Imbolc ritual, celebrating the return of the light but being still aware of the presence of Winter. It seems we weren't far off the mark, because when we read Seldiy's write-up afterwards, she writes of it as being suitable for "night and winter rituals, for female mysteries" and some other more profound uses.



slightly acrid quality to the smoke which we couldn't enjoy. From the catalogue, it seems to have a medicinal function "skin and teeth, bone-damage, arthritis, chronic illness." Yes, well, I'll keep some in the medicine cabinet next to the aspirin.

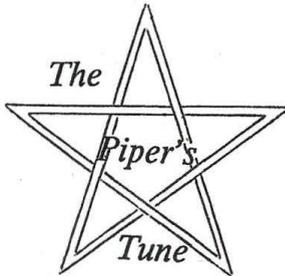
Isis we found extremely exotic, rich, heavy and rather alien. 'A bit theatrical' was one comment and we all imagined florid Egyptian rituals being performed in an elaborate indoor setting. Not quite our style.

Selene was our favourite. This has the freshness of spring growth, seeming to come from the earth herself. It had the depth and at the same time the hint of spring that we were looking for for use in our Solstice ritual.

All in all, sampling the incenses made for an enjoyable and fascinating evening. They had obviously been carefully and lovingly blended and at £2.50 (plus P&P) per jar, they are well-presented and good value. I was aware that our sampling on this occasion was of a rather superficial nature in that we just had a taste of each one, whereas you would need to work with each one along the lines that Seldiy suggests over a period of time and be in a deeper frame of mind, in order to test out some of the more far-reaching claims which are made of them. We were very pleased with the way in which 'Selene' enhanced our Winter Solstice ritual and look forward to trying out other incenses at the other festivals.

You can obtain a copy of the AKADEMIA catalogue/magazine for £1 plus stamp or A5 size SAE. The current issue contains a complete list of incenses, suggestions as to their use, plus other items of interest. Send to BCM AKADEMIA, London WC1N 3XX. Cheques to ACCA & ADDA or S. Bate/N. Bourne.

Article & Artwork © Gabrielle Hawkes



News has reached us that the Witchcraft Museum in Boscastle, north Cornwall is being put up for sale by its owner Cecil Williamson. This museum is a curious melange of genuine artifacts and imaginative reconstructions, but does contain the core of a collection originally built up by Wiccan revivalist Gerald Gardner and subsequently housed on the Isle of Man. Some of this original collection was sold to the States, and there are fears that the rest might go the same way, as a figure of £300,000 has been put on the sale. A campaign has been launched amongst the pagan community to try and raise enough money to buy the collection, though not everyone agrees it is worth saving at that price. It does however contain a number of items obtained by the present owner from Cornish witches or wise-women practising traditional witchcraft earlier this century: one, the scrying maze stone, has already been mentioned in a previous MM (No 5 p17). If anyone is interested in saving "Albion's pagan heritage" they should contact the Boscastle Fund Raising Campaign at 16 Glen Kinglas Road, Greenock, Inverclyde PA16 9NW.

Meanwhile present-day "witches" in Cornwall were mentioned in 'The Ley Hunter' recently, quoting a news item from the Western Sunday Independent about a farmer chasing them off the Merry Maidens stone circle. A rather old report this (1985) but one that nevertheless was worth commenting on.



Firstly perhaps not always to trust the media in everything you read! We know the farmer mentioned Owen Prowse well and he is not in fact unsympathetic to the large numbers of people who visit the site. But his sympathy has been much abused in the past, from the team of American 'investigators' who arrived unannounced one day by helicopter, to the deliberate smearing of excrement on top of all the stones! On occasions we have found people there climbing all over the stones as if the place were some playground laid on for their benefit rather than a sacred site. So it is perhaps worth remembering that for every blooded-minded farmer who would like to clear megalithic sites out of his fields, there are others who are really interested in the sites in their care but who are often exploited and abused by people who ought to know better.

Some people who have used the site well in the past are Kevin & Ingrid Carlyon. They held an 'open' ritual there in 1987, and one at the Men-an-Tol last summer (see MM6 p19). Now they have put the festivals together on a tape called *Rituals of the Stones*, which also contains other ideas for setting up and performing ritual work. A second tape *Earth Magic* is a spoken account by Kevin of the meaning behind earth energies. As a special offer to MM readers they will supply free copies of the tapes for the sending of blank tapes (C90 for *Rituals*, C60 for *Earth Magic*) with 2 1st class stamps for each copy. There is also a booklet "Witchcraft - an honest view" which contains the words of their Men-an-Tol ritual @ £3 from the same address (see back cover).

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MM10 due out Autumn 89 will include The Ritual Cycle, Penwith Altar Stones, Spirits of West Penwith & a Guide to Crosses - 2. MM11 will feature Sacred Wells.

PAGANISM

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WOOD AND WATER - A Goddess Inclined Eco-Pagan Magazine (Annual: 4 issues £3.40) 77 Parliament Hill, London NW3

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THE SCOT-IC PAGAN - New mag of the Old Religion (Annual: 4 issues £3.50 Sample £1) Robert Watson Jnr, 16 Glen Kinglas Rd, Greenock, Inverclyde, PA16 9NW

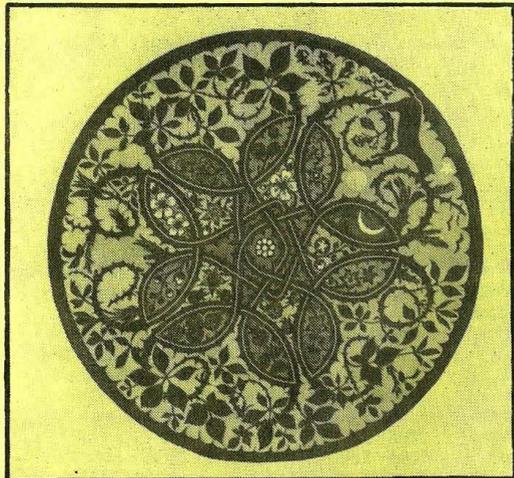
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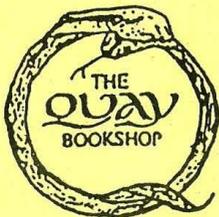
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